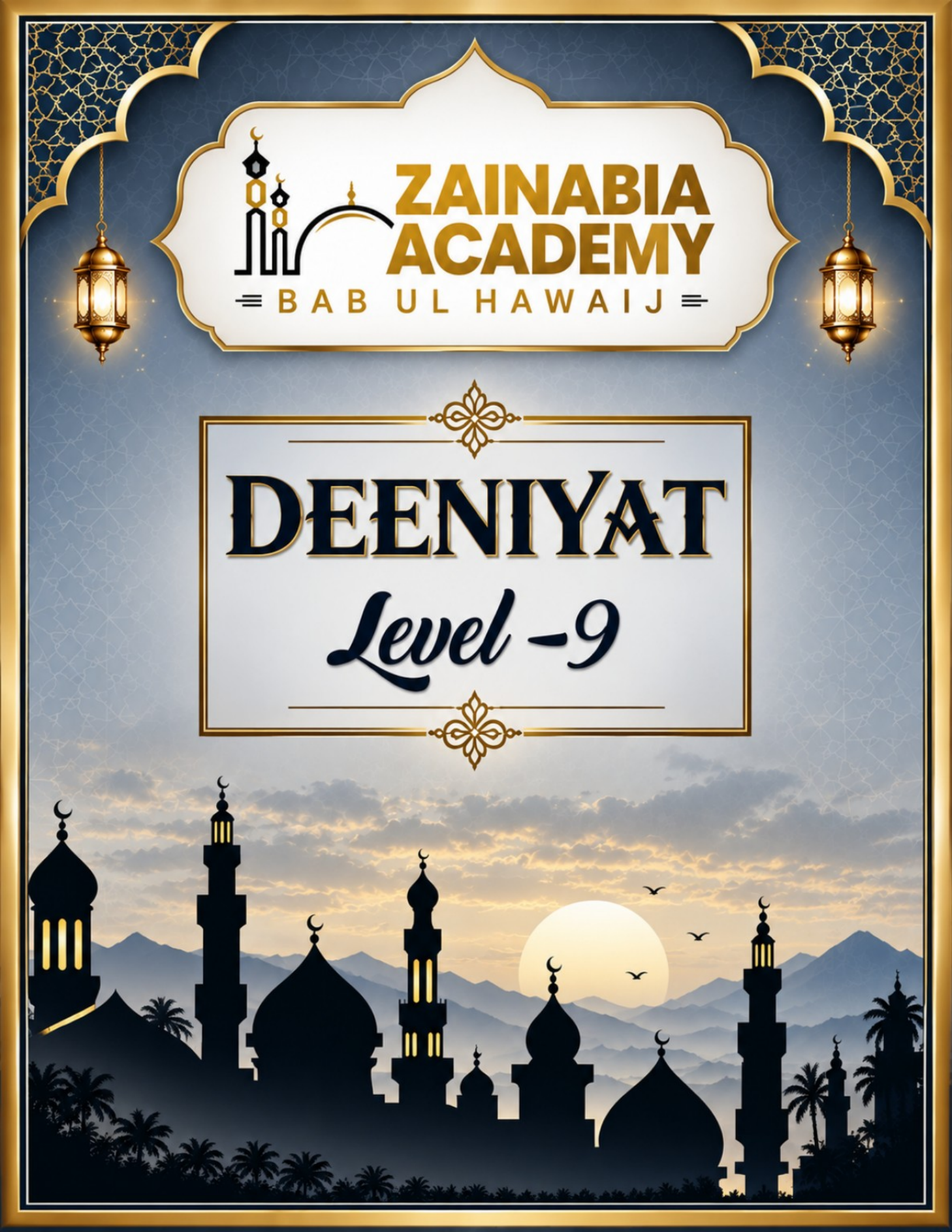

ZAINABIA
ACADEMY
BAB UL HAWAIJ
DEENIYAT
Level -9

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-9 TEACHING SCHEDULE

AQAID	FIQH	TARIKH	AKHLAQ

DATE	WEEK	CHAPTERS	PAGE #
LESSONS FOR FIRST TERM			
	1.	1 KNOWING ALLĀH (SWT) 14. HUMILITY	-100- -194-
	2.	2 THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 1) 3 THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 2)	-107- -112-
	3.	3. TAYAMMUM	-138-
	4.	1. QĪṢAṢ AL-ANBIYĀʾ - NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) (PART 1) AKHLAQ LINK: HARD WORK	-146- -148-
	5.	2. QĪṢAṢ AL-ANBIYĀʾ - NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) (PART 2) AKHLAQ LINK: OPPRESSION	-150- -152-
	6.	3.QĪṢAṢ AL-ANBIYĀʾ - NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) (PART 3) AKHLAQ LINK: SHUKR AND QANĀʿAH	-155- -157-
		1st TERM EXAM DAY	
LESSONS FOR SECOND TERM			
	7.	4.REVELATION 4.WAFĀT OF RASŪL ALLĀH (S) AKHLAQ LINK: THE NAFS	-118- -164- -166-
	8.	1. ṢALĀT AL-JUMUʿAH 2. ṢALĀT AL-ʿĪD	-134- -136-
	9.	5.THE EVENT OF SAQĪFAH BANŪ SAʿĪDAH AKHLAQ LINK: MATERIALISM	-168- -170-
	10.	7. THE THREE CALIPHS (PART 1) 8. THE THREE CALIPHS (PART 2)	-172- -174-
	11.	9. THE AʾIMMAH - IMĀM ʿALĪ AL-NAQĪ (A) AKHLAQ LINK: ZUHD	-176- -178-
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		2nd TERM EXAM DAY	

ZAINABIA ACADEMY

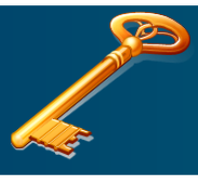
DEENIYAT LEVEL-9 TEACHING SCHEDULE

AQAID	FIQH	TARIKH	AKHLAQ

LESSONS FOR THIRD TERM

DATE	WEEK	CHAPTERS	PAGE #
	14.	5 IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 1) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 2)	 -123- -128-
	15.	12. PEOPLE IN FOCUS - SAYYIDAH ZAYNAB (A) AKHLAQ LINK: MODESTY AND CHASTITY	-188- -190-
	16.	4. FOOD & DRINK 17. ALCOHOL & DRUGS	-140- -200-
	17.	16. SPYING 18. VOLUNTEERING	-198- -204-
	18.	5. RADD AL-MAẒĀLIM 15. ḤUSN AND SŪʾ AL-ẒANN	-142- -196-
	19.	13. SIGNS OF THE REAPPEARANCE OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ A ʿAQĀʾID LINK: IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 1 AND 2)	-192-
	20.	19. TAWBAH 20. PORNOGRAPHY	-206- -209-
	21.	Exam Review	
		3rd TERM EXAM DAY	

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

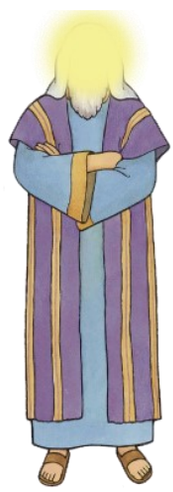
List the names of the Divine Books that have been mentioned in the Qurʾān and which *rasūl* each book was revealed to?

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:

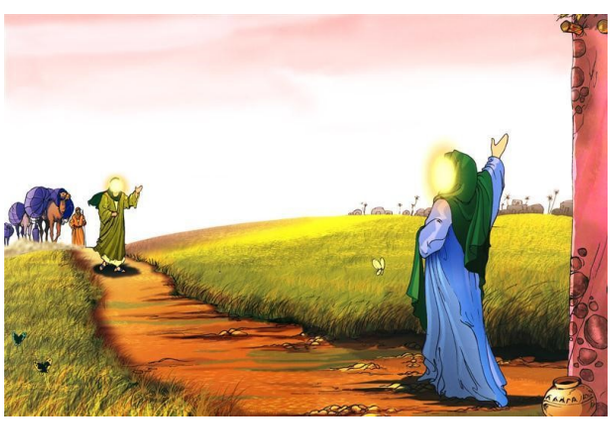
"Oh Allāh, for the sake of Muḥammad, ʿAlī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, turn towards me (in forgiveness)."

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

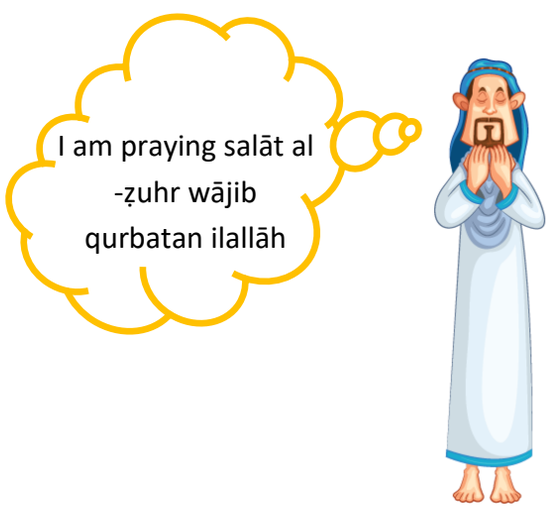
MY NOTES

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 ṣalāh?
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

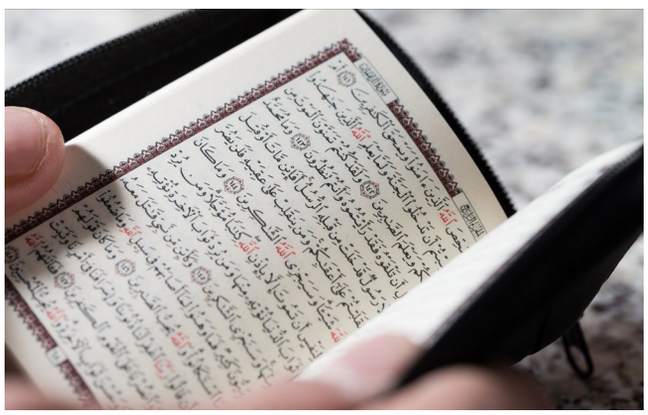
GROUP ACTIVITY

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):

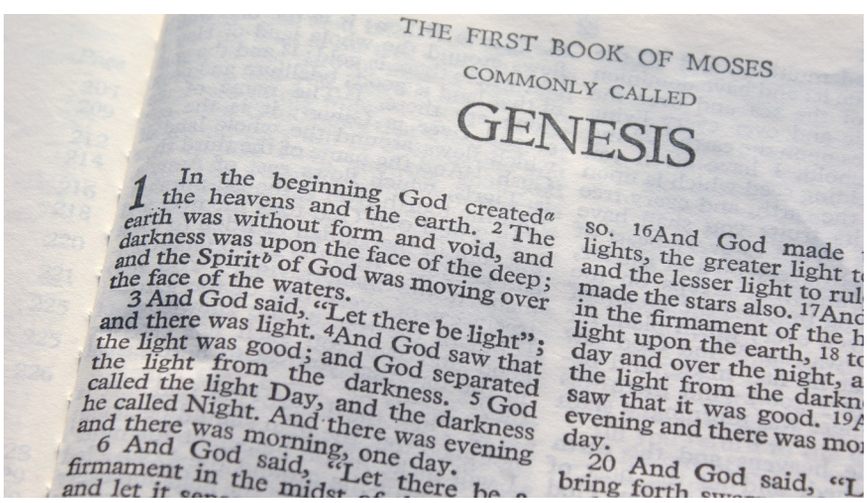
"The (Islamic) religion will continue until the Hour (the Day of Judgment), having twelve caliphs for you, all of them will be from Quraysh."

"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 the day and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also. 17 And God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth, 18 to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.
20 And God said, "Let the waters 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]

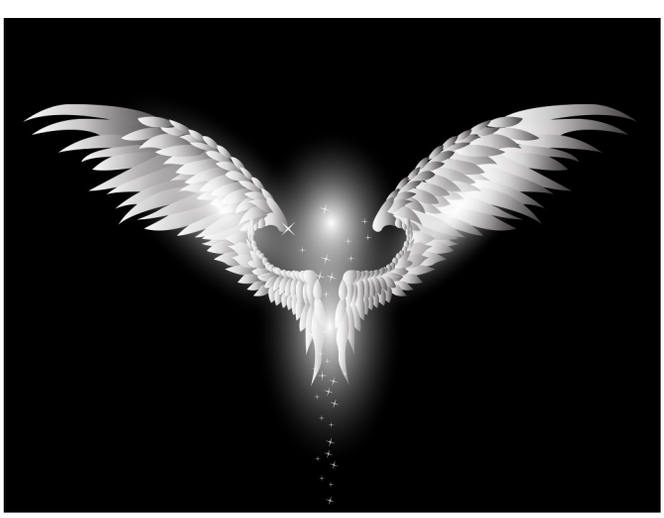
Other than the human being, from among the different intelligent creatures that the Qurʾān has informed us about are the angels, regarding whom we will be studying in more detail in this lesson.

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.

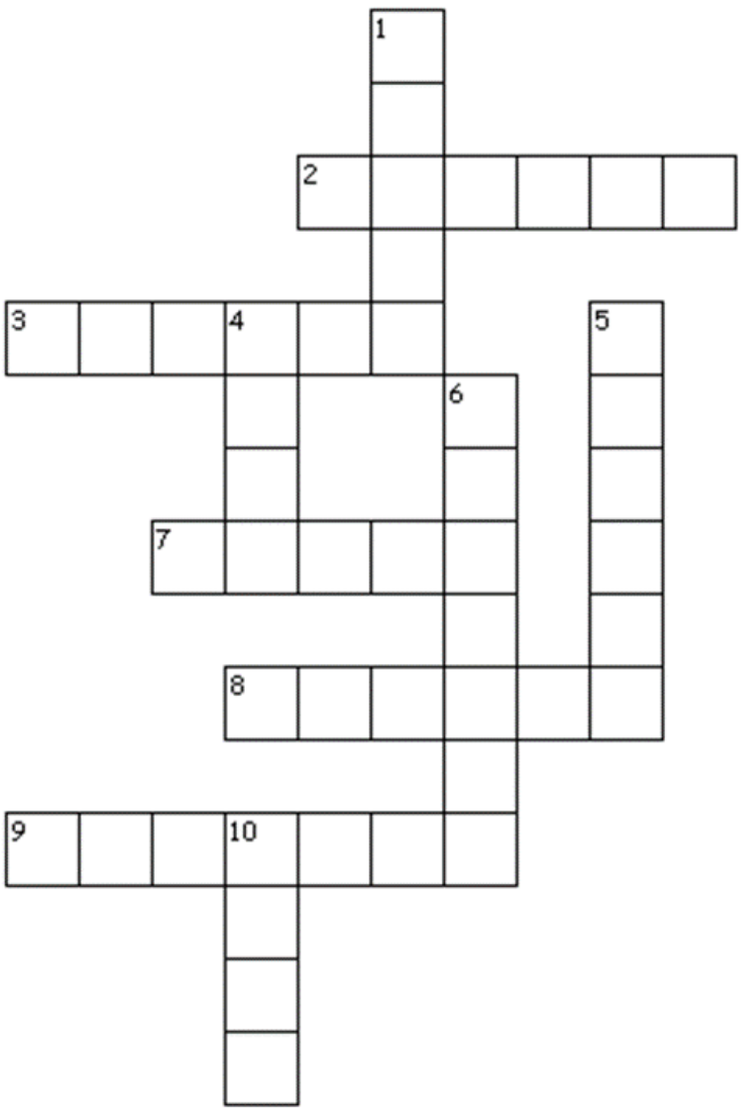
3. Among the greatest angels are Jibrāʾīl, Mikāʾīl, Isrāfīl and ʿIzrāʾīl.

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

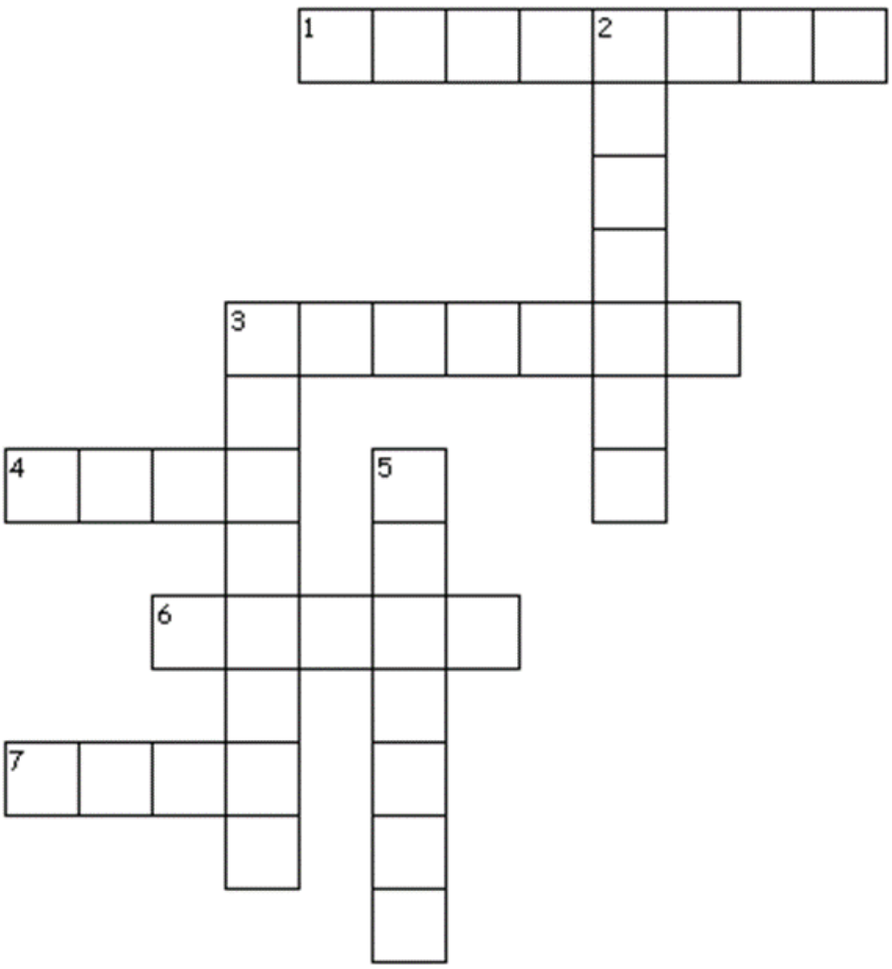
1. A Muslim is known as a **monotheist** (**muwaḥḥid**), i.e. a believer in one God.

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:_____

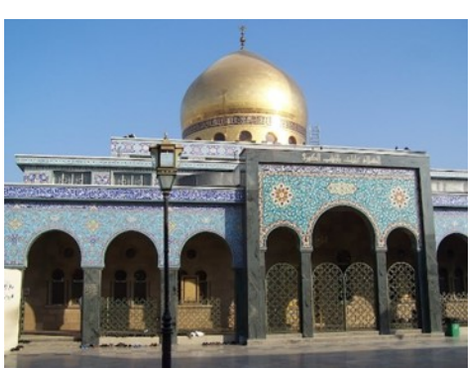
12:_____

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

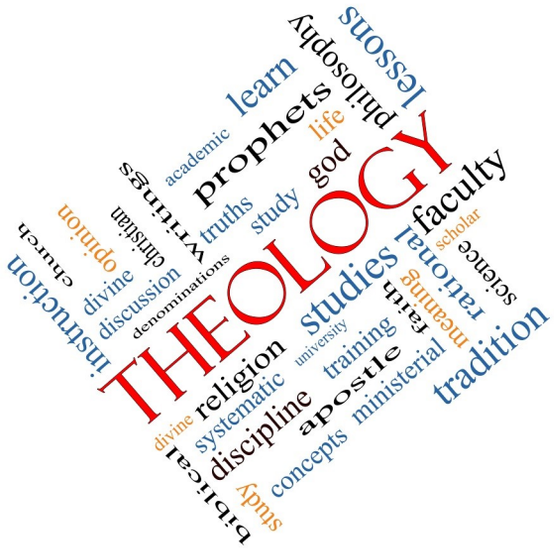
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

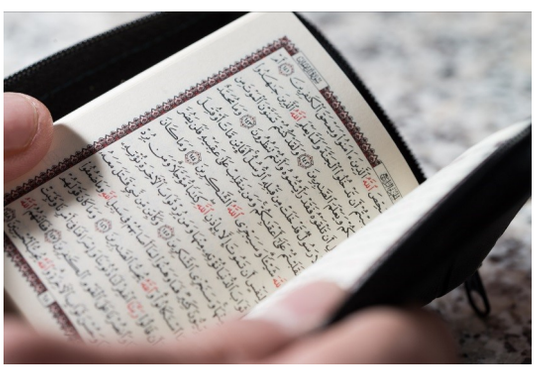
2. Understand that only Allāh (SWT) has the right to choose His representatives

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

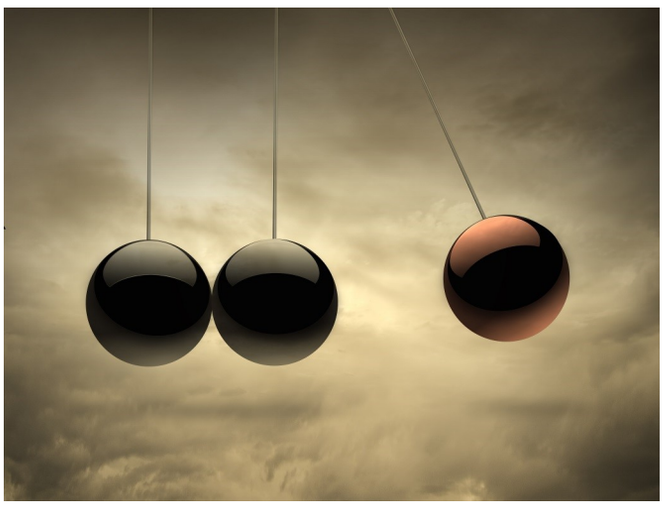
And remember that Ibrāhīm was tested by his Lord with certain commands, which he fulfilled. He said: "I will make you an Imām to the Nations." He pleaded: "Does this promise apply to my descendants also?" He answered: "My promise shall not reach the unjust." [2:124]

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

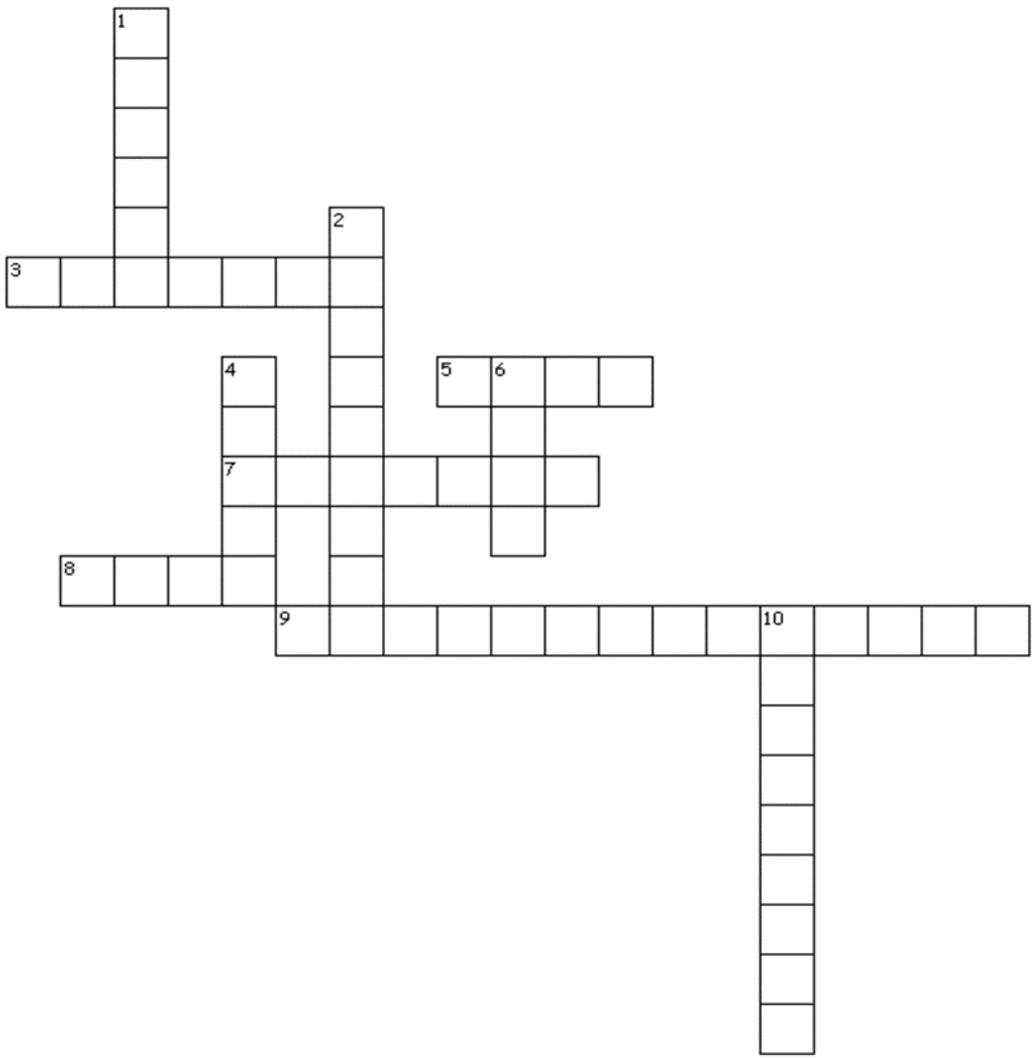
1. The necessity of having maʿṣūm Imāms to succeed the Holy Prophet (S) is as important as the necessity of prophethood itself, in order to preserve the message after him.

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:

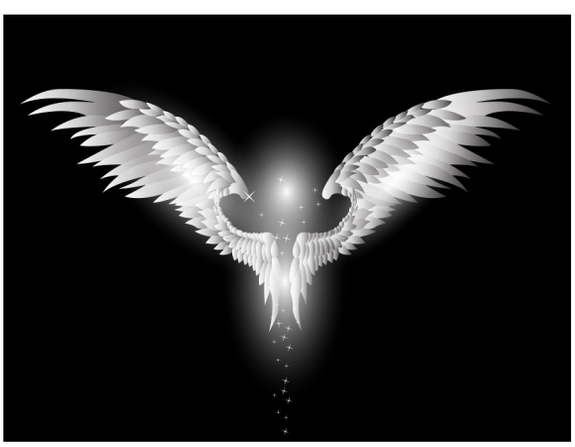


اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا ۖ فَيُمْسِكُ الَّتِي قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا الْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ الْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

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]

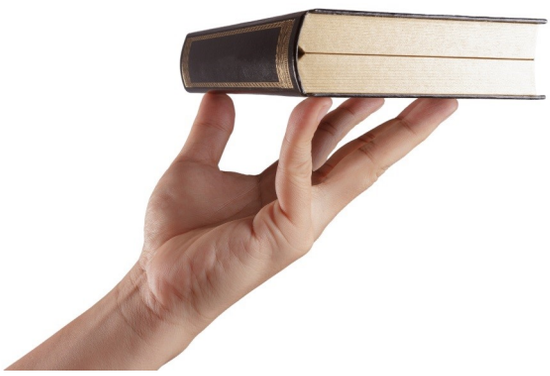
OUR BOOK OF DEEDS

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.

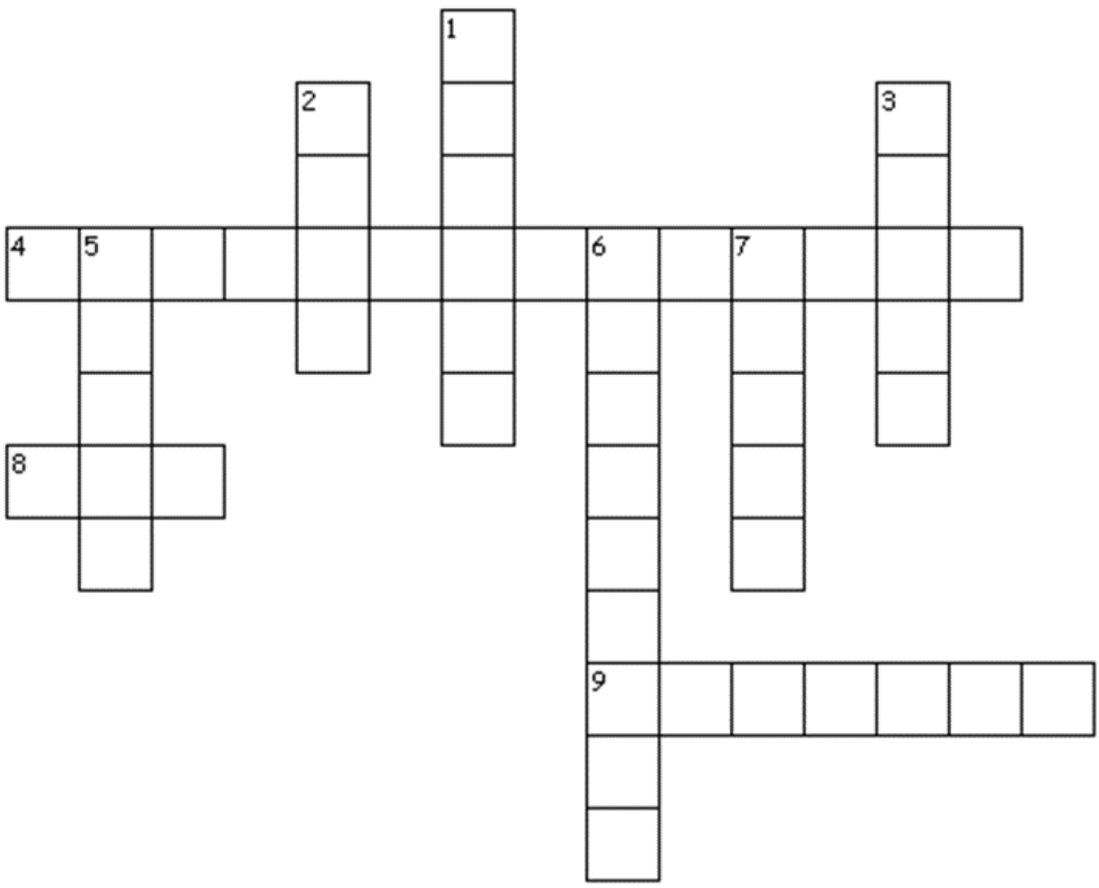
KEY POINTS

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

01 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:

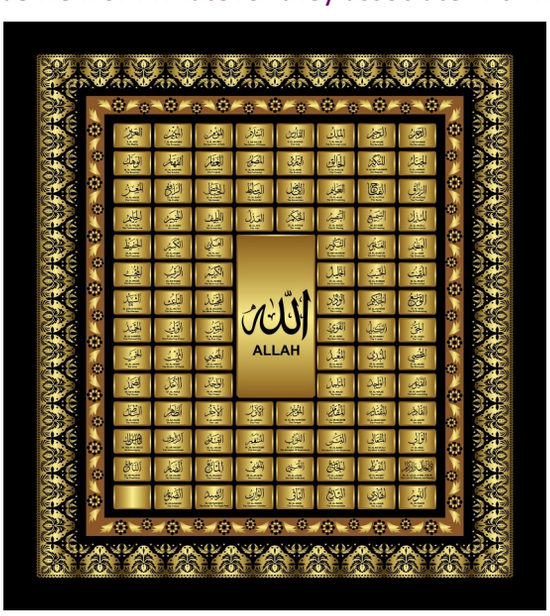
قُلْ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَانَ أَيًّامَّا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى

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]

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.

MY NOTES

01 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:

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) 02

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?

02 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".

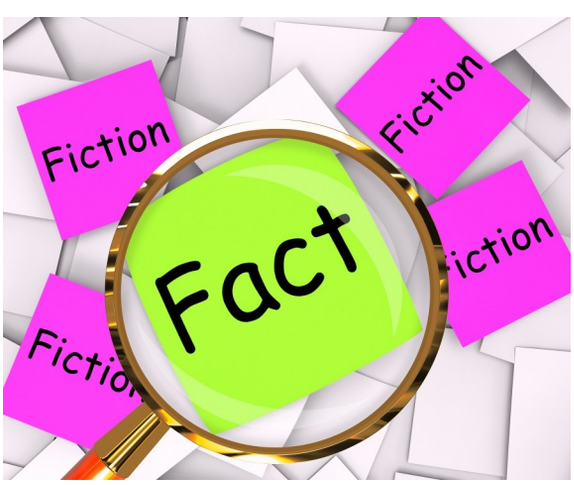
ATHEIST: Can you please explain further.

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

02 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.

03 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

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?

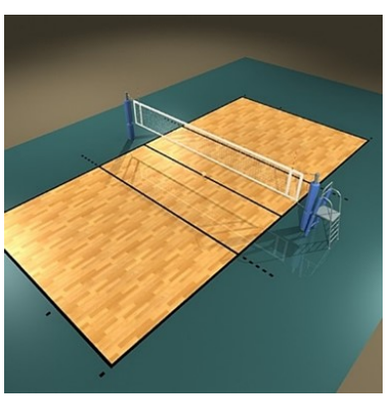
BELIEVER: Yes, of course I would have.

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!

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?

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

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):

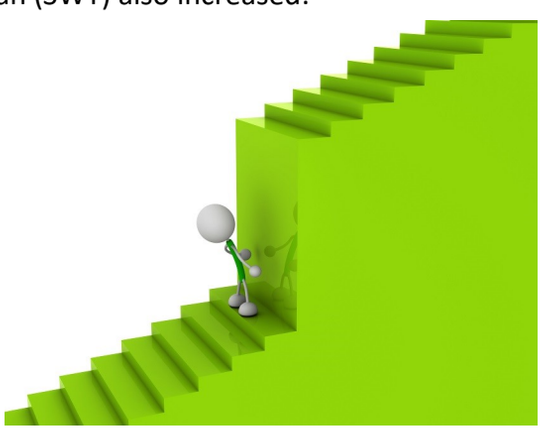
"Among what Allāh, the Exalted, revealed to Prophet Mūsā (A): 'I have not created anything as dear to Me as My believing servant, so when I try him, I do so for his own good, and I make him prosper for his own good, and I shield him for his own good. And I know best what improves My servant, so let him 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**



03 THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 2)

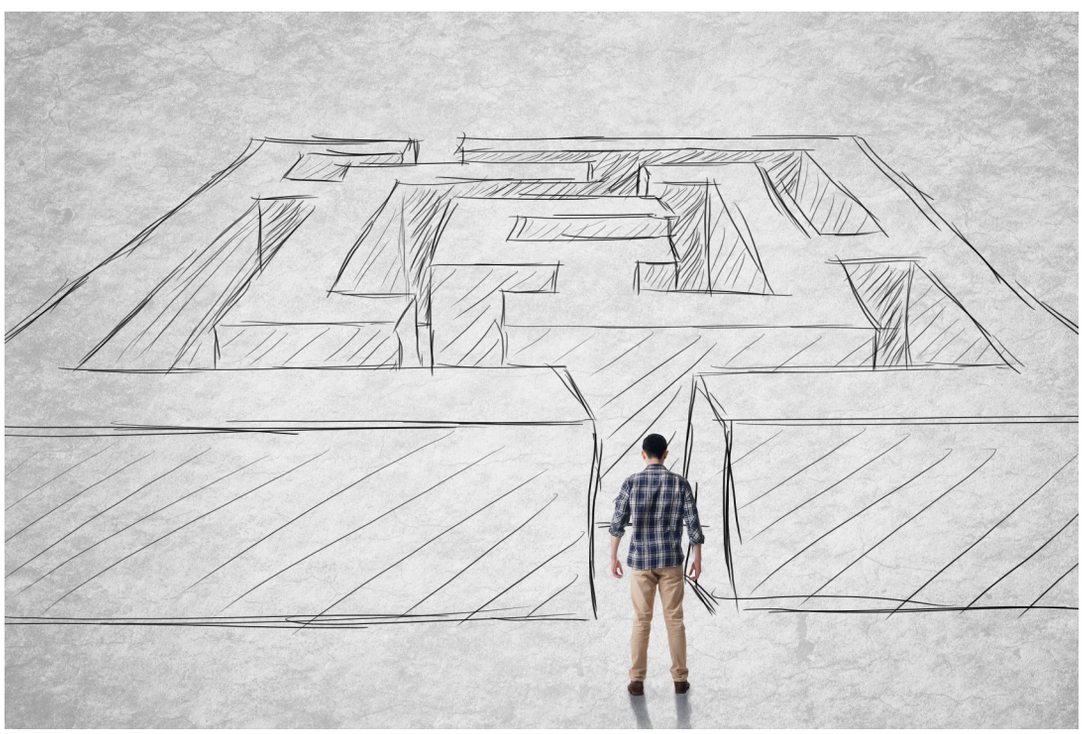
DID YOU KNOW?

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]

04 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,

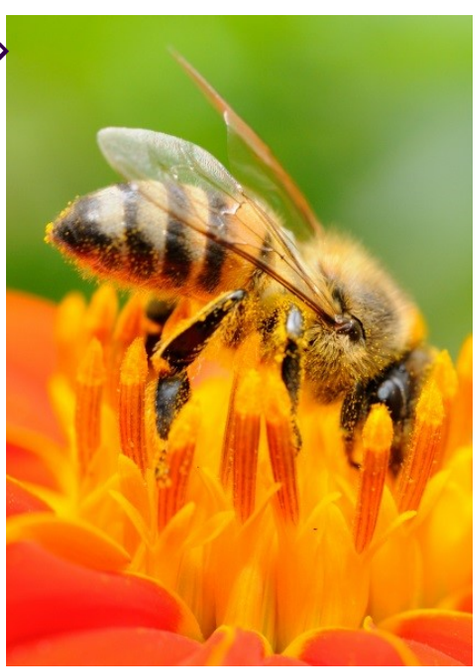
بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا

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.

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

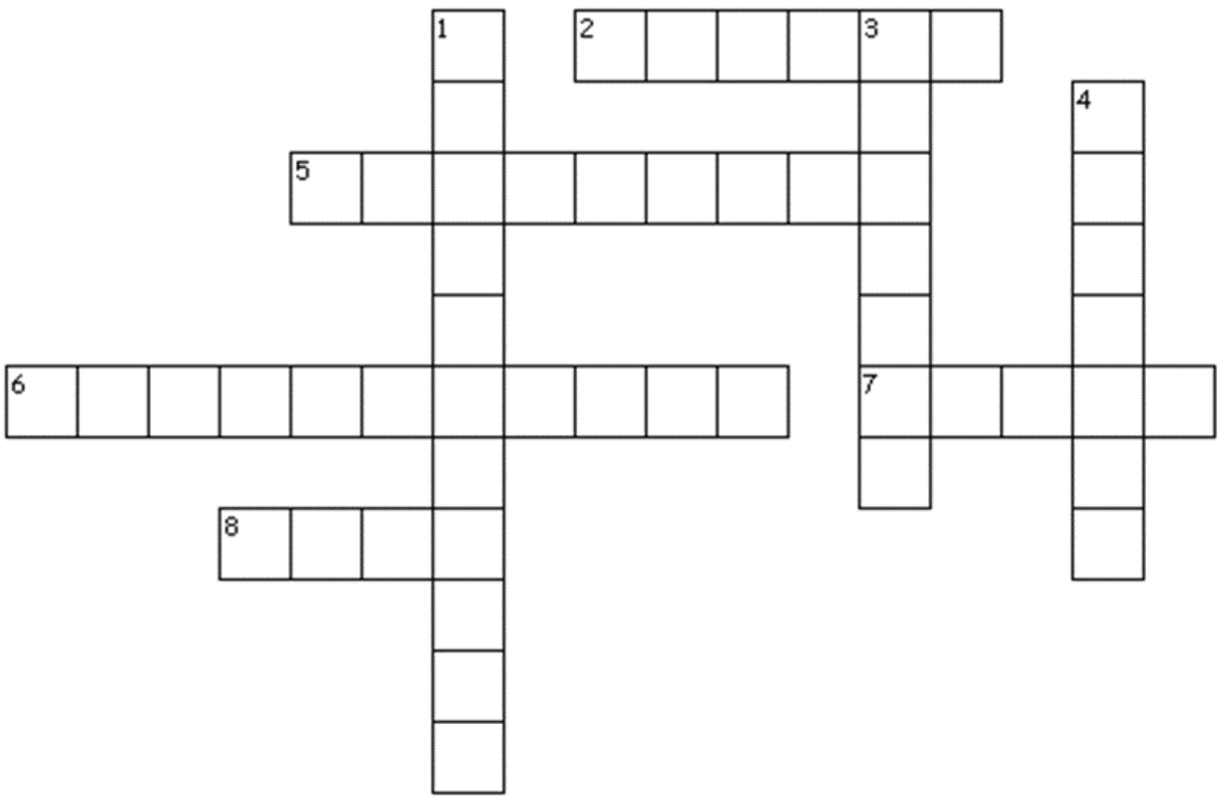
1. The "intuitive guidance" (**al-hidāyah al-takwiniyyah**) is a form of guidance that Allāh (SWT) provides to every creation in this world.

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)

05

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

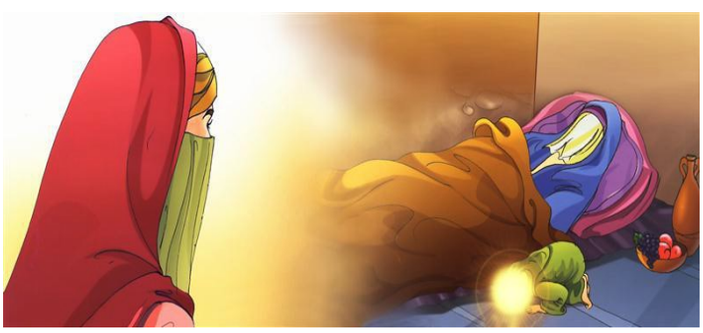
Write a letter to Imām al-Mahdī (A). Speaking from your heart, inform him about the problems in this world, as well as your personal problems in life and ask him to help you and those suffering around the world.

05 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).

05 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).

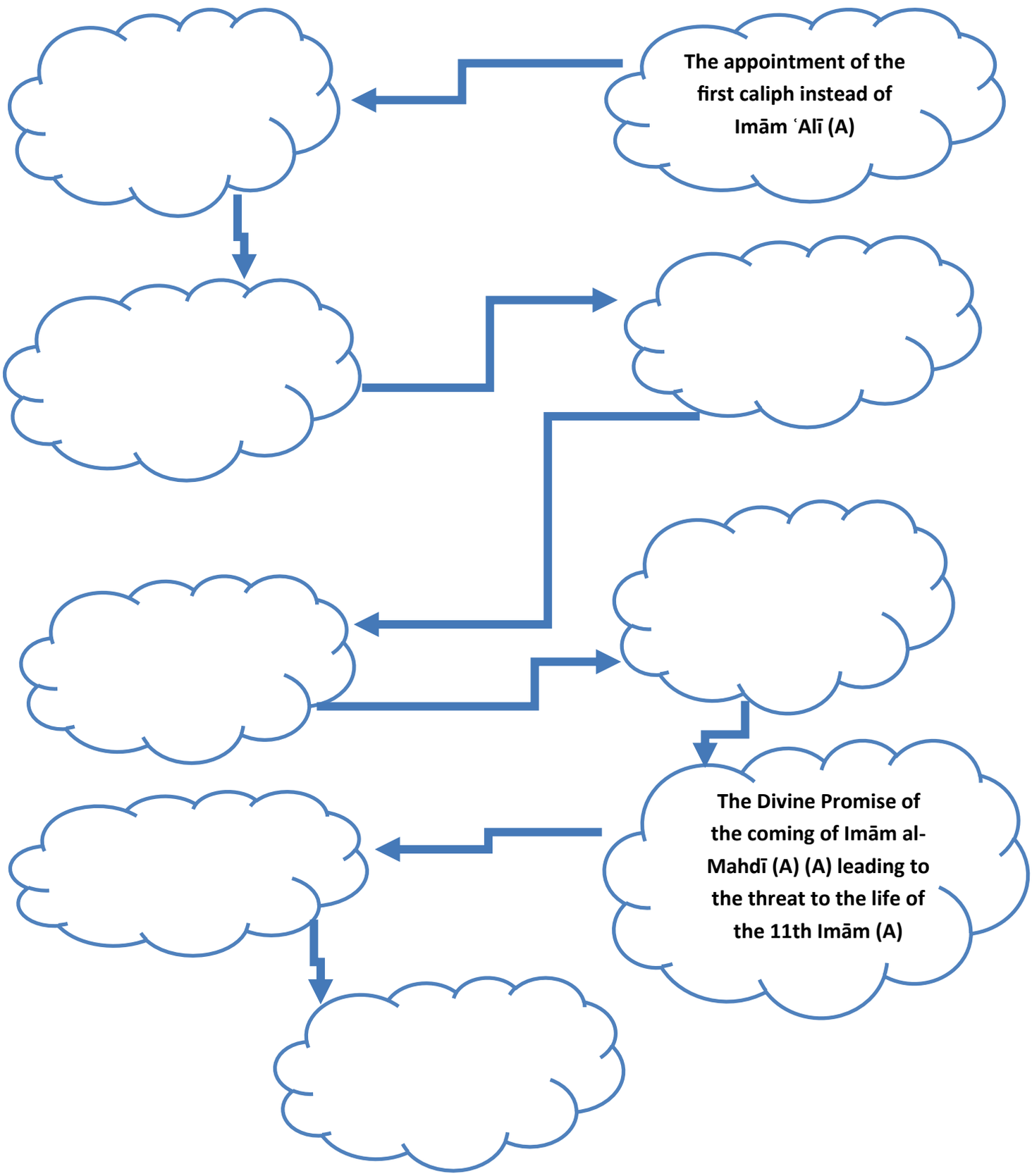
In other words, the Imām (A) is telling us that we must be patient and not arrogantly assume that we are able to understand all of the Divine mysteries. We must not lose faith in the existence of our Imām (A) and use this time to prepare ourselves for his coming. When he reappears, he will inform us 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)



06 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."

06 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.

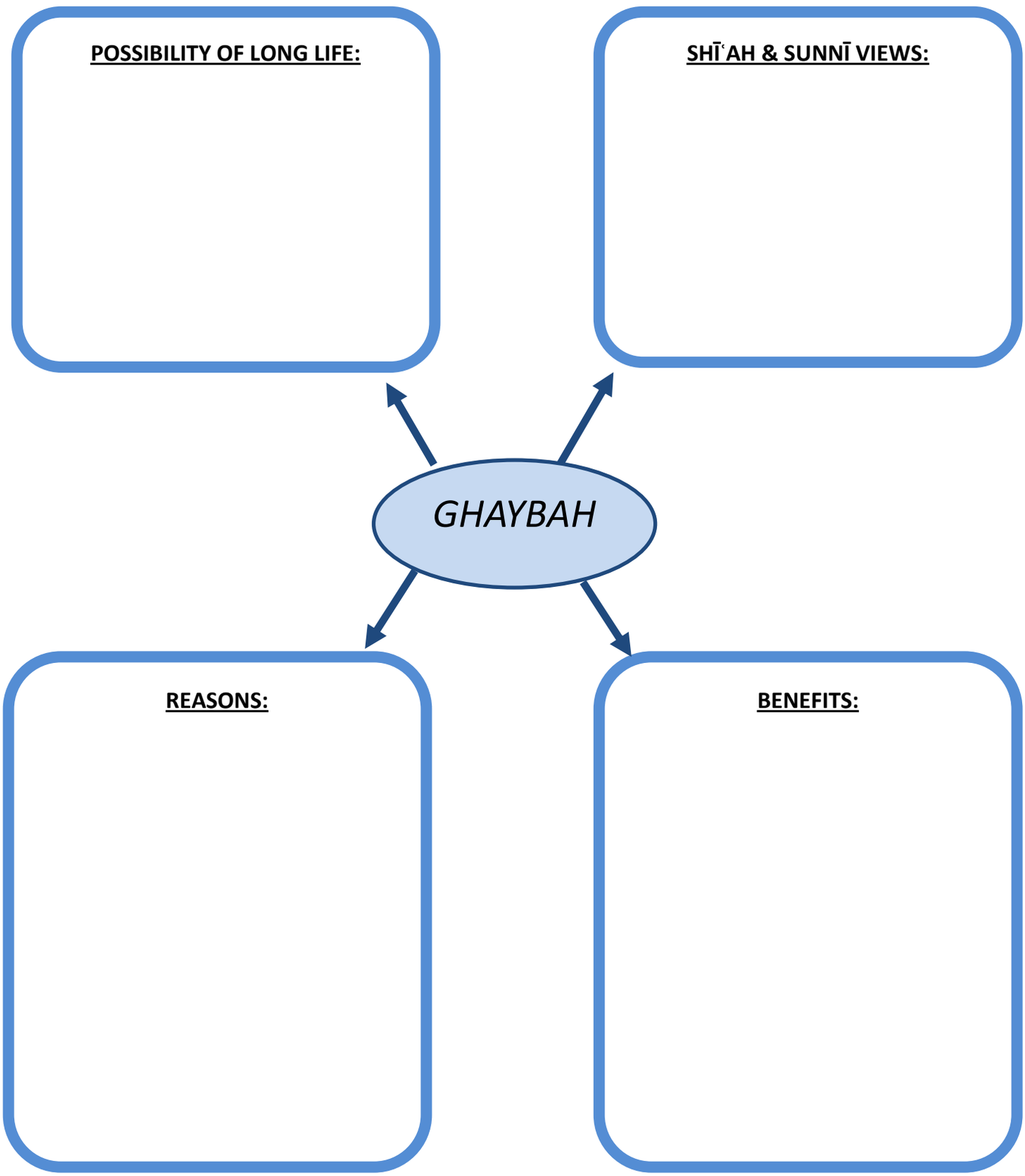
3. From the time of Prophet Ādam (A), there has not been a moment in this world, but that there has been a ḥujjah of Allāh (SWT) present. Without the presence of a ḥujjah of Allāh (SWT), the world cannot continue.

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.



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 ṢALĀT AL-JUMUʿAH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What are the different types of wājib actions?
2. What is the importance of reciting ṣalāt al-jumuʿah?
3. How is ṣalāt al-jumuʿah performed?

MY NOTES

TYPES OF WĀJIB ACTIONS

There are four main types of wājib actions. These are:

1. Wājib ʿaynī

A wājib act that every bāligh and sane Muslim must perform. For example, the 10 Furūʿ al-Dīn (ṣalāh five times a day, ṣawm in the month of Ramaḍān, Ḥajj and so on). These are all wājib ʿaynī.

2. Wājib kifāʾī

A duty that is wājib on every Muslim until one person does it. Then it is no longer wājib on the others. For example, giving ghusl, kafan and burial to a dead Muslim. As long as no one does it, everyone is held responsible. However, once a few Muslims come forward and do it, it is no longer wājib on the others. Another example of wājib kifāʾī is if a Muslim walks into a room and says salām. It is wājib kifāʾī on everyone in the room to reply, but once one person replies, it is no longer wājib on anyone else, even though it is good if they also reply.

3. Wājib fawrī

This is a wājib act that must be done immediately and without delay (i.e. as soon as it becomes wājib). For example, as soon as there is an earthquake or an eclipse, it is wājib on everyone present in that place to pray ṣalat al-āyāt without any delay. Ṣalāt al-āyāt is therefore both wājib ʿaynī and wājib fawrī.



Similarly, as soon as a person has the health, wealth and means to go for his/her wājib Ḥajj, it becomes wājib to go the same year without delay (i.e. wājib fawrī).

When we recite or hear an āyah of the Qurʾān that requires a wājib sajdah, we must perform the sajdah right away because it is wājib fawrī.

4. Wājib takhyīrī

This is a wājib duty where you have a choice. An example of wājib takhyīrī is the choice to pray ṣalāt al-jumuʿah or ṣalāt al-ẓuhr on Fridays. If a person prays ṣalat al-jumuʿah, then he/she doesn't have to pray ṣalat al-ẓuhr and vice versa.

Another example is the choice to either recite taṣbiḥāt al-arbaʿah or sūrat al-Fātiḥah in the 3rd and 4th rakʿah in ṣalāh. We have to choose one, but cannot leave out both.

ACTIVITY

There are four main types of wājib acts. In pairs, give two examples of each.

ṢALĀT AL-JUMUʿAH (THE FRIDAY PRAYER)

Ṣalāt al-jumuʿah is wājib takhyīrī during the ghaybah of Imām al-Mahdī (A).

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾan:

يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِي لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

O believers! When the call is made for prayer on Friday, hurry toward the remembrance of Allāh, and leave all business. That is better for you, should you know. [62:9]

Friday prayer consists of two sermons (khutbahs) followed by a two rakaʿāt ṣalāh. The Imām leading the prayer delivers the sermons whilst standing, with his hands usually resting on a staff. It is iḥṭiyāt wājib to listen to both sermons.

In the first sermon, the Imām praises Allāh (SWT), and asks the people to have taqwā. At the end of this sermon, the Imām recites a short sūrah and then sits down for a pause. He then stands up, and begins the second khutbah by praising Allāh (SWT), Rasūl Allāh (S) and his family (A), and asking Allāh (SWT) to bless them. He also prays for Allāh (SWT) to forgive the people. He may also talk about ethical, social, religious and political issues that concern the Muslim community. Those parts of the sermons that are wājib must be said in Arabic, but the rest can be in the language that the majority of the people attending understand.

After the two sermons, a two rakaʿāt ṣalāh is performed in jamāʿah. There should be at least 5 people present, including the Imām, for ṣalāt al-jumuʿah to be performed. It cannot be performed individually, and there should not be another ṣalāt al-jumuʿah within a 3 mile radius.



DID YOU KNOW?

There are two qunūts in ṣalāt al-jumuʿah. In the first rakaʿāt, the qunūt is done before rukūʿ, and in the second rakʿah, it is done after rukūʿ and before going to sajdah.

It is mustaḥab to recite sūrat al-jumuʿah after sūrat al-Fātiḥah in the first rakʿah, and sūrat al-Munāfiqūn after sūrat al-Fātiḥah in the second rakʿah.

KEY POINTS

1. There are four main types of wājib acts: **wājib ʿaynī**, **wājib kifāʾī**, **wājib fawrī** and **wājib takhyīrī**.

2. **Ṣalāt al-Jumuʿah** (the Friday prayer) is wājib takhyīrī. It consists of two **khutbahs** (sermons) and a two rakʿah ṣalāh. It is iḥtiyāṭ wājib to listen to both sermons.

3. There should be at least 5 people present for ṣalāt al-jumuʿah. It must be prayed in jamāʿah, and cannot be prayed individually.

IN SUMMARY

1. What are the four main types of wājib actions?
2. Define the terms ṣalāt al-jamāʿah and ṣalāt al-jumuʿah.
3. What does the Imām recite in the two khutbahs of ṣalāt al-jumuʿah?
4. What is the minimum number of people required for ṣalāt al-jumuʿah?

02 ṢALĀT AL-ʿĪD

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Significance of the day of ʿĪd
2. Method of performing ṣalāt al-ʿĪd
3. Zakāt al-fiṭrah

MY NOTES

ṢALĀT AL-ʿĪD

Ṣalāt al-ʿĪd is performed on two occasions:

* **ʿĪd al-Fiṭr - on 1st Shawwāl**
* **ʿĪd al-Aḍḥā - on 10th Dhūʾl-Ḥijjah**

Ṣalāt al-ʿĪd is mustaḥab during the ghaybah of the Imām (A). It can be prayed either in jamāʿah (congregation) or furādah (individually).

The time for ṣalāt al-ʿĪd is between sunrise and noon (ẓuhr). It is mustaḥab to perform it immediately after sunrise. It is preferable to pray ṣalāt al-ʿĪd under an open sky. When people have gathered for ṣalāh, instead of reciting the adhān or iqāmah, the muʾadhdhin calls out "**al-ṣalāh**" 3 times and everyone present should rise for the ṣalāh.

1st *rakʿah*	*Sūrat al-Fātiḥah* followed by *sūrat al-Aʿlā,* then *qunūt* 5 times. Then go into *rukūʿ* and *sajdah* as usual and stand up for the 2nd *rakʿah*
2nd *rakʿah*	*Sūrat al-Fātiḥah* followed by *sūrat al-Shams*, then recite *qunūt* 4 times. Then go into *rukūʿ* and *sajdah*, and complete the *ṣalāh* as usual with *tashahhud* and *salām*.

Ṣalāt al-ʿĪd consists of 2 rakaʿāt and 9 qunūt. It is mustaḥab to recite the following duʿāʾ in qunūt:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَهْلَ الكِبْرِيَاءِ وَالعَظَمَة وَاَهْلَ الجُوْدِ وَالجَبَرُوْتِ وَاَهْلَ العَفْوِ وَا لرَّحْمَة وَاَهْلَ التَقْوَى وَالمَغْفِرَة اَسْأَلُكَ بِحَقِ هَذَا اليَومُ الَذِي جَعَلْتَهُ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ عِيدًا وَلِمُحَمَّدٍ صَلَى اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَآلِهِ ذُخْرًا وَشَرَفًا وَكَرَامَةً وَمَزِيدًا اَنْ تُصَلِي عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّد وَاَنْ تُدْخِلَنِي فِي كُلِ خَيرٍ اَدْخَلْتَ فِيهِ مُحَمَّدًا وَآلَ مُحَمَّد وَاَنْ تُخْرِجَنِي مِنْ كُلِ سُوءٍ اَخْرَجْتَ مِنْهُ مُحَمَّدًا وَآلَ مُحَمَّد صَلَوَاتُكَ عَلَيهِ وَعَلَيْهِم. اَللّٰهُمَ اِنِّي اَسْأَلُكَ خَيْرَ مَا سَأَلَكَ بِهِ عِبَادُكَ الصَالِحُوْن وَاَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِمَّا اسْتَعَاذَ مِنْهُ عِبَادُكَ مُخْلِصُوْن

O Allāh, Possessor of Majesty and Greatness! Possessor of Generosity and Might! Possessor of Pardon and Mercy! Possessor of Power and Forgiveness! I ask You, for the sake of this day, which You have made an ʿĪd for the Muslims and for Muḥammad, blessings be on him and his family, a treasure, honour, dignity and more; that You bless Muḥammad and his family, and include me in every good that You have included Muḥammad and his family; and remove me from every evil that You have removed from Muḥammad and his family. Your blessings be on him and on them. O Allāh! I ask You for the best that Your righteous servants ask You for and I seek refuge with You from what Your most sincere servants seek refuge.

ACTIVITY

It is mustaḥab to recite sūrat al-Aʿlā and al-Shams in ṣalāt al-ʿĪd. Read the translation of one of these sūrahs. State any 2 lessons you learn from it.

After the ṣalāh is over, the Imām of jamāʿah should deliver two khutbahs (sermons), just as in ṣalāt al-jumuʿah.

It is ḥarām to fast on either one of these two ʿĪds.

ZAKĀT AL-FIṬR

Zakāt al-fiṭr is wājib charity that has to be given on ʿĪd al-Fiṭr at the end of the month of Ramaḍān. Every bāligh, sane Muslim has to pay the fiṭrah for himself, his dependants and all his guests who spend the eve of ʿĪd at his house. Dependents and guests include children and adults, male or female, Muslim or non-Muslim.



The fiṭrah amount is about **3 kgs** of one's staple food (e.g. wheat or rice), or its value in money, for every person in the house. Fiṭrah should be given with the niyyah of qurbatan ilallāh, any time from maghrib on the eve of ʿĪd until noon on ʿĪd day, but before praying ṣalāt al-ʿīd.

Fiṭrah is wājib and must be given even if one does not offer ṣalāt al-ʿīd, which is mustaḥab. If a person fails to give the fiṭrah before noon on the day of the ʿĪd, he/she should still give it afterwards, with the niyyah of qurbatan ilallāh.

Fiṭrah is given to the poor and needy among the Shīʿah Muslims. The person to whom fiṭrah is given should be genuinely in need, and not be an open sinner. A sayyid cannot receive fiṭrah from a non-sayyid but a non-sayyid can take the fiṭrah from a sayyid.

It is wājib to give fiṭrah to the needy in our own hometown, and it is recommended to give it to our own poor relatives and Shīʿah neighbours. If there is no one in need of fiṭrah in our local community, then we can send it to those further away in other cities or countries. When we give zakāt al-fiṭrah to the needy, we don't have to tell the them what it is or why we are giving it to them.

IN SUMMARY

1. On which two ʿĪd is it mustaḥab to pray ṣalāt al-ʿīd?
2. How many qunūt are there in ṣalāt al-ʿīd?
3. In your own words, state what we ask Allāh (SWT) in qunūt of ṣalāt al-ʿīd.
4. What is zakāt al-fiṭr (fiṭrah)?
5. How much fiṭrah should be given per person? To whom should it be given?

DID YOU KNOW?

It is mustaḥab to do ghusl and wear new clothes on the day of ʿĪd.

It is also mustaḥab to eat something first and then go for ṣalāt al-ʿīd on ʿĪd al-Fiṭr, but pray ṣalāt al-ʿīd first and then eat on the day of ʿĪd al-Aḍḥā.

KEY POINTS

1. It is mustaḥab to recite ṣalāt al-ʿīd on **ʿĪd al-Fiṭr** and **ʿĪd al-aḍḥā**. It consists of 2 rakaʿāt with 5 qunūt in the 1st rakaʿāt and 4 qunūt in the 2nd, followed by 2 sermons.

2. Ṣalāt al-ʿīd can be recited in jamāʿah even though it is a mustaḥab ṣalāt.

3. It is wājib to give **zakāt al-fiṭr** (fiṭrah) on the day of ʿĪd al-fiṭr. We should give 3 kgs of our staple food (or its equivalent in money) per person before noon on the day of ʿĪd.

03 TAYAMMUM

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is tayammum?
2. How is it performed?
3. When is it permissible?
4. On what surfaces can we perform tayammum?

MY NOTES

WHAT IS TAYAMMUM?

Tayammum is wājib when you have no water and you have to perform wuḍūʾ or ghusl. It is a method of purifying oneself in the absence of water.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ...

فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا

فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ

And if you are sick or on a journey…and you cannot find water, then do tayammum on clean ground and wipe a part of your faces and your hands… [5:6]

Tayammum is done on the ground (i.e. earth, sand, stones etc.). As long as dry earth is available, it is wājib to do tayammum on it and not on any other surface. When there is no dry earth then use either sand, dry mud or a lump of clay. If these are also not available then perform tayammum on a stone. If you cannot even find a stone or rock, you can use dust (including the dust that may have settled on a rug or carpet). If that is not found, then a dry mud wall (not painted) can be used.

If snow or ice is available, you can melt it and then it can be used to perform wuḍūʾ or ghusl (as required). If it is not possible to melt it, then tayammum can be done on the ice or snow.

Any obstructions to tayammum (like rings or glasses) should be removed before performing tayammum.

If there is a possibility of getting water a little later but before the time for ṣalāh is over (qaḍāʾ), you should not do tayammum. Instead, you must wait as long as possible to find water until there is only enough time to perform tayammum and pray the ṣalāh.

Qaḍāʾ prayers cannot be performed with tayammum if there is a possibility you will find water later on and will be able to perform the qaḍāʾ prayers with wuḍūʾ.



ACTIVITY

Practical demonstration of tayammum

NIYYĀH

QURBATAN ILALLĀH



STRIKE THE EARTH WITH BOTH HANDS



WIPE FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE HAIRLINE TO THE TIP OF THE NOSE





WIPE THE RIGHT HAND THEN THE LEFT FROM THE WRIST TO THE FINGERTIPS

HOW TO PERFORM TAYAMMUM

Be careful to rub the parts of tayammum in full. If even a little part of the forehead or the back of the hands are not rubbed, the tayammum will be bāṭil.

WHEN DO WE PERFORM TAYAMMUM?

Tayammum must be performed instead of wuḍūʾ or ghusl when:

* There is no water available
* It is not possible to get water, due to illness, weakness, or fear
* It is harmful to one's health
* Using the water available will mean others will have to go without it
* Water is only enough to make the body or clothes ṭāhir
* There isn't enough time to perform wuḍūʾ or ghusl
* The only water available is ghasbī

IN SUMMARY

1. What is tayammum?
2. How is it performed?
3. When is it permissible to do tayammum?
4. On what surfaces can we perform tayammum?
5. Tayammum requires tartīb and muwālāt. What does this mean?

DID YOU KNOW?

Like wuḍūʾ, tayammum has to be done in sequence (**tartīb**) and with continuity (**muwālāt**). If the hands are rubbed before the forehead, the tayammum is bāṭil. Likewise, if there is a long gap of time between rubbing the forehead and the back of the hands, the tayammum is bāṭil and must be redone.

MY NOTES

KEY POINTS

1. **Tayammum** is a method of purifying oneself. It is performed instead of wuḍūʾ or ghusl when water is not available, or can't be used.

2. Tayammum is done on dry ground.

3. Tayammum must be done step by step (tartīb) without delay between the steps (muwālāt). Care must be taken to ensure that every part of tayammum has been rubbed fully.

04 FOOD & DRINK

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1.What are the Islamic laws concerning food and drink?

2.What foods are ḥarām to consume?

MY NOTES

HALĀL AND HARĀM FOODS

Ḥalāl means “allowed” or “lawful”. **Ḥarām** means “forbidden” or “unlawful”.

For food and drinks, anything that a Muslim is not allowed to eat or drink is called ḥarām, and all the rest are ḥalāl.

Examples of ḥarām foods are:

- **Pork** and anything that has an ingredient from pigs in it. For example, lard or pig gelatine.
- **Alcohol** and anything that has alcohol (e.g. wine or beer) in it. It is wājib for a Muslim to leave a gathering where alcohol is being served and it is ḥarām to sit at the same table where alcohol is consumed.
- **Meat of an animal that is ḥarām to eat**, such as the meat of rabbits, cats, dogs, donkeys and all reptiles.



- **Meat of an animal that is ḥalāl but the animal is not slaughtered according to Islamic Law** (called dhabīḥah). For example, a Muslim can eat chicken, cow (beef), camel, lamb, sheep or goat meat but only if the animal was slaughtered according to the sharīʿah.
- **Meat of an animal that died before slaughter**. For example, if a chicken, cow or sheep dies in an accident or due to disease or old age, we cannot eat their meat. The animal has to be alive during dhabīḥah.
- **Fish without visible scales.** It is also ḥarām to eat lobster, crab, squid, octopus, molluscs etc. Prawns and shrimp are ḥalāl to eat.
- **Birds that do not flap their wings** when flying (like eagles and hawks) as well as birds that are **scavengers** (like vultures). We are allowed to eat chicken and turkey as long as they are slaughtered according to sharīʿah.

When we are invited to eat at the house of a Muslim, or if we are eating at a restaurant that we are sure is owned by Muslims, we do not have to ask them about the food and we can assume it is ḥalāl. However if a Muslim restaurant serves alcohol as well, then it is better to avoid it. If a Muslim restaurant owner sells ḥalāl beef but ḥarām chicken meat, we should also not eat there because we cannot trust such a person. When it comes to meat, we have to be extra cautious and sure that what we eating is ḥalāl.

ACTIVITY

In pairs, make a list of common animals, birds and seafood that are not ḥalāl to eat.

LAWS OF SLAUGHTERING ANIMALS

An animal whose flesh is ḥalāl, and slaughtered in the prescribed Islamic way is considered lawful (ḥalāl) and can be eaten.

The person who slaughters an animal must be a sane, adult, Muslim, male or female. Even a child may slaughter an animal as long as he or she is of an age to be able to distinguish good from evil.

Slaughtering should be performed with an instrument made from iron or steel, and it must be sharp.

The animal should be placed on its side (or held up on its rear) in such a manner that the front of its head, its four legs and belly face the qiblah at the time of slaughter. It is not necessary that the animal should be exactly facing the qiblah. An approximate direction would suffice. The person slaughtering the animal must also face qiblah and recite bismillāh (in the name of Allāh), preferably in Arabic.

The slaughterer should cut through the four main blood vessels of the animal's neck, cleanly and completely. It is also necessary that after the blood vessels have been cut the animal should move, even if it only moves its eyes or tail, in order to prove that it was not dead before being slaughtered.

Slaughtering an animal where other animals can look on, or slaughtering an animal one has bred and raised oneself is makrūh.



DID YOU KNOW?

When you don't know for sure if something is najis or not, you can assume it is ṭāhir e.g. fruits and vegetables. But in the case of meat, you must be 100% sure it is ḥalāl and ṭāhir. If you are doubtful, you cannot eat it.

It is ḥarām to eat or drink from containers made of real gold or silver, but if the dish is only gold or silver-plated or mixed with other materials then it is not ḥarām. If the food in a gold or silver dish is transferred into a different dish, it can be eaten.

IN SUMMARY

1. Which animals are ḥalāl for us to eat?
2. What are the conditions for beef to be ḥalāl?
3. What types of seafood are we allowed to eat? Which ones are we not allowed to eat?
4. What is dhabīḥah?
5. What conditions are required for the slaughter instrument?

KEY POINTS

1) Muslims must only eat ḥalāl food. When you don't know whether something is ṭāhir or not, you can assume it is ṭāhir, except in the case of meat and meat products. In these cases, you must be sure it is ḥalāl before you can eat it.

2) The Islamic slaughter method is called **dhabīḥah**. The animal must be placed facing qiblah, and the person slaughtering must face qiblah and recite bismillāh before slaughtering.

05 RADD AL-MAẒĀLIM

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is radd al-maẓālim?
2. What is Luqaṭah?

MY NOTES

WHAT IS RADD AL-MAẒĀLIM?

Radd = to return
Maẓālim = to acquire something unlawfully

Radd al-maẓālim is to return property which is acquired unlawfully to its rightful owner.

Property may be acquired unlawfully if:

* It is stolen
* It is borrowed and not returned
* It is taken without the permission of the owner
* A person takes more than his/her share

Anything acquired unlawfully must be returned to its rightful owner. If the item is not longer available (e.g. fruits picked and eaten from someone's garden without permission), agree on a fair amount with the owner and pay him/her.

In some cases, the owner may be unknown or no longer present. In such cases, the property must be given to a mujtahid who will give it in ṣadaqah on behalf of the owner. Alternatively, the person who has the unlawfully acquired item can give it in charity after getting permission to do so from a mujtahid.

After returning the property to its rightful owner, or giving it in ṣadaqah on behalf of the owner if he/she is not known or not present, the person who had acquired the property unlawfully must do tawbah and ask Allāh (SWT) for forgiveness.



GROUP ACTIVITY

Does Islam agree with the notion "finders keepers"?

LOST AND FOUND PROPERTY

The word **luqaṭah** is used with reference to lost and found property whose owner is not known. Luqaṭah differs with maẓālim because the person has simply found the lost property and has not acquired it unlawfully.

If you find lost property on the street or in a public place, try and find the owner by announcing it and asking around. If after a while you lose hope of finding the owner, give it away in charity with the intention that the real owner will be rewarded for giving it in charity. You too will be rewarded for your honesty and for spending it in charity on behalf of the owner.

If it is a large sum of money or an expensive item that someone may come looking for at the local police station and you trust that the police will act faithfully, then hand it over to the police.

If it is within a premise, give it to someone in charge. For example, at a masjid, give it to the masjid administrators; at a shopping mall, hand it over to the lost-and-found department; at a school, give it to the office; at a bank or commercial store, give it to the customer service department OR bank manager, etc.



DID YOU KNOW?

Islam does not allow us to use anything without the owner's permission. Items taken without permission from the owner are known as ghasbī. It is not even permissible to pray in a place or do wuḍūʾ with water without the owner's permission.

KEY POINTS

1. **Radd al-maẓālim** means returning property which is acquired unlawfully to its rightful owner.

2. Property can be acquired unlawfully by stealing, not returning borrowed items, taking more than one's fair share, taking something without the owner's permission and so on.

3. **Luqaṭah** refers to lost and found property.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the meaning of radd al-maẓālim?
2. How can property be acquired unlawfully?
3. What should we do with property whose owner is not known?
4. What is the meaning of luqaṭah?
5. How does it differ from radd al-maẓālim?

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 MŪSĀ (A) (PART 1)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Who were the Banū Isrāʾīl? How did they come to Egypt?
2. Who was Firʿawn?
3. The birth of Nabī Mūsā (A)
4. Nabī Mūsā (A) meets Nabī Shuʿayb (A)

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Nabī Yaʿqūb (A) was also known as Isrāʾīl, and his descendants were called Banū Isrāʾīl (The children of Isrāʾīl).

Nabī Yaʿqūb (A) lived in Palestine He had 12 sons, one of the youngest son was Nabī Yūsuf (A).

Nabī Yūsuf (A) was thrown into a well by his brothers. He was then rescued and taken to Egypt, where he eventually became the governor.

ACTIVITY

Read the translation of verses 20: 17 - 36. State two miracles that Allāh (SWT) gave to Nabī Mūsā (A), and two instructions that were given to him.

THE BIRTH OF NABĪ MŪSĀ (A)

Many years after Nabī Yūsuf (A) passed away, Egypt was ruled by the Pharaohs. During this period, many of the people living in Egypt were not originally Egyptian. They were the descendants of Nabī Yaʿqūb (A), and had settled in Egypt after Nabī Yūsuf (A) became governor of Egypt. They were called Banū Isrāʾīl (the Children of Isrāʾīl).

Firʿawn enslaved the Banū Isrāʾīl so that they would never become powerful. He made them work very hard, and they lived in poor conditions. Their population had increased to such an extent that they outnumbered the Egyptians, and Firʿawn was worried they would overthrow him.

The Banū Isrāʾīl believed that one day a boy would be born who would save them and destroy Firʿawn. Firʿawn therefore ordered his soldiers to kill any baby boy born amongst the Banū Isrāʾīl.

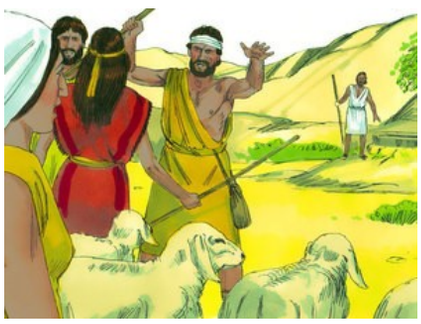


The child that the Banū Isrāʾīl were waiting for was Nabī Mūsā (A). When Nabī Mūsā (A) was born, his mother placed him in a basket and put the basket in the river Nile to save him from being killed by Firʿawn. The basket floated down the river and was washed ashore at Firʿawn's palace. Firʿawn's wife Āsiyah saw the baby boy in the basket and begged Firʿawn to let her keep him, as she had no children of her own.

Word then spread round that Lady Āsiyah was looking for a nanny to nurse the baby boy. When Nabī Mūsā's mother heard this, she came to the palace and asked to be employed as a nanny, and through Allāh's will, Nabī Mūsā (A) was reunited with his mother.

Nabī Mūsā (A) grew up into a strong young man. He always tried to help the Banū Isrāʾīl, who were treated very harshly by Firʿawn. One day, he saw an Egyptian beating a slave from the Banū Isrāʾīl. Nabī Mūsā (A) tried to stop the Egyptian but he wouldn't listen, so he punched the Egyptian, who fell down and died. When Firʿawn heard about this incident, he was very angry. He could not tolerate anyone killing an Egyptian to defend the Banū Isrāʾīl, who were his slaves. He ordered his soldiers to arrest Nabī Mūsā (A). Nabī Mūsā (A) fled Egypt to escape Firʿawn and travelled to Madyan.

NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) MEETS NABĪ SHUʿAYB (A)



When Nabī Mūsā (A) arrived in Madyan, he came across a water hole where the shepherds had brought their livestock for water. He noticed that there were some ladies who had also brought their animals but could not get to the water hole. He therefore helped them water their animals. When they found out that he was new in town and had nowhere to go, they invited him to their home. Nabī Mūsā (A) followed them to their house, where he met their father, Nabī Shuʿayb (A).

Nabī Shuʿayb (A) was impressed with Nabī Mūsā's character, and invited him to stay. Nabī Mūsā (A) asked for one of Nabī Shuʿayb's daughters in marriage, and in return, he would work for Nabī Shuʿayb (A) for 10 years.

After ten years had passed, he left Madyan with his family, and started travelling through the desert back to Egypt. On the way, it was very cold one night, and Nabī Mūsā (A) saw a fire in the distance. He asked his family to wait, while he went to fetch some fire to keep them warm.

As he got closer to the fire, he noticed that the flames were coming from a burning bush, but the bush was not on fire! He then heard a voice saying:

يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ فَاخْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ ۖ إِنَّكَ بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى

وَأَنَا اخْتَرْتُكَ فَاسْتَمِعْ لِمَا يُوحَىٰ

...'O Moses! Indeed I am your Lord! So take off your sandals. You are indeed in the sacred valley of Ṭuwā. I have chosen you; so listen to what is revealed. [20:11-13]

This was the start of Nabī Mūsā's mission to guide Firʿawn and his people.

DID YOU KNOW?

Lady Āsiyah, the wife of Firʿawn, together with Sayyidah Maryam (mother of Nabī ʿĪsā), Sayyidah Khadījah (wife of Rasūl Allāh) and Sayyidah Fāṭimah al-Zahrāʾ (A) are the four foremost women of Paradise.

KEY POINTS

1. The Banū Isrāʾīl were the descendants of Nabī Yaʿqūb (A). They were from Palestine and had settled in Egypt after Nabī Yūsuf (A) became governor.

2. Firʿawn and the Egyptians treated the Banū Isrāʾīl very harshly, and killed their baby boys.

3. When Nabī Mūsā (A) was born, his mother placed him in a basket and put him in the river Nile to save him from being killed by Firʿawn.

4. Nabī Mūsā (A) grew up in Firʿawn's palace but did not like the way the Banū Isrāʾīl were treated. One day he tried to defend a man who was being beaten. The cruel Egyptian was killed in the scuffle, and Nabī Mūsā (A) had to leave Egypt for Madyan to save his life.

IN SUMMARY

1. Who were the Banū Isrāʾīl?
2. How did Nabī Mūsā (A) end up in Firʿawn's palace?
3. Why did he have to leave Egypt and go to Madyan?
4. Who did he meet in Madyan? Why did he have to stay there for 10 years?
5. What did Allāh (SWT) say to him from the burning bush?

01 HARD WORK

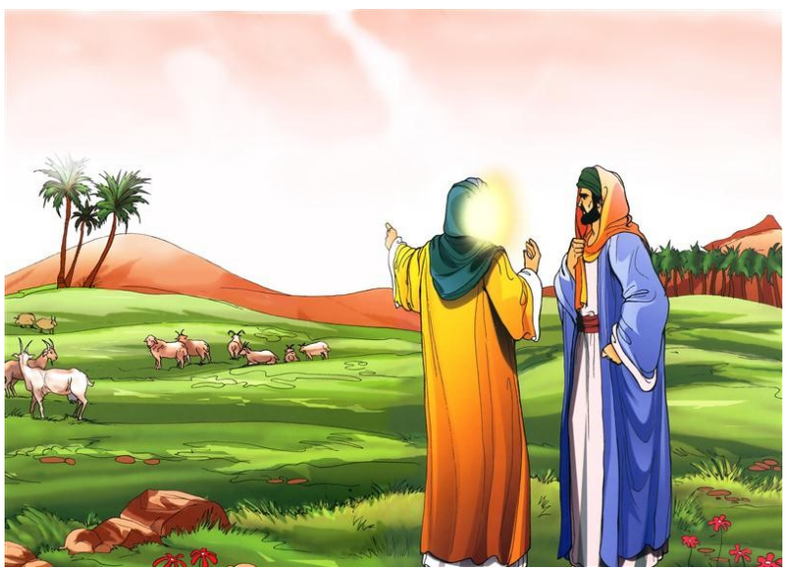
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the importance of hard work
2. Understand the importance of earning a ḥalāl livelihood

MY NOTES

IMPORTANCE OF EARNING A ḤALĀL LIVELIHOOD

Islam teaches us to be hardworking individuals. Allāh (SWT) does not like those who are dependent on others due to laziness.



Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) was once busy working on his farm on a hot sunny day, wearing working clothes with spade in hand, when one of his companions, Abū ʿUmr Shaibānī arrived. Seeing the Imām (A) drenched in perspiration because of the heat and labour, he said, **"Let me help you finish this work."** The Imām (A) said, **"No. I like working on the farm with my own hands. It is necessary for man to face the heat of the sun and feel the exhaustion of earning one's own living."**

Allāh (SWT) does not help those who just pray all day and do not work to earn a living.



An extremely worried man once visited Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) and begged him to pray that Allāh (SWT) would increase his sustenance and relieve him of all financial difficulties. The Imām answered: **"I shall certainly not pray for you."**

The poor man asked, **"Why not? What have I done?"**

The Imām replied, **"You know perfectly well that Allāh (SWT) has given us means of attaining success. He has ordered you to leave your house and earn a living through hard work. You refuse to work hard and foolishly hope praying for you will bring you prosperity."**

ACTIVITY

State 3 qualities of a hardworking person and 3 qualities of a lazy person.

WE SHOULD NOT BE A BURDEN ON OTHERS

Rasūl Allāh (S) was once travelling through the desert with his companions. The journey had been long and tiresome. Finally, they reached an oasis, and everyone eagerly stopped to refresh themselves and rest. After getting off his camel, Rasūl Allāh (S) also started walking towards the water, but then turned back towards his camel. Everyone thought he had changed his mind about stopping at the oasis and was going to continue with the journey.

They were waiting for the call to remount, when to their surprise, they saw Rasūl Allāh (S) tying his camel. After doing this, he returned to his companions. The companions said, **"O Messenger of Allāh, why did you not let one of us perform that task for you instead of going all the way back to do it yourself? We are always on the lookout to do something for you and feel honoured, but you never give us a chance."**

Rasūl Allāh (S) answered:

"It is unwise to depend on others, or ask for their help in anything you can do yourself, be it as small as getting a green twig to brush your teeth. You must consider your work to be your duty, and not become a burden on others."



IN SUMMARY

1. What did Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) say when his companion offered to help him finish the work on the farm?
2. Why did Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) refuse to pray for the poor man who came to him asking him to pray for him?
3. What did Rasūl Allāh (S) do to teach his companions to be independent and not become a burden on others?
4. What are the qualities of a hardworking person?

DID YOU KNOW?

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān that He has created us to worship him. However, worship does not only refer to praying and fasting. Working hard to earn a living or to help others is also an act of worship.

MY NOTES

KEY POINTS

1. Islam teaches us to be hard working individuals.

2. We must work hard to earn a ḥalāl livelihood, without cheating, stealing or earning 'easy' money through ḥarām means.

3. We must do as much as we can ourselves, and not become a burden on others.

4. Allāh (SWT) does not help those who are lazy and don't want to work hard.

02 QIṢAṢ AL-ANBIYĀʾ: NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) (PART 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Allāh (SWT) sends Nabī Mūsā (A) and Nabī Hārūn (A) to guide Firʿawn and his people
2. Nabī Mūsā (A)'s miracles
3. Allāh (SWT) saves the Banū Isrāʾīl from Firʿawn

DUʿĀʾ

When *Nabī* Mūsā (A) spoke to Allāh (SWT) through the burning bush, he asked this *duʿāʾ*:

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي
وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي
وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي
يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي

My Lord! Open my chest for me. Make my affair easy for me. Grant me clarity of speech. So that they may understand my words. [20:25-28]

ACTIVITY

Read verses 7:113 - 114. What did the magicians want from Firʿawn? How did he respond to them?

NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) AND NABĪ HĀRŪN (A)'S MISSION

When Allāh (SWT) spoke to Nabī Mūsā (A) at the burning bush, He instructed him to go and guide Firʿawn



اذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ

Go to Pharaoh. He has indeed rebelled. [20:24]

Nabī Mūsā (A) asked Allāh (SWT) to appoint his brother Hārūn (A) to assist him in this mission. Nabī Mūsā (A) and Nabī Hārūn (A) then went together to Egypt to guide Firʿawn and the Egyptians. When they reached Firʿawn's palace, Nabī Mūsā (A) said to him:

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يَا فِرْعَوْنُ إِنِّي رَسُولٌ مِنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Moses said, "O Pharaoh, I am indeed an apostle from the Lord of all the worlds." [7:104]

قَالَ إِنْ كُنْتَ جِئْتَ بِآيَةٍ فَأْتِ بِهَا إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ

He (Firʿawn) said, "If you have brought a sign, produce it, should you be truthful." [7:106]

Nabī Mūsā (A) then showed Firʿawn his miracles to prove he was indeed Allāh (SWT)'s Messenger. He threw his staff down and it became a snake. Then he took out his hand from his armpit and it was shining bright. Firʿawn said, "This is only magic. It is not a miracle from Allāh. I am god."

Firʿawn called the best magicians in Egypt to challenge Nabī Mūsā (A). The magicians threw pieces of rope on the ground, and made them appear as snakes through magic. Nabī Mūsā (A) then threw his staff down and it became a huge snake and ate up all the pieces of rope. The magicians were surprised to see this miracle. They knew this was from Allāh (SWT) and it was not magic.

قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ رَبِّ مُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ

They said, "We have believed in the Lord of all the worlds, the Lord of Mūsā and Hārūn." [7:121-122]

This made Firʿawn very angry, He threatened to cut their limbs if they did not accept him as god, but the magicians refused to give up their belief in Allāh (SWT), so he ordered his guards to kill them by cutting off their limbs.

NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) SAVES THE BANŪ ISRĀʾĪL FROM FIRʿAWN

Allāh (SWT) then sent many punishments to Firʿawn and his people for rejecting Allāh (SWT)'s message even after clear proof had come to them. There were locusts and lice and frogs everywhere, and they started dying of disease. Their water turned to blood, and so on. Nabī Mūsā (A) gave Banū Isrāʾīl the good news that they were no longer slaves and it was time for them to be free. He gathered them all in the middle of the night and they left Egypt.



When Firʿawn woke up in the morning, he realized the Banū Isrāʾīl had left and there were no slaves to do any work for him. He called his soldiers and started following Nabī Mūsā (A) and the Banū Isrāʾīl, determined to kill them all.

When Nabī Mūsā (A) and his people reached the sea, they were stuck as they had no way of crossing over. Firʿawn's army was fast approaching, and the Banū Isrāʾīl were terrified. Nabī Mūsā (A) then miraculously parted the sea, and the Banū Isrāʾīl escaped.

Firʿawn was very proud. After seeing this wonderful miracle, instead of asking Allāh (SWT) to forgive him, he decided he would still chase Nabī Mūsā (A) and the Banū Isrāʾīl and kill them. He ordered everyone to go in and follow the same path in the sea.

When Firʿawn and his army reached the middle of the sea, Nabī Mūsā (A), Nabī Hārūn (A) and the Banū Isrāʾīl had finished crossing it. The parted waters of the sea came together again, drowning Firʿawn and his men.

As Firʿawn was drowning, he tried to save himself by saying, "Now I believe in Allāh, the Lord of Mūsā!" but it was too late now. He drowned and died with the rest of his army. His body has been preserved for all to see that he was just a mortal like everyone else.

IN SUMMARY

1. Who did Nabī Mūsā (A) ask for to help him in his mission?
2. What miracles did Nabī Mūsā (A) show Firʿawn?
3. Why did Firʿawn punish the magicians?
4. What punishments did Allāh (SWT) send on Firʿawn and his people for rejecting Allāh (SWT)'s message?
5. How did Firʿawn die?

DID YOU KNOW?

Rasūl Allāh (S) said on many occasions that Allāh (SWT) had appointed Imām ʿAlī (A) to assist him just as he had appointed Nabī Hārūn (A) to assist Nabī Mūsā (A).

KEY POINTS

1. Allāh (SWT) sent Nabī Mūsā (A) to guide Firʿawn and his people.
2. Nabī Mūsā (A) asked Allāh (SWT) to appoint Nabī Hārūn (A) to assist him in his mission.
3. Nabī Mūsā (A) told Firʿawn to believe in Allāh (SWT) but he refused, saying he was god.
4. Allāh (SWT) sent punishments to Firʿawn and his people, but they continued disbelieving
5. Allāh (SWT) then told Nabī Mūsā (A) to lead the Banū Isrāʾīl out of Egypt. Nabī Mūsā (A) parted the sea to make way for them to escape.
6. Firʿawn followed them, but the waters closed in in his army and they drowned.

02 OPPRESSION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Islam teaches us not to oppress others
2. We must not support the oppressors

MY NOTES

WE MUST NOT SUPPORT THE OPPRESSORS

Ṣafwān was a companion of Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A). He lived during the reign of the ʿAbbāsid caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd who hated the Ahl al-Bayt (A). He misused the wealth of the Muslims for his own enjoyment, drank alcohol and had singers and dancers perform before him. He would never show mercy to others and severely punished anyone who opposed him.

One year, Hārūn decided to go for Hajj to Makkah to show people he was a good Muslim. He decided to travel with all his ministers and officials, and wanted to take a lot of food, clothes and money with him so he needed many camels to help carry all his possessions.

Ṣafwān owned camels and used to rent them out, so Hārūn asked to rent all his camels for the trip from Baghdad to Makkah. Hārūn promised to give Ṣafwān a large sum of money for renting his camels upon his return. Ṣafwān knew that if he refused Hārūn, he would either kill him or take all his camels away by force, so he agreed to rent out his camels.



After a few days, Ṣafwān visited Imām al-Kāẓim (A). Imām received him with honour and said, "O Ṣafwān! All your deeds are good and I am pleased with you, except for one deed."

Ṣafwān was surprised and asked Imām what that action was that made him unhappy. Imām said, "You are renting your camels to Hārūn and he will use them to carry wealth that belongs to Muslims to entertain himself and for his own sinful habits."

Ṣafwān was surprised. How did the Imām know this? He said, "I didn't rent my camels with the intention of supporting any sin. I rented them for ḥajj. I won't accompany the caravan myself. My workers will go with them."

Imām then asked him, "Do you hope for Hārūn's well-being and safe return so that he can pay you for the camels?"

Ṣafwān said, "Yes, I wish he does return from ḥajj and pay me."

Imām said, "No one wishes for the well-being of such an evil tyrant except someone who is evil like him."

Ṣafwān realised his mistake. He apologised to the Imām and decided to sell all his camels so that he would not be forced to loan them to Hārūn. When Hārūn came

ACTIVITY

Read the story of Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A)'s companion Ṣafwān. What lessons can we learn from his story?

MY NOTES

to know that Ṣafwān had sold his camels, he summoned him to his palace and said angrily, "Ṣafwān! I understand you have sold all your camels! Why did you do that?"



"Well," said Ṣafwān, "I am now getting old and cannot look after them. I find it too difficult and tiring."

Hārūn shouted, "Get out of here! I know who gave you this idea. It is my enemy Mūsā ibn Jaʿfar who does not want you to support me in anything. Get out of my palace quickly before I have you killed!" Ṣafwān left, smiling to himself and pleased that he had been brave and done the right thing by not supporting a tyrant.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT WAYS IN WHICH OPPRESSION OCCURS?

The Aʾimmah (A) have taught us that oppressing others, helping the oppressors as well as not helping the oppressed, are all great sins.

Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A) has said, **"To participate in the activities of the oppressors, to endeavour to achieve their evil objectives and to help them is equal to infidelity and to knowingly lean towards them is a greater sin and deserves Hell."**

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَلَا تَرْكَنُوا إِلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ

And do not incline toward the oppressors, lest the Fire (of Hell) should touch you... [11:113]

In the above verse, the phrase 'do not incline' means we must not have the slightest inclination towards oppressors. We must not treat them honourably, mix with them freely or show affection towards them. We must not be greedy for their gifts, nor should we praise or obey them.

There are two main categories of oppression (ẓulm): Oppression against one's own soul and oppression against others.

Being oppressive against one's own soul happens when one disobeys Allāh (SWT)'s commands and commits sins. Oppression against others is not only carried out by tyrant rulers. There are many acts that are oppressive, such as insulting, abusing, bullying, backbiting, falsely accusing or physically hurting people. Taking away someone's property and not returning it is also considered a form of oppression.

02 OPPRESSION

DID YOU KNOW?

Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) has said:

On the day of Qiyāmah an announcer will call: Where are the unjust, the helpers of the unjust and those who liked the unjust? So much so that even if one has brought merely pen and ink for the oppressor to write the order of oppression; all these people would be bundled up in a cage of iron and thrown into Hell.

When we see oppression taking place, we must do all we can to stop it. Rasūl Allāh (S) once said, **"Help your fellow Muslims whether they are an oppressor or the oppressed ones."**

People asked, "O Messenger of Allāh (SWT)! We shall help the oppressed ones, but how is it possible to help the oppressor?"

He replied, **"Hold both their hands so that they cannot oppress others. If you do that, it is as if you have helped them, and such an action is a help to your brothers (in faith)."**



KEY POINTS

1. Islam teaches us that oppressing others, helping oppressors and not helping the oppressed are all major sins.

2. There are many different ways in which oppression takes place. Oppression against one's own soul occurs when a person disobeys Allāh (SWT) and sins.

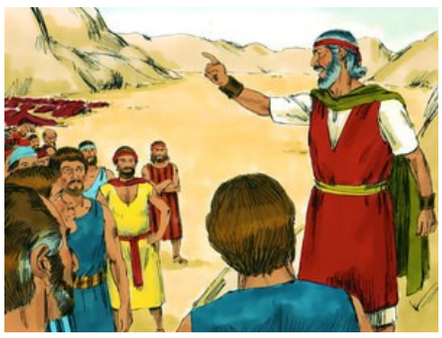
3. Insulting, abusing, bullying, backbiting, falsely accusing others, physically hurting people and taking away their property are all examples of oppression against others.

IN SUMMARY

1. What are the different ways in which one can oppress others?
2. What is oppression against one's own soul?
3. Why should we not help those who are oppressive to others?
4. What should we do when we see someone being bullied?
5. What advice did Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A) give to his companion Ṣafwān when he lent his camels to the tyrant caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd?

QIṢAṢ AL-ANBIYĀʾ: NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) (PART 3) 03

NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) RECEIVES THE TAWRĀH



Nabī Mūsā (A) and Nabī Hārūn (A) thanked Allāh (SWT) for saving them from Firʿawn. Allāh (SWT) now told them to take the Banū Isrāʾīl to a new land. He also asked Nabī Mūsā (A) to go up Mount Sinai to receive a new divine book containing guidance for the Banū Isrāʾīl. This Book was the Tawrāh.

Nabī Mūsā (A) told the Banū Isrāʾīl to wait at the foot of the mountain for 30 days under the leadership of Nabī Hārūn (A) while he went up to get the new laws from Allāh (SWT). After 30 days, Allāh (SWT) told Nabī Mūsā (A) to wait for 10 more days before returning to his people. Allāh (SWT) wanted to test the Banū Isrāʾīl. In the meantime, a man amongst the Banū Isrāʾīl called Sāmirī told the Banū Isrāʾīl that Nabī Mūsā (A) had lied to them and he was not going to come back. He told them not to listen to Nabī Hārūn (A). Instead he made for them a calf out of gold and told them to start worshipping it.

Nabī Hārūn (A) tried to stop them but they would not listen to him. When Nabī Mūsā (A) returned with the Tawrāh after 40 days, he was shocked to see that the Banū Isrāʾīl had stopped worshipping Allāh (SWT) and were now worshipping a golden calf. He told the Banū Isrāʾīl to burn the golden calf and ask Allāh (SWT) for forgiveness.

وَإِذْ وَاعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ

And when We made an appointment with Moses for forty nights, you worshipped the calf in his absence, and you were wrongdoers. [2:51]

Nabī Mūsā (A) then led the Banū Isrāʾīl to the new land they were promised, but they found other people living there as well and so refused to go there.

يَا قَوْمِ ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ

"O my people, enter the Holy Land which Allāh has ordained for you, and do not turn your backs or you will become losers." [5:21]

قَالُوا يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ وَإِنَّا لَنْ نَدْخُلَهَا حَتَّىٰ يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِنَّا دَاخِلُونَ

They said, "O Moses, there are a tyrannical people in it. We will not enter it until they leave it. But once they leave it, we will go in." [5:22]

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Tawrāh is revealed to Nabī Mūsā (A)
2. Banū Isrāʾīl continue to disobey Allāh (SWT) and His prophets
3. Allāh (SWT) sends numerous prophets and divine books to guide the Banū Isrāʾīl.

MY NOTES

GROUP ACTIVITY

In small groups, recite verse 2:61 and read its translation. What 3 lessons can we learn from this verse?

03 QIṢAṢ AL-ANBIYĀʾ: NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) (PART 3)

DID YOU KNOW?

Nabī Mūsā (A) has been given the title Kalīm Allāh because he conversed with Allāh (SWT) through the burning bush.

BANŪ ISRĀʾĪL CONTINUE TO DISOBEY ALLĀH (SWT)

قَالُوا يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنَّا لَنْ نَدْخُلَهَا أَبَدًا مَا دَامُوا فِيهَا ۖ فَاذْهَبْ أَنْتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَاتِلَا إِنَّا هَاهُنَا قَاعِدُونَ

They (Banū Isrāʾīl) said, "O Moses, we will never enter (the Holy land) so long as (the other people) remain in it. Go ahead, you and your Lord, and fight! We will be sitting right here." [5:24]

Q: What does this verse indicate about Banū Isrāʾīl's attitude?

Allāh (SWT) then told Nabī Mūsā (A) to take the Banū Isrāʾīl to the desert where they lived for another 40 years. Allāh (SWT) was very kind to the Banū Isrāʾīl. Even in the desert, He would send food to them from the heavens, but they kept disobeying Him.

After Nabī Mūsā (A) and Nabī Hārūn (A) died, Allāh (SWT) sent many other Prophets to guide the Banū Isrāʾīl, including Nabī Dāwūd (A), Nabī Sulāyman (A), Nabī Zakariyyah (A), Nabī Yaḥyā (A), and Nabī ʿĪsāʾ (A). Allāh (SWT) also revealed other Books – the Zabūr to Nabī Dāwūd (A) and the Injīl to Nabī ʿĪsāʾ (A) to guide the Banū Isrāʾīl. However, many of them refused to accept Nabī ʿĪsāʾ (A) as Allāh (SWT)'s Prophet.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ ۖ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ ۗ أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰ أَنْفُسُكُمُ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ

Certainly We gave Moses the Book, and followed him with the apostles, and We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, manifest proofs, and confirmed him with the Holy Spirit. Is it not that whenever an apostle brought you (the Banū Isrāʾīl) that which was not to your liking, you would act arrogantly; so you would question their

KEY POINTS

1. After saving the Banū Isrāʾīl from Firʿawn, Allāh (SWT) called Nabī Mūsā (A) to Mount Sinai to give him the Tawrāh.
2. Before heading for Mount Sinai, Nabī Mūsā (A) left the Banū Isrāʾīl under the guidance of Nabī Hārūn (A).
3. When Nabī Mūsā (A) came back with the Tawrāh, he saw Banū Isrāʾīl worshipping a golden calf. He told them to burn the calf and ask Allāh (SWT) for forgiveness.
4. He then led them to the promised land, but they refused to enter it because other people were living there as well. Allāh (SWT) then made them live in the desert for 40 years.
5. Allāh (SWT) blessed the Banū Isrāʾīl with many bounties and sent many prophets to guide them, but they continued disobeying Allāh (SWT).

IN SUMMARY

1. Why did Allāh (SWT) call Nabī Mūsā (A) to Mount Sinai?
2. Why did Allāh (SWT) ask Nabī Mūsā (A) to stay on the mountain for 10 more days before returning to the Banū Isrāʾīl?
3. What did the Banū Isrāʾīl do in the absence of Nabī Mūsā (A)?
4. Why did the Banū Isrāʾīl refuse to enter the promised land?
5. Name any 5 Prophets Allāh (SWT) sent to guide the Banū Isrāʾīl.

SHUKR AND QANĀʿAH

03

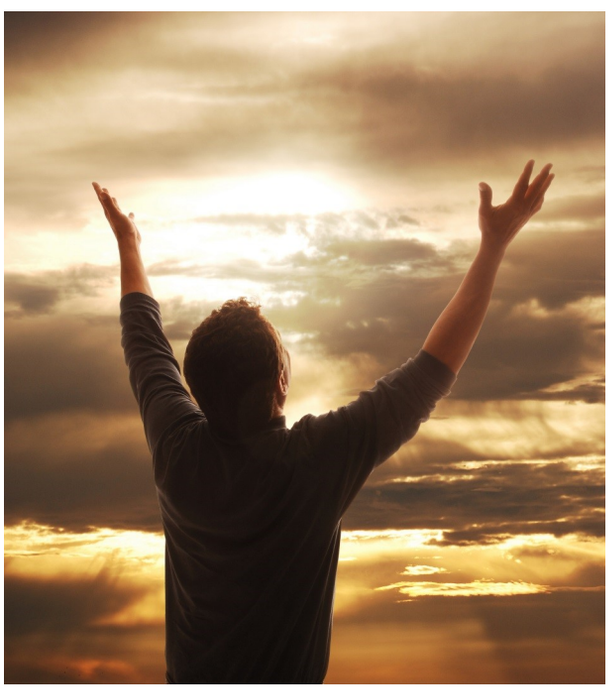
THANKING ALLĀH (SWT) FOR ALL HIS BLESSINGS AND BOUNTIES

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلاَ تَكْفُرُونِ

… and thank Me, and do not be ungrateful to Me. [2:152]

Everything we are and everything we have are from the blessings of Allāh (SWT). We must therefore acknowledge His bounties and be thankful to Him. If people do not thank us for something we do for them, we feel they are being ungrateful or rude. Similarly, it is a sign of being ungrateful when we don't thank Allāh (SWT). Even worse is when we keep expressing dissatisfaction with what we have and keep wishing we had more.



In Arabic, thanking Allāh is called "**shukr**" and it can be expressed by saying "al-ḥamdu lillāh" (All praise belongs to Allāh) or by saying "shukran lillāh" (all thanks is to Allāh (SWT)). Contentment is called "**qanāʿah**". Qanāʿah means to be pleased with what Allāh (SWT) has given us. Of course, it is not wrong to pray to Allāh (SWT) for more or to work hard to get more, but it should never be done with a sense of dissatisfaction. People who are always complaining that life has been unfair to them lack qanāʿah.

Allāh (SWT) tells us that if we thank Him, He will give us more but if we are ungrateful, we will only earn His wrath and punishment:

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ

And when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you (in blessing), but if you are ungrateful, My punishment is indeed severe.' [14:7]

It is important to keep in mind that Allāh (SWT) has nothing to gain or lose whether we thank Him or not. He insists that we thank Him for our own good because the more we thank our Creator and appreciate His presence in our lives, the more we grow spiritually and get closer to Him.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is shukr?
2. How should we thank Allāh (SWT)?
3. What is qanāʿah?

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Read verses 7:10 and 67:23 What do these two verses have in common?

MY NOTES

وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ

…and whoever gives thanks, gives thanks only for his own sake. And whoever is ungrateful, (let him know that) Allāh is indeed all-sufficient, praiseworthy. [31:12]

This principle applies even when we thank another person. The person who is thanked does not benefit from it, but the one who thanks others appears grateful. Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) has said that the most honourable person before Allāh (SWT) is the one who thanks Allāh when he is blessed and is patient when he is tested (with suffering).

WE MUST THANK ALLĀH (SWT) AT ALL TIMES

Once a group of people came to Imām ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (A) and claimed they were his Shīʿah. The Imām asked them what they did when they received something nice. They replied that they thanked Allāh (SWT).

The Imām then asked them what they did when something nice was taken away from them. They said they got upset, but came to terms with the loss. The Imām then asked what they did when they got nothing. Puzzled, they replied that they did nothing.

Imām said that these were not the actions of his Shīʿah but those of a dog: When dogs are given something, they wag their tails in thanks. When something is taken away from them they bark to complain, then walk away. When they get nothing, they do nothing.

Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (A) then explained that his true followers and Shīʿah are those who thank Allāh when:

* they get something
* something is taken away
* they get nothing

Even when people do us a favour or give us a gift, we should first thank Allāh (SWT) and then thank them. Some people believe that whatever they have is purely as a result of their own hard work and not from God. This shows they are ungrateful.



Their example is like that of a boy who is at home on his birthday and the doorbell rings. He opens the door and it is the postman delivering a shiny new bicycle for him. This makes him very happy.



Then, later on in the evening, the boy's grandmother calls him to say, "Happy birthday! Did you like the bicycle that I sent you?" The boy replies, "You did not send me the bicycle, the postman did!"

The boy did not understand that the postman only delivered the bicycle, and did not send it. In the same way, when something good comes our way, we sometimes fail to realise that it came from Allāh (SWT) and that the person who gave it was only a means through whom Allāh (SWT) has blessed us. That is why, when we receive any blessing, we should first thank Allāh to acknowledge it came from Him and then thank the person who gave it to us or helped us.

DID YOU KNOW?

True thankfulness to Allāh is to obey Him. Imām ʿAlī (A) has said: **"Even if Allāh had not warned us of punishment for sinning, it would still be wājib not to disobey Him so as to show our gratitude for His blessings."**

KEY POINTS

1. Thanking Allāh (SWT) is called **shukr** in Arabic. We should thank Allāh for all His Blessings and bounties.

2. We can thank Allāh (SWT) by sincerely saying "al-ḥamdu lillāh" or "shukran lillāh".

3. When we receive a gift or favour from someone, we should thank Allāh (SWT) first before we thank the person who gave us the gift or favour.

4. **Qanāʿah** is contentment. It means being pleased and satisfied with whatever Allāh (SWT) has given us.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is shukr?
2. How should we thank Allāh (SWT) for His blessings?
3. Why should we thank Allāh (SWT) first even when someone else helps us or gives something to us?
4. What is qanāʿah?

04 QIṢAṢ AL-ANBIYĀʾ: NABĪ ZAKARIYYAH (A) AND NABĪ YAḤYĀ (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Who was Nabī Zakariyyah (A)?
2. Who was Nabī Yaḥyā (A)?
3. Why is Nabī Yaḥyā (A) closely associated with Imām al-Ḥusayn (A)?

MY NOTES

NABĪ ZAKARIYYAH (A)



Nabī Zakariyyah (A) was a descendent of Nabī Ibrāhim (A). He was sent to guide the Banū Isrāʾīl. He was loved and respected by his people because of his humble and cheerful manner. He was in charge of Bayt al-Muqaddas in Jerusalem, and preached the religion of Allāh (SWT) from there. He guided the people according to the rules laid down in the Tawrāh of Nabī Mūsā (A).

Nabī Zakariyyah (A) also looked after Sayyidah Maryam, mother of Nabī ʿĪsāʾ (A). Sayyidah Maryam was the daughter of Hannah, the sister of Nabī Zakariyyah's wife. Sayyidah Hannah had made a vow to dedicate her child to Bayt al-Muqaddas, the most sacred place of worship in Jerusalem. Nabī Zakariyyah (A) built a special room for her in the compound of Bayt al-Muqaddas where she lived and worshipped Allāh (SWT). Nabī Zakariyyah (A) was an old man at the time, but had no children of his own. After seeing how Allāh (SWT) had blessed Sayyidah Maryam, he felt very hopeful and prayed to Allāh (SWT) to bless him with a child who would succeed him.

دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ. فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِنْ الصَّالِحِينَ

… Zakariyyah prayed to his Lord. He said, "My Lord! Grant me a good offspring from You! Indeed You hear all supplications." Then the angels called out to him as he stood praying in the miḥrāb: "Allāh gives you good news of Yaḥyā…. (who will be) a leader and chaste, a prophet, among the righteous." [3:38-39]

Nabī Zakariyyah (A) was surprised to hear this:

قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِيَ الْكِبَرُ وَامْرَأَتِي عَاقِرٌ ۖ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكَ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ

He said, "My Lord, how shall I have a son while old age has overtaken me and my wife is barren?" He said, "So it is that Allāh does whatever He wishes." [3:40]

قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً ۚ قَالَ آيَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْزًا ۗ

He said, "My Lord, grant me a sign." He said, "Your sign is that you will not speak to people for three days except in gestures." [3:41]

GROUP ACTIVITY

Read verse 3:37 of the Qurʾān. What conversation did Nabī Zakariyyah (A) have with Sayyidah Maryam?

Nabī Zakariyyah (A) could not speak for three days. He was then blessed with a son called Yaḥyā.



NABĪ YAḤYĀ (A)

Nabī Yaḥyā (A) was special. He was named by Allāh (SWT) before he was born, when the angels gave his father Nabī Zakariyyah (A) the good news of his birth. He was wise and knowledgeable from childhood. He worshipped Allāh (SWT) a lot and was always kind to his parents. He never spoke to them harshly.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا وَحَنَانًا مِنْ لَدُنَّا وَزَكَاةً وَكَانَ تَقِيًّا. وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَيْهِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ جَبَّارًا عَصِيًّا وَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَيَوْمَ يَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ يُبْعَثُ حَيًّا

...and We gave him (Yaḥyā) wisdom while still a child, and kind-heartedness and purity from Us. He was God-conscious, and good to his parents, and he was not harsh or sinful. Peace be on him the day he was born, and the day he dies and the day he is raised alive! [19:12-15]

Nabī Yaḥyā (A) was soft-hearted. Whenever he heard any mention of the hell fire, he would start weeping and ask Allāh (SWT) to protect him from it. Nabī Yaḥyā (A) was also very brave. Not only did he teach people to follow Allāh (SWT)'s commands, but when he saw people sinning he did not hesitate to speak out and try to stop them.

One day, Nabī Yaḥyā (A) found out that Herod, the King of Palestine, wanted to marry his own niece. Such a marriage was ḥarām and forbidden in the Tawrāh. Nabī Yaḥyā (A) openly spoke out against this marriage, and soon everyone in the country was talking about it. The King's niece was in favour of the marriage because she wanted to become the Queen of Palestine. When she heard of Nabī Yaḥyā's objection, she started hating him. Once, when the King was drunk, she told him that if he wanted to marry her he would have to kill Nabī Yaḥyā (A).

The King issued an order to have Nabī Yaḥyā (A) killed. His head was brought on a tray before the tyrant King, and because of this great sin, Palestine was attacked and the King was killed.

IN SUMMARY

1. To which group of people did Allāh (SWT) send Nabī Zakariyyah?
2. How was Sayyidah Maryam, mother of Nabī ʿĪsāʾ (A), related to Nabī Zakariyyah (A)?
3. Why was Nabī Yaḥyā (A) killed by the king of Palestine?

DID YOU KNOW?

In aḥādīth, Nabī Yaḥyā (A) is compared to Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) because both of them rose against the tyrant ruler of their time, both of them were killed unjustly, both of them were beheaded and their heads were brought on a tray before the tyrant ruler of their time.

KEY POINTS

1. Nabī Zakariyyah (A) was a descendent of Nabī Ibrāhīm (A). He was sent to guide the Banū Isrāʾīl.

2. Allāh (SWT) blessed him with a son in old age. His son was Yaḥyā.

3. Nabī Yaḥyā (A) was very wise, knowledgeable, kind to his parents and God-conscious.

4. He was killed by king Herod because he spoke out against the king marrying his own niece, which was against the laws of the Tawrah.

04 FITNAH & FASĀD

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1.What is fitnah and fasād?

2.What does the Qurʾān say about fitnah?

3.How does fitnah spread in society?

4.What can we do to stop the spread of fitnah?

MY NOTES

WHAT IS FITNAH AND FASĀD?

The Arabic word for mischief is 'fitnah' or 'fasād'. One who causes mischief is called a fāsid (female: fāsidah).

Fasād can take many forms. It can be physical, where a person destroys property, kills innocent people, commits arson, and harms others just "for fun" or out of anger, being drunk, etc. This leads to a lot of confused reactions in the society that in turn leads to mischief and disunity.

Allāh (SWT) condemns this kind of mischief in the Qurʾān:

وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَى فِي الأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ وَاللَّهُ لاَ يُحِبُّ الْفَسَادَ

And if he (the fāsid) were to gain authority, he would try to cause mischief in the land, and to ruin the crop and the cattle, and Allāh does not like mischief. [2:205]

Mischief can also be verbal, where a person spreads rumours about others, creates lies and causes fights between people just to create disunity and to weaken the society. Sometimes people cause mischief without even knowing that they are doing so. They think they are doing good and fighting for truth and justice when in fact they are the mischief-makers. Allāh (SWT) mentions them as well in the Qurʾān:

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لاَ تُفْسِدُوا فِي الأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ أَلاَ إِنَّهُمْ هُمْ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لاَ يَشْعُرُونَ

When they are told, 'Do not cause mischief on the earth,' they say, 'We are only reformers!' Indeed! They are themselves the agents of mischief, but they are not aware. [2:11-12]

Mischief can also be non-physical and non-verbal. When a person commits sins in public or tells others about his/her own sinful habits, it also spreads mischief. That is why it is ḥarām to confess one's sins to another human being.

HOW CAN WE STOP THE SPREAD OF FITNAH AND FASĀD?

We should encourage people to do good and forbid evil

Mischief spreads faster when we live in a society where everyone "minds his/her own business" and al-amr bī al-maʿrūf and al-nahy ʿan al-munkar are not practised.

ACTIVITY

In small groups, draw a picture showing the effects of fitnah and fasād in a community.

A society is like a group of travellers in one ship. If one person starts digging a hole in his room in the ship, everyone would try and stop him. The travellers won't say "it's not my business" because they know they will eventually sink with him. In the same manner, when we allow corruption and sin to spread in society, it eventually catches up with us.

WE SHOULD NOT SIN OPENLY IN PUBLIC

Sinning openly in public is also wrong because it makes the sin appear small and light in the eyes of others. People may think "maybe it's not so serious" and "others do it so why can't I?" If the first person had not started doing it, no one else would have dared to do the same. So when we sin openly, we also become the cause of others sinning and in this manner we spread mischief and corruption in society. On the Day of Judgement, we will have to bear a share of the burden of everyone else that sinned because of us.



IN SUMMARY

1. What is the meaning of fitnah and fasād?
2. What are the different forms of mischief?
3. How does fitnah and fasād spread in society?
4. What can we do to stop the spread of fitnah and fasād?

DID YOU KNOW?

Imām ʿAlī (A) has said:

"One who lights the fire of mischief, will be its fuel (on the Day of Judgement)."

MY NOTES

KEY POINTS

1. Fitnah and fasād refer to spreading mischief in society.

2. Allāh (SWT) does not like those who spread mischief.

3. Mischief can be physical as well as verbal.

4. Fitnah and fasād spread in society when people don't encourage others to do good or stop them from doing evil.

05 WAFĀT OF RASŪL ALLĀH (S)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Rasūl Allāh (S)'s illness
2. Usāmah ibn Zayd's expedition
3. The calamity of Thursday
4. Rasūl Allāh's wafāt and burial

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Read verses 4:80 and 53:3-4. What are the key messages in these verses? How can we interpret the Calamity of Thursday in view of these verses?

WAFĀT OF RASŪL ALLĀH (S)

At the beginning of the month of Ṣafar 11 AH, Rasūl Allāh (S) fell ill. Just then he also received news of a potential attack on Madīnah by the Romans. Rasūl Allāh (S) therefore asked a young man named Usāmah ibn Zayd to lead an army of Muslims against the Romans. He specifically asked all the Muhājirūn, except for Imām ʿAlī (A), to leave Madīnah and join Usāmah's army. Usāmah set out and camped at a place called Jurf, and everyone was asked to gather there before departing for battle against the enemy.

Some of the Muhājirūn refused to go and disobeyed the orders of Rasūl Allāh (S) making up excuses such as Usāmah being too young to lead them. Rasūl Allāh (S) was disappointed when he found out that people were not setting out of Madīnah to join Usāmah.

As time passed, the health of Rasūl Allāh (S) worsened. On some occasions, he was too ill to even walk on his own or go to the masjid to lead the ṣalāh.

On the Thursday before he passed away, a large number of his companions came to see him. Rasūl Allāh (S) said to his companions, **"Bring me a pen and paper that I may dictate something to you so that you will never go astray after me."** ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said that Rasūl Allāh (S) was in a delirious state because of his illness. He said there was no need for Rasūl Allāh (S) to write anything as the Qurʾān was sufficient for the Muslims. Other companions who were present were upset to hear this. They insisted that Rasūl Allāh (S) should be allowed to dictate his will. Rasūl Allāh (S) was angered by the companions arguing. He asked them to leave his room. This sad event is known as the Calamity of Thursday.

Rasūl Allāh (S) passed away on Monday, 28th Ṣafar 11 AH at the time of Ẓuhr. In his last moments, he was surrounded by the Ahl al-Bayt. Imām al-Ḥasan (A) and Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) hugged Rasūl Allāh (S) as he lay on the bed with his head on the lap of Imām ʿAlī (A).

Sayyidah Fāṭimah al-Zahrāʾ (A) sat beside her father crying. At one point Rasūl Allāh (S) opened his eyes and whispered something to his daughter Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) and she smiled. When she was asked later why she smiled, she said her father had told her that she would be the first one from his family to leave this world and join him. Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) passed away within three months after Rasūl Allāh (S)'s wafāt.

Imām ʿAlī (A) personally carried out the funeral rites for Rasūl Allāh (S). He wept a lot over the loss of Rasūl Allāh (S) saying, **"We have suffered because of your loss, O beloved of our hearts! In losing you, revelation from Allāh has been cut off from us! From Allāh we come and to Him is our return!"**

Before the burial of Rasūl Allāh (S), the Muslims came in small numbers to pray over his body. Imām ʿAlī (A) told them no one would lead the ṣalāh in the presence of Rasūl Allāh (S) and everyone prayed on their own.

The grave of Rasūl Allāh (S) was dug in the exact same spot where he passed away. Imām ʿAlī (A) went down into the grave of Rasūl Allāh (S) first to receive his body as it was lowered into the grave.

There were less than 10 people for the washing and burial of Rasūl Allāh (S). Some prominent companions like Abū Bakr and ʿUmar were absent from the funeral, and did not pray over the body of Rasūl Allāh (S).

Rasūl Allāh (S) had lived all his life in perfect submission to Allāh (SWT). His life was blameless and his character was unmatched. Allāh (SWT) praised him in the Qurʾān saying:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلى خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

And indeed you possess a mighty character. [68:4]



IN SUMMARY

1. Why did Rasūl Allāh (S) ask Usāmah ibn Zayd to form an army?
2. What is the Calamity of Thursday?
3. When did Rasūl Allāh (S) pass away?
4. Who performed his funeral rites (ghusl, kafan and burial)?
5. Where is Rasūl Allāh (S) buried?
6. State any four titles that Allāh (SWT) has used in the Qurʾān to refer to Rasūl Allāh (S)

DID YOU KNOW?

Allāh (SWT) has referred to Rasūl Allāh (S) in the Qurʾān as the Bearer of Good News (Bashīr), the Warner (Nadhir), a Brilliant Lamp of Guidance (Sirāj al-Munīr) and a Mercy for the Worlds (Rahmatun lil ʿĀlamin).

KEY POINTS

1. Rasūl Allāh (S) fell ill in Ṣafar 11 AH and passed away in the same month.

2. He received news of a potential attack on Madīnah by the Romans, and appointed **Usāmah ibn Zayd** to lead an army to go and defend the Islamic state. He commanded all the **muhājirūn** to join Usāmah's army, but some prominent companions refused to leave Madīnah.

3. Rasūl Allāh (S) asked for pen and paper to write some advice for Muslims, but some of his companions argued over whether he should be allowed to do this. Rasūl Allāh (S) was angered by their behaviour. This event is known as the **Calamity of Thursday**.

4. Rasūl Allāh (S) passed away on **28th Ṣafar 11 AH**. Imām ʿAlī (A) performed his funeral rites, and he was buried in the same place where he passed away.

05 THE NAFS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is the nafs?
2. What are the different types of nafs?
3. What are the powers of the soul?
4. How do we purify our nafs?

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Think of a person who you admire and respect a lot. What qualities in that person make you attracted to him/her?

WHAT IS THE NAFS?

Allāh (SWT) has created us with a body and a nafs. Our nafs makes us who we are. If we purify and strengthen it, we will be successful human beings. However, if we corrupt it with sins, we will have failed. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا
وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا

And by the soul and Him who fashioned it, and inspired it with the ability to differentiate between good and evil, one who purifies it (the nafs) is successful, and one who corrupts it fails. [91:7-10]

Q: How do we purify the nafs?



Purification of the nafs is called tazkiyat al-nafs. Just as the body is affected by physical disease and illness, the nafs is affected by spiritual diseases. These include evil habits, addictions and sins. A person who does not purify his/her nafs is worse than an animal. It is therefore necessary to purify our nafs and nurture it constantly so that we reach perfection.

This can be done by ensuring that we perform all our wājib actions and keep away from all ḥarām actions. People who perform good actions and have positive habits possess beautiful souls, whereas those who have bad habits and commit evil actions have dark and ugly souls. Just as a seed grows into a tree through proper care, and a wild horse or a dog can be tamed to serve its master, so can a human soul attain perfection and wisdom through spiritual training, self-discipline and good actions.

The nafs has three basic levels:

Nafs al-Ammārah: When the nafs operates at this level, it tempts the person to indulge it his/her base desires and commit evil.

Nafs al-Lawwāmah: This is the human conscience. It makes us feel guilty whenever we do something wrong, so that we may repent and not repeat the same mistake again.

If we always follow nafs al-lawwamah and do not pay attention to nafs al-ammarah, we eventually reach a state of perfection. At this level, we operate at the level of **nafs al-muṭmaʾinnah** - the soul at rest. This means that the soul is no longer attracted towards sins.

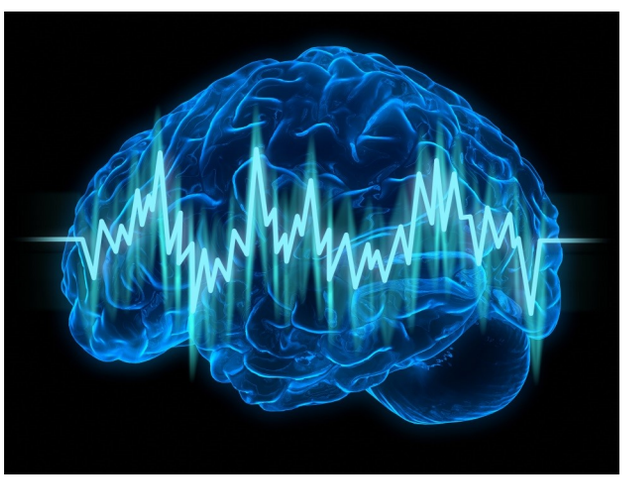
THE FOUR POWERS OF THE SOUL

Just like the body has five senses (speech, sight, hearing, touch and taste), the soul has four powers:

1. The power of **intellectual thought** (al-quwwah al-ʿaqliyyah)
2. The power of **imagination** (al-quwwah al-wahmiyyah)
3. The power of **anger** (al-quwwah al-ghaḍabiyyah)
4. The power of **desire** (al-quwwah al-shahwiyah)

Each one of these powers has a very important role to play in our spiritual journeys, but they need to be tamed, controlled and used in moderation. In either extreme, they become a spiritual disease.

For example, when intellectual power is too weak, a person can't distinguish good from evil and is easily misled. When it is too extreme, everything is sought through the mind only and often leads to atheism and doubts in faith.



If the power of imagination is too weak, a person loses all creativity and ability to nurture the gifts given by Allāh. If it is too strong, it leads to evil thoughts and sinful fantasies.

If the power of anger is too weak, a person cannot defend himself or stand up to fight for the truth. When it is excessive, it leads to violence and destruction.

When the power of desire is too weak, a person may lose interest in life and in healthy socializing with others. When it is too extreme, it leads to promiscuity and immorality (such as adultery) and love for the world (wealth, power, comfort, pleasure etc.).

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the meaning of nafs?
2. What are the three types of nafs?
3. How can we develop our nafs to become nafs al-muṭmaʾinnah?
4. What are the four powers of the soul?
5. What happens when each of these four powers are not used in moderation?

DID YOU KNOW?

Unlike the body, the soul is everlasting and does not die. It is independent of the body. After death, the soul leaves the body and moves on to the world of Barzakh.

MY NOTES

KEY POINTS

1. The nafs is the human soul.

2. Allāh (SWT) has instructed in the Qurʾān to purify our soul. This is known as tazkiyat al-nafs. A person who purifies the soul will be successful in life, and one who corrupts the soul will fail.

3. The nafs has three levels and four powers.

4. We must use the powers of the soul in moderation.

06 THE EVENT OF SAQĪFAH BANŪ SAʿĪDAH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What happened at Saqīfah Banū Sāʿīdah?
2. How did Abū Bakr become the first caliph?
3. How did Imām ʿAlī (A) handle the situation?

MY NOTES

THE EVENT OF SAQĪFAH BANŪ SAʿĪDAH

As soon as Rasūl Allāh (S) passed away, some people gathered at a place called Saqīfah Banū Sāʿīdah to discuss the leadership of the Muslims. They ignored the various occasions on which Rasūl Allāh (S) had declared Imām ʿAlī (A) as his successor, including the event of Ghadīr just two months before he passed away.

In the meantime, Imām ʿAlī (A) was busy attending to the burial of Rasūl Allāh (S). Prominent companions like Abū Bakr and ʿUmar found out that a discussion on the future of Islamic leadership was taking place and immediately left to join the discussions at Saqīfah. As a result, they never paid their last respects to Rasūl Allāh (S) nor did they assist in his funeral rites or witness his burial.

At Saqīfah, the discussion became very heated. The Anṣār were made up of two tribes: the Aws and the Khazraj. Each tribe wanted a leader from themselves. Before Abū Bakr and ʿUmar had arrived at Saqīfah, the Anṣār were leaning towards electing Saʿd ibn Ubāydah, the leader of the Khazraj tribe. Abū Bakr and ʿUmar argued with them that the successorship should belong to the Muhājirūn because they were closer to Rasūl Allāh (S) by virtue of being from his tribe (of Quraysh). They were also the first to accept Islam.

The Anṣār argued that they had given shelter to Rasūl Allāh (S) and the Muhājirūn during the hijrah, but Abū Bakr said that the rest of the Arabs in Makkah and elsewhere will never accept any leader who is not from the Quraysh. The Anṣār said that the only the muhājir they would accept as a leader would be Imām ʿAlī (A) (even though he was not present at Saqīfah).

Imām ʿAlī (A) and the Banū Hāshim were not present nor were they consulted because they were busy attending to the funeral of Rasūl Allāh (S).

Eventually, the arguments led to a choice between Saʿd ibn ʿUbāydah and ʿUmar. At one point ʿUmar hit Saʿd physically and threatened to kill him. As each group began shouting at each other, there was total chaos. ʿUmar jumped forward and said to Abū Bakr, "Extend your hand!" and he pledged allegiance to him as the 1st Caliph and successor to Rasūl Allāh (S). The leader of the Aws tribe of the Anṣār, in rivalry to the Khazraj, did the same and soon the Khazraj had to do the same so as not to be isolated from the rest. Saʿd ibn ʿUbāydah was deeply angered by this and left Madīnah for Syria where he retired. Four years later, in 15 AH, he was murdered in Syria (during the rule of ʿUmar).

GROUP ACTIVITY

Do a role play in class to depict the events at Saqīfah Banū Sāʿīdah.

ABŪ BAKR IS CHOSEN AS THE FIRST CALIPH AT SAQĪFAH

The day after Saqīfah, Abū Bakr came to the mosque of Rasūl Allāh (S) and everyone in Madīnah was forced to come and pay allegiance to him and accept him as the Caliph.

Imām ʿAlī (A) refused to do so and some of his family and companions took shelter in his home to avoid giving allegiance to Abū Bakr. ʿUmar marched with a group of people to Imām ʿAlī's home, set the door on fire and pushed it on Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A), who lost her unborn baby. Thereafter Imām ʿAlī (A) was tied in ropes and taken to Masjid al-Nabawī. When Imām ʿAlī (A) still refused to pay allegiance to Abū Bakr, he was finally left alone by Abū Bakr but the others were forced to pay allegiance.

Abū Sufyān, the father of Muʿāwiya and the archenemy of Rasūl Allāh (S) saw this as an opportunity to divide the Muslims and weaken them forever. He came to Imām ʿAlī (A) and offered to fill the alleys and streets of Madīnah with horsemen to fight for Imām ʿAlī's right as Rasūl Allāh's successor. Imām ʿAlī (A) could see through Abū Sufyān's intentions. He knew that Abū Sufyan was only doing this to gain power for himself, so he turned down the offer.

It was to preserve Islam and the Muslim community that Imām ʿAlī (A) kept silent and did not use force to fight for his right. He did however always say his right was usurped.



IN SUMMARY

1. Why did Abū Bakr and ʿUmar leave Rasūl Allāh (S)'s funeral to go to Saqīfah Banū Sāʿīdah?
2. Who did the Anṣār want as their leader?
3. Why were Imām ʿAlī (A) and the Banū Hāshim not present at Saqīfah Banū Sāʿīdah?
4. Who was selected as the first caliph at Saqīfah?

DID YOU KNOW?

Abū Bakr chose ʿUmar as his successor. ʿUmar appointed a committee of six people and asked them to choose one person from amongst themselves to become his successor. Through this process, ʿUthmān became the third caliph.

KEY POINTS

1. As soon as Rasūl Allāh (S) passed away, some people gathered at Saqīfah Banū Sāʿīdah to select a new leader. They ignored Imām ʿAlī's appointment as Rasūl Allāh's successor.

2. When ʿUmar and Abū Bakr heard about the gathering at Saqīfah they left Rasūl Allāh's funeral to join the gathering.

3. Abū Bakr was selected at Saqīfah to become the first caliph, and everyone was forced to pledge allegiance to him.

4. Imām ʿAlī (A) refused to accept Abū Bakr as caliph.

06 MATERIALISM

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is worldliness and materialism.
2. Why are some people materialistic?
3. How do we overcome being materialistic?

MY NOTES

GROUP ACTIVITY

What are the qualities of a materialistic person?

How should we live our lives so that we enjoy the blessings given to us by Allāh (SWT) but at the same time not lose focus on the Hereafter?

THE HEREAFTER IS BETTER THAN THIS MATERIAL WORLD

Islam places a lot of emphasis on preparing for life in the Hereafter because that life is everlasting, whereas the life of this world is temporary and short lived. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ ۖ وَلَلدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ ۗ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ

The life of the world is nothing but play and diversion, and the hereafter is surely better for those who are God-conscience. Do you not apply reason? [6:32]

بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا. وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ

Rather you prefer the life of this world, while the hereafter is better and more lasting. [87:16-17]



The Arabic phrase ḥubb al-dunyā means love of the world. When Islam condemns "love of this world", it is not in the sense of enjoying Allāh (SWT)'s blessings such as food, getting married, earning a living, having a nice home, travelling and so on. These are all good and in fact recommended in Islam.

What Islam condemns is being completely taken in by the pleasures of this world and making the life of this world our main focus, goal and aim in life. For example, it would be wrong if our main goal in life was to make as much money as possible, in any way possible.

Similarly, we would be guilty of ḥubb al-dunyā if we constantly focus on physical pleasures. Such materialism and obsession with the world is wrong because it makes us forget Allāh (SWT) and the Hereafter (the true purpose of our existence). Being overly concerned with the material world while forgetting the Hereafter and all spiritual matters is called **materialism**. Materialism and the Hereafter are like the two ends of a seesaw. One cannot rise in one without falling in the other, or get closer to one without getting further from the other. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُ فِي حَرْثِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ نَصِيبٍ

Whoever desires the harvest of the Hereafter, We will increase for him his harvest, and whoever desires the harvest of the world, We will give it to him, but he will have no share in the Hereafter. [42:20]

ISLAM TEACHES MODERATION IN EVERYTHING

Sufyān Sūrī was a zāhid (ascetic) and a Sūfī. He completely distanced himself from the world, and lived a very simple life. One day he came to visit Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) and found him dressed in a graceful white robe of expensive material. He immediately criticised the Imām, saying, "You should not be dressed in such rich robes. They are not for you to adorn yourself. The pleasures of the world should not contaminate pious people like you. You should exercise restraint in terms of good food and splendid clothes."

Imām smiled and said, "I would like to explain something that will benefit you both in this life and the Hereafter. If you wish to gain knowledge so that you can share it with others, my advice will be useful, but if your purpose is to create disharmony among Muslims, you will disregard whatever I say. Listen carefully. You are clinging to the state of early Islam. Your mind carries the image of the simple lifestyle of Rasūl Allāh (S) and his companions, and you think that lifestyle is wājib on all Muslims until Qiyāmah, but that is not so.

Rasūl Allāh (S) and his companions lived at a time when Muslims survived on the bare minimum, so they lived simple lives just like the rest of the believers. However, we now live in better times and have attained Allāh (SWT)'s blessings. Those closest to Allāh (SWT) deserve these blessings more than anyone else; the pious more than the wicked, the believers much more than the non-believers.

You consider it sinful for me to enjoy Allāh (SWT)'s blessings. Let me tell you something. I have always made sure the portion that Allāh (SWT) has decided for my relatives, the poor, needy, captives, and whoever may have a right over me, reaches them before the sun sets. Not for a moment each day have I disregarded or delayed performing my duties towards others."



DID YOU KNOW?

Imām ʿAlī (A) said to his companion Kumayl:
"O Kumayl, those who amass wealth are dead even though they may be living, while those endowed with knowledge will remain as long as the world remains."

KEY POINTS

1. Islam encourages us to appreciate and use the blessings given to us by Allāh (SWT) in this world.

2. However, we must not get overly obsessed with this temporary world to an extent that we don't give enough attention to the Hereafter, which is permanent.

3. Materialism is being overly concerned with gathering wealth and possessions in the world. People with such a quality are said to have ḥubb al-dunyā (love of the world). This is not a good quality as it makes us forget Allāh (SWT) and the true purpose of our existence.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is ḥubb al-dunyā?
2. What is materialism according to Islam?
3. Why is the life of the hereafter better than the life of this world?
4. What did Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) say to Sufyān Sūrī?
5. What can we do to overcome being materialistic?

07 THE THREE CALIPHS (PART 1)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. A brief history of the first three caliphs
2. The Riddah wars
3. The land of Fadak

MY NOTES

ABŪ BAKR - THE FIRST CALIPH

After the wafāt of Rasūl Allāh (S), some Muslims gathered at Saqīfah and chose Abū Bakr as their new leader. They then returned to Madīnah and forced everyone else to pledge allegiance to him.

Abū Bakr's was from the tribe of Taym. He was 60 years old when he became caliph. In his very first address to the Muslims, he ascended the pulpit of Rasūl Allāh (S) and said:

"I have been placed in this position of authority, though I am averse to it. By Allāh, I would have been pleased if any of you had taken it in my place. If you expect me to act like Rasūl Allāh, then I cannot do it. He was honoured and preserved from error by the Lord, while I am an ordinary man, no better than any of you. When you see me following the right path then obey me, and when you see me turning away from it then set me aright. I have a devil that seizes me sometimes, and when you see me enraged then avoid me because at that time you will not be able to reason with me."



Abū Bakr used to trade in cloth and was also a genealogist (i.e. he knew the family trees of the Arabs, especially the Quraysh). After his election, ʿUmar saw him going to the market to open his shop and said, "Are you going to trade although you have been given the rule over the Muslims?"

"How else shall I feed my family?" asked Abū Bakr. ʿUmar then took him to Abū ʿUbaydah, the treasurer of the Bayt al-Māl (Public Treasury), who assigned him a yearly allowance.

When Abū Bakr was declared caliph, many tribes refused to accept him and stopped paying taxes (zakāt) to the government. Abū Bakr sent various commanders to the remote tribes to collect zakāt by force. Those who refused to submit to the caliph were attacked and made prisoners. These military exercises are known as the Riddah Wars.

Abū Bakr also contested Sayyidah Fāṭimah's ownership of the land of Fadak and took it away from her. It was given to Rasūl Allāh (S) after the Battle of Khaybar, and because it did not involve any battle, it belonged to Rasūl Allāh (S). He had given it to his daughter Fāṭimah (A) during his own lifetime. Sayyidah Fāṭimah (S) never forgave him for the way she had been treated. According to her will, Abū Bakr and ʿUmar were not allowed to attend her funeral.

ACTIVITY

Look at the Map of the Middle East and North Africa. Can you locate the regions that came under Muslim control by the end of ʿUmar's reign?

ʿUMAR IBN AL-KHAṬṬĀB - THE SECOND CALIPH

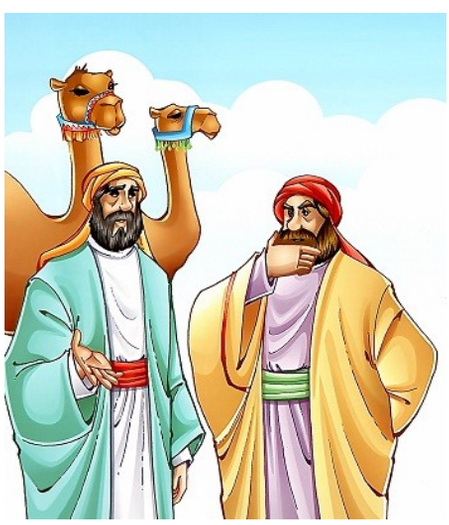
Abū Bakr died in 13 AH. He had ruled as caliph for 2 years. Before dying he appointed ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to be his successor. In his first address, ʿUmar said:

"O God! I am rough in temper, therefore soften me; and weak, so strengthen me; and miserly, so make me generous."

ʿUmar introduced new religious laws during his caliphate:

* He introduced the Tarāwiḥ prayer during the month of Ramaḍān.
* He made ḥarām the minor ḥajj (al-ʿumrah al-tamattuʿ) and the fixed term marriage (zawāj mutʿa) that Rasūl Allāh (S) had permitted.
* He reduced the takbīr in salāt al-mayyit from five to four.
* He removed ḥayya ʿala khayril ʿamal in aẓān and introduced the phrase al-ṣalātu khayrun min al-nawm in aẓān for ṣalāt al-fajr.
* During ʿUmar's reign, Muslim territories expanded greatly as many foreign lands were conquered, including Syria, Jordan, Jerusalem, Egypt and Persia.

ʿUmar was quick tempered and impulsive in his rulings. Numerous incidents of wrong judgement are reported in his life. Imām ʿAlī (A) often intervened to give the right judgement. ʿUmar used to say, **"If it was not for ʿAlī, ʿUmar would have perished!"**



ʿUmar had a rule that non-Arabs were not allowed to enter Madīnah. However, he relaxed this rule for Abū Luʾluʾah who was not an Arab but a good carpenter, blacksmith and engraver. Abū Lulu was heavily taxed for the privilege of residing in Madīnah. Abū Luʾluʾah asked ʿUmar to increase his personal allowance but his request was turned down. A few days later, Abū Luʾluʾah stabbed ʿUmar. ʿUmar died of his wounds at the age of 63 in 23 AH.

IN SUMMARY

1. Who appointed Abū Bakr to become caliph after Rasūl Allāh (S)?
2. State any 3 points from Abū Bakr's first sermon to the Muslims after he became caliph.
3. What is Fadak?
4. What are the Riddah wars?
5. What new religious laws did ʿUmar legislate during his caliphate?
6. What role did Imām ʿAlī (A) play during the caliphate of ʿUmar?

DID YOU KNOW?

Abū Bakr faced a rebellion in Hadramawt (Yemen) from Ashʿath b. Qays, chief of the Banū Kindah. When he got hold of Ashʿath, Abū Bakr did not take any action against him and allowed him to marry his sister Umm Farwah. Ashʿath and Umm Farwah had a daughter called Juʿdah who married Imām al-Ḥasan (A) and then poisoned him.

KEY POINTS

1. After Rasūl Allāh's wafāt, some Muslims gathered at Saqīfah to choose a their new leader. They selected Abū Bakr as the first caliph.

2. Abū Bakr took away Fadak from Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) and waged the Riddah wars.

3. Abū Bakr's caliphate lasted 2 years. He appointed ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to be his successor.

4. ʿUmar introduced new religious laws and vastly expanded the Muslim empire during his caliphate.

5. He made many wrong judgments and Imām ʿAlī (A) often advised and guided him.

6. His caliphate lasted about 10 years. He was killed by Abū Luʾluʾah.

08 THE THREE CALIPHS (PART 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. The shūrāh appointed by ʿUmar to select his successor
2. The caliphate of Uthmān

MY NOTES

ʿUMAR APPOINTS A SHŪRĀH TO SELECT HIS SUCCESSOR

When ʿUmar realised he would not survive after being stabbed by Abū Luʾluʾah, he appointed a shūrāh (council) of six people. This council included: Imām ʿAlī (A), ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwām, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf, Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqās and Talḥah ibn Ubayd Allāh.

ʿUmar then asked these six people to stay at a place for 3 days and not leave until they had elected one amongst themselves as caliph. He also said that if three of them vote for one person and the remaining two oppose them, they should be killed. If the group was equally divided into three each then the candidate selected by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf's should win the vote.

This was a clever plot by ʿUmar to ensure that Imām ʿAlī (A) would not be given his right whilst making it look like a fair vote. This is because ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf was married to ʿUthmān's sister. He was not popular enough to be accepted as Caliph himself but he would only vote for his brother-in-law ʿUthmān. Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqās hated Imām ʿAlī (A) and would never vote for him. Talḥah was not in Madīnah at the time but he belonged to the tribe of Taym (same as Abū Bakr) – a tribe opposed to the Banū Hāshim in general. The only person who could vote for Imām ʿAlī (A) was Zubayr. Zubayr's mother was Abū Ṭālib's sister.

At the shūrāh meeting, everyone present realised that Imām ʿAlī (A) was the best person to lead the Muslims and offered him the caliphate on the condition that he agrees to follow the practices introduced by Abū Bakr and ʿUmar. Imām ʿAlī (A) refused to do so, saying that he would only follow the Qurʾān and the practice of Rasūl Allāh (S).

Then they offered the caliphate to ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān with the same condition. He readily agreed to the condition and was appointed as the 3rd Caliph.

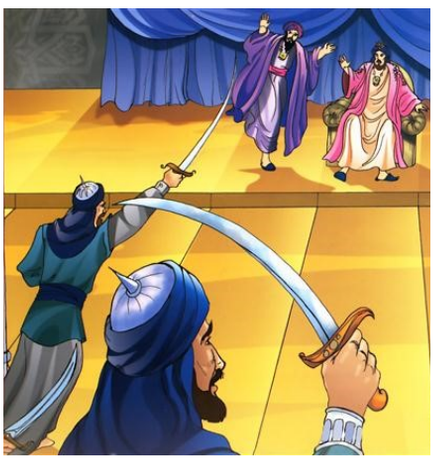
Among the six members of the shūrāh council, ʿUthmān was the only one who had never been entrusted with leading even a minor expedition or a small group of the Muslim army: neither by Rasūl Allāh (S) himself nor by the first two caliphs. He had no leadership qualities whatsoever. He had a glaring lack of military prowess and was known to flee from battles. Despite his weaknesses as a leader he was put forward as a candidate only to counter and stop Imām ʿAlī (A) from getting the khilāfah. This is because he was an ʿUmayyad and would therefore have a strong backing of the Makkan aristocracy.



ACTIVITY

Can you name the 6 people appointed by ʿUmar for the shūrāh council to appoint his successor?

ʿUTHMĀN IBN ʿAFFĀN - THE THIRD CALIPH



When ʿUthmān became caliph, he realised his unpreparedness but he had strong backing from the Quraysh. He therefore let his family run the show. In no caliph's life is nepotism so widely acknowledged by historians, as in the caliphate of ʿUthmān. From the first day of his rule, he began systematically replacing the governors of the major provinces with his own relatives from the Banī ʿUmayyah.

During the Caliphate of ʿUthmān, conquests were extended beyond Egypt in the East and as far as Morocco in the West. The new territory brought in a lot of wealth for the caliph. The greatest grievances the Muslims had against ʿUthmān were his ill-treatment of the ṣaḥābah and the squandering of the Muslim wealth. While they suffered in poverty, ʿUthmān's relatives built palaces for themselves and treated the Muslim treasury as their personal property. Thousands of Dirhams were given by ʿUthmān to his family members. When ʿAmmār bin Yāsir, a great companion of Rasūl Allāh (S), spoke out against ʿUthmān, he was severely beaten by ʿUthmān's men. Abū Dharr, another great companion of Rasūl Allāh (S) who opposed ʿUthmān, was banished by him to the desert, where he was forced to live alone and die in isolation.

Eventually, the Muslims were fed up of ʿUthmān's injustices. A group of about 10,000 Muslims from Egypt, Kūfah and Baṣrah surrounded his palace in Madīnah, demanding him to come out. This siege lasted 40 days, and no food or water was allowed into the palace.

Imām ʿAlī (A) tried to help diffuse the situation and managed to convince the Muslims to allow Imām al-Ḥasan (A) and al-Ḥusayn (A) to take water to ʿUthmān. In the end, a group from among the Muslims managed to break into the palace. All of ʿUthmān's family had fled, leaving him alone. The people attacked and killed him. Thereafter they refused to have him buried next to Rasūl Allāh (S) and the previous two caliphs. Instead his body was taken to the other end of Baqī where the Jews buried their dead and he was buried there.

IN SUMMARY

1. Why did ʿUmar appoint a shūrā council?
2. Who were the six people on the council?
3. Why was Imām ʿAlī (A) not appointed caliph even though he was the best person to lead the Muslims?
4. State any three injustices carried out by ʿUthmān during his caliphate.

DID YOU KNOW?

ʿUthmān was the first caliph to refer to himself as khalīfat Allāh (The caliph of Allāh (SWT)). Abū Bakr had called himself as "the caliph of Rasūl Allāh". ʿUmar also used this title initially, but then used the title of "Amīr al-Muʾminīn", a title that had been given to Imām ʿAlī (A) by Rasūl Allāh (S).

KEY POINTS

1. After ʿUmar was stabbed, he knew he would not survive the wounds, so he appointed a shūrāh council of 6 people to select his successor.
2. ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān was selected as the third caliph.
3. ʿUthmān favoured his family, who squandered Muslim wealth and persecuted the Muslims, especially the companions of Rasūl Allāh (S).
4. Eventually, the Muslims were fed up and killed ʿUthmān. Unlike Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, he was not allowed to be buried near Rasūl Allāh (S).

09 THE AʾIMMAH (A): IMĀM ʿALĪ AL-NAQĪ (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. An introduction into the life of Imām ʿAlī al-Naqī al-Hādī (A)
2. How was the Imām treated by the ʿAbbasid caliphs?

MY NOTES

IMĀM ʿALĪ AL-NAQĪ (A)

Imām ʿAlī al-Hādī al-Naqī (A) is our tenth Holy Imām. He was only 8 years old when his father, Imām Muḥammad al-Taqī (A), was poisoned. His most famous titles are al-Hādī (the guide) and al-Naqī (the pure).

Key Facts

Birth date: 15th Dhūʾl-Ḥijjah 212 AH in Madīnah.

Father: Imām Muḥammad al-Taqī al-Jawād (A)

Mother: Sayyidah Samānah (from Morocco)

Wafāt: 3rd Rajab 254 AH. Imām is buried in Sāmarrā

After the martyrdom of Imām al-Jawād (A), the caliph appointed a teacher called al-Jundī to educate Imām al-Hādī (A). Al-Jundī wanted to teach the Imām to recite 10 suwar of the Qurʾān. Instead Imām al-Hādī (A) asked him, "Tell me, which sūrah would you like me to recite for you?"

"Sūrat Āl ʿImrān" said al-Jundi. To his amasement, the young Imām recited the sūrah beautifully. "Imām al-Jawād was in Baghdad and passed away there; this boy has been alone in Madīnah – who taught him all this?" he wondered.

Imām ʿAlī al-Hādī (A) then said to al-Jundi, "Would you like to hear some of what I have learnt from my father?" The Imām began reciting aḥādīth that he heard from his father who heard from his father, all the way up to ʿAmīr al-Muʾminīn (A) who heard from Rasūl Allāh (S). Al-Jundi felt the light of the Imām's knowledge penetrate his heart and began saying to himself, "Indeed, Allāh knows where to keep His message!"



The ruling ʿAbbasid caliphs during the time of the Imām made sure he did not have any wealth. They always tried to keep the Ahl al -Bayt in poverty. He also kept the Imām under house arrest and appointed spies to watch his every move. This was to ensure that the Imām would not overthrow their rule.

Imām ʿAlī al-Hādī (A) therefore lived a simple life. He had an empty room that had no furniture or worldly possessions except for a straw mat on which he prayed ṣalāh.

He often quoted a ḥadīth from Imām ʿAlī (A): **"One whose greatest concern is the Hereafter will be content with life even without wealth."**

ACTIVITY

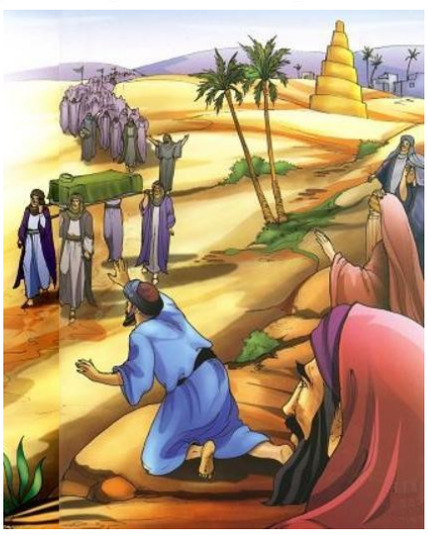
List the names, titles and Quniyyah of each of the 14 Maʿṣūmīn (A).

IMĀM AL-HĀDĪ (A) IS SUMMONED TO SĀMARRĀ FROM MADĪNAH

Imām ʿAlī al-Hādī (A) lived to see the rule of six different caliphs. One of them was Mutawakkil. He was a cruel man who was well known for his hatred of the Ahl al-Bayt. He knew that the Shīʿah loved and followed Imām al-Hādī (A), and felt threatened by the presence of the Imām in Madīnah. He sent Yaḥyā ibn Harthamah to Madīnah and to bring the Imām to his capital in Sāmārraʾ.

Imām ʿAlī al-Hādī (A) went to Sāmarrāʾ with his son Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A) and his family. When Imām reached Sāmarrāʾ, Mutawakkil ordered that he should be kept in a very dirty and run-down inn. A Shīʿah came to visit the Imām and cried when he saw the condition of the place, but the Imām smiled and told him not to cry because no one can humiliate an Imām.

No matter how hard Mutawakkil tried, the personality of the Imām always won people over. They felt humble before him and began loving and following him.



One day, Mutawakkil took Imām al-Hādī (A) to a hilltop from where thousands of armed soldiers could be seen marching in formation. He was afraid that the Imām would overthrow him and wanted to show the Imām his power.

Imām said to Mutawakkil, "Now look at my weapons." He raised his eyes to the heavens and prayed to Allāh (SWT), and suddenly the sky was filled with angels all armed as warriors. Mutawakkil fell down and fainted out of fear of what he saw.

Mutawakkil was killed by his own son Muntaṣir, who became the next caliph. Imām ʿAlī al-Hadi (A) was poisoned by the caliph Muʿtamid. All the markets and shops were closed on the day of his wafāt, and a large number of Muslims gathered at the main masjid in Sāmarrāʾ for his funeral. He was buried in his house in Sāmarrāʾ as he had requested in his will.

IN SUMMARY

1. Who are the parents of Imām ʿAlī al-Naqī (A)?
2. What do the titles al-Naqī and al-Hādī mean?
3. How did Imām ʿAlī al-Naqī (A) prove his knowledge to al-Jundi?
4. Why did Mutawakkil summon the Imām to Sāmarrāʾ?
5. How did the caliph Mutawakkil treat the Shīʿah of the Imām?
6. Where is Imām ʿAlī al-Naqī (A) buried?

DID YOU KNOW?

The caliph Mutawakkil killed anyone who went for the ziyārah of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) in Karbalāʾ. He even tried to change the direction of the river Furāt so that it would flood and destroy the grave of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A), but failed to do so.

MY NOTES

KEY POINTS

1. Imām ʿAlī al-Hādī al-Naqī (A) is our tenth Holy Imām. He was born in Madīnah.

2. He was summoned to Sāmarrāʾ by the ʿAbbasid caliph Mutawakkil, who hated the Ahl al-Bayt and the Shīʿah.

3. Imām was outstanding in his knowledge, prayers, piety and patience.

4. He was poisoned by the caliph Muʿtamid and died in Samarrāʾ, where he is buried.

09 ZUHD

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is zuhd?
2. What are the qualities of people with zuhd?
3. How do we find the right balance between zuhd and worldliness?

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Is it possible to have zuhd and at the same time enjoy the ḥalāl pleasures of this world?

WHAT IS ZUHD?

Zuhd is loosely defined as "asceticism", but this definition can be misleading. Zuhd is abstention from worldliness and materialism. It is not abstention from the world, being part of a society or earning a living and having a family. Rasūl Allāh (S) said:

لا رَهْبَانِيَّةُ فِي الإِسْلامِ

There is no monasticism in Islam

Islam highly encourages Muslims not to attach themselves to worldly pleasures or to live in the world as if they are here to stay forever. One who practices zuhd is called a **zāhid** (male) or **zāhidah** (female). A distinguishing quality of a zāhid or zāhidah is that all aspects of their lives show that they truly believe this world is a temporary abode.

Q: What are the qualities of a person with zuhd?



People with zuhd are occupied in preparing for the permanent abode and not in hoarding and amassing for this world. Of course preparing for the next permanent abode is not by worship only but includes working hard to earn a lawful living to support one's family, socialising with family and friends, and so forth. As long as the intention is to please Allāh (SWT) and one's mortality is not forgotten, the blessings of Allāh (SWT) can be enjoyed in this world as well. Therefore, we could define zuhd as "non-materialism".

Rasūl Allāh (S) said: **"Zuhd is not to give up what is ḥalāl or making what is ḥalāl ḥarām for yourself, or not owning anything in the world. Zuhd is that you don't trust and find more security and safety with what is in your hands, rather than what is with Allāh."**

Rasūl Allāh (S) once said to his companion Abū Dharr, **"O Abū Dharr! When a person abstains from worldliness, Allāh plants wisdom in his heart that manifests in his tongue and He makes him see the flaws of the world, its illnesses and its cure and He takes him out of the world safely into the Safe Abode (Dār al-Salām)"** i.e. to Jannah.

Most people go through life driven only by desires, greed and fear. A lot of what we see as "progress" and "advances" by humans is only because of their pursuit for the world and their desire to invent new devices that will give them more pleasure or material comfort. Zuhd does not stop us from progress, but keeps us

grounded in the reality that we are here to prepare for the eternal life of the Hereafter, and should therefore divide our time accordingly between working for this life and preparing for the Hereafter.

HOW DO WE ACQUIRE ZUHD?

The Aʾimmah (A) have taught us excellent ways in which we can acquire zuhd. The most important thing that we must understand before we can acquire zuhd is the value of this world in relation to the value of the Hereafter. Imām ʿAlī (A) has said: **"A person's proportion of zuhd over what is temporary (the world) is based on how much conviction (yaqīn) he has over what is permanent (the Hereafter)."**

He also said: **"How can he abstain from this world who does not know the value of the Hereafter?"** In another ḥadīth he said: **"Do not be like one of those who want the Hereafter with actions for the world…. He speaks against the world like the zāhidīn but he works for the world like those who long for it."**

Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A) has advised those who want to acquire zuhd to remember death. He said, **"Remember death frequently, because when a person remembers death frequently, he abstains from this world (i.e. from materialism)."**

Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) has said: **"A zāhid is one who keeps away from ḥalāl out of fear of ḥisāb (accounting in Qiyāmah) and keeps away from ḥarām out of fear of ʿadhāb (punishment in Qiyāmah)."**

This does not mean that we should keep away from what is ḥalāl if we want to acquire zuhd. What stops a person from practising zuhd is being shackled by his/her desires. Therefore, a muʾmin needs to combat addiction to desires and pleasures even if they are ḥalāl, so as to acquire higher levels of zuhd.

Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) has said, **"A zāhid prefers the Hereafter to the world, prefers being unknown over fame, prefers struggling over comfort, prefers hunger instead of overeating, and prefers remembrance of Allāh over being heedless. His body is in this world but his heart is in the Hereafter."**

DID YOU KNOW?

A man once came to Abū Dharr and said, "Why is it that we dislike death?" He replied, "It is because you have made the world your home and ruined your Hereafter. You hate being moved from where you have settled to where you have ruined."

KEY POINTS

1. Zuhd is abstention from worldliness and materialism.

2. It is not abstention from the world, being part of society, earning a living and having a family.

3. One who practices zuhd is called a zāhid (male) or zāhidah (female).

4. People with zuhd are occupied in preparing for the Hereafter rather than wasting their time pursuing material pleasures of this world.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is zuhd?
2. What are the qualities of a zāhid / zāhidah?
3. Why is it necessary to acquire zuhd?
4. Why is understanding the value of the Hereafter the first step to acquiring zuhd?
5. What actions can we perform to acquire zuhd?

10 THE AʾIMMAH (A): IMĀM ḤASAN AL-ʿASKARĪ (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. An introduction into the life of Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A).

2. The difficult circumstances in which the Imām lived his life.

MY NOTES

IMĀM ḤASAN AL-ʿASKARĪ (A)

Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A) is our eleventh Imām. He was only 2 years old when the caliph Mutawakkil forced his father Imām ʿAlī al-Hādī (A) to move to Sāmarrāʾ where he could keep a close watch on him. Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A) had moved to Sāmarrāʾ with his father.

Key Facts

Birth date: 8th Rabīʿ al-Thānī 232 AH in Madīnah

Father: Imām ʿAlī al-Naqī al-Hādī (A)

Mother: Sayyidah Sawṣan

Wafāt: 8th Rabīʿ al-Awwal 260 AH. He is buried in Sāmarrāʾ

Imām was well known for his calmness, chastity, generosity and nobility. He spent a lot of his life imprisoned by the ʿAbbasid caliphs. Even though the most cruel guards were kept in charge of guarding him, he remained patient and showed such excellent character that the guards would change and become the best of people.



The caliph Mutawakkil once asked his guards why they had changed. They said, "How can we be harsh to a man who fasts all day and prays all night. He never talks or does anything but worship Allāh!"

Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A) prepared the Shīʿah for the final Imām and the ghaybah when people would not know the Imām's whereabouts. He wrote many letters to his companions explaining the ghaybah of his son Imām al-Mahdī (A).

In a letter to ʿAlī bin al-al-Ḥusayn bin Bābwayh al-Qummī, he wrote:

"...be patient and wait for the time when the Imām will return because Rasūl Allāh (S) has said: "the best action is waiting for relief from suffering"... our Shīʿah will continue suffering until the ẓuhūr of my son whose coming was told by Rasūl Allāh (S). He will fill the earth with justice and equity after it is filled with injustice and tyranny. Therefore be patient, the earth will finally belong to the righteous servants of Allāh... and salām on you and on all our Shīʿah and the mercy and blessings of Allāh, and blessings of Muḥammad (S) and his family."

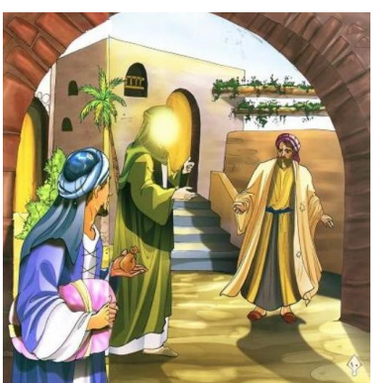
ACTIVITY

How did Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī prepare the Shīʿah for the ghaybah of his son Imām al-Mahdī (A)?

IMĀM ḤASAN AL-ʿASKARĪ'S KNOWLEDGE AND GENEROSITY

A man called Ismāʿīl bin Muḥammad once asked Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A) for some money even though he had 200 Dinars which he had saved for the future. Ismāʿīl said to the Imām, "I swear by Allāh, I don't have anything, not even one Dirham and nothing to eat for lunch or dinner."

Imām told him, "Why are you swearing falsely in the name of Allāh, when you have buried away 200 dinars?! Yet I am not saying this to you because I don't want to give you anything." Imām then gave Ismāʿīl 100 dinars, which was all he had at the time. The Ahl al-Bayt (A) never turned anyone away.



Imām then said to Ismāʿīl, "You will never get to enjoy the 200 dinars that you have buried and you will lose it when you need it most."

Ismāʿīl said that what the Imām had told him was true. There came a time when he was really poor and in need but when he went to get the money he had secretly buried, he found that it was gone. One of his sons had seen him burying it and had stolen it.

The ʿAbbasid caliphs knew the son of Imām al-ʿAskarī (A) was going to be the Mahdī, who would bring peace and justice on earth. They were afraid that Imām al-Mahdī (A) would overthrow their rule, so they constantly spied on Imām al-ʿAskarī (A) to find out if any son was born in his house. Imām al-Mahdī (A)'s birth was therefore kept a secret and only a few close companions of Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A) were informed of it.

To prevent the birth of Imām al-Mahdī, the ʿAbbasid caliph eventually decided to poison the Imām, not knowing that his son was already born. The Imām died at the age of 28. Imām al-Mahdī (A) was only 5 years old at the time, but he conducted the funeral preparations of his father and led the funeral prayers. Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A) was buried next to his father Imām ʿAlī al-Hādī (A) in Sāmarrāʾ.

IN SUMMARY

1. Who are the parents of Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A)?
2. Why did the ʿAbbasid caliphs constantly imprison the Imām and spy on him?
3. How did the Imām prepare his Shīʿah for the ghaybah of his son?
4. How did the Imām guide and change the people around him to become better Muslims?

DID YOU KNOW?

Yaʿqūb Al-Kindī, a famous Muslim scientist, philosopher and mathematician from Kūfah, was writing a book to prove that there were mistakes in the Qurʾān. One day, Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A) met one of al-Kindī's students and gave him some questions to ask his teacher. When al-Kindī heard those questions, he asked his student where he got them from, as they could not be his own. The student confessed that they were from the Imām.

Al-Kindī said, "Now you have spoken the truth, only someone from that house could have come up with this." He then burnt the book he was writing against the Qurʾān because the Imām's questions had proved to him that he was wrong.

KEY POINTS

1. Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A) is our eleventh Imām. He was born in Madīnah and then moved to Sāmarrāʾ with his father Imām al-Hadī (A).

2. Imām's excellent character changed even the most cruel prison guards into good people.

3. Imām prepared the Shīʿah for the ghaybah of his son Imām al-Mahdī (A), when they would not have direct access to their Imām.

10 SINCERITY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand that honesty and sincerity are very important qualities in a muʾmin.
2. How do we maintain sincerity at all times?

MY NOTES

THE IMPORTANCE OF SINCERITY IN OUR ACTIONS

Sincerity is called ikhlāṣ in Arabic. It is an essential quality for a true believer because it helps us ensure that we do good only for the sake of Allāh (SWT). Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ

Surely We have revealed to you the Book with the truth, therefore serve Allāh (SWT), being sincere to Him in obedience. [39:2]

Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) has said that the best person is not the one who has performed the most good deeds, but the one whose deeds are as a result of pure and sincere intentions.



True ikhlāṣ is when a person performs good deeds purely for the sake of Allāh (SWT), without the expectation of any reward either in this world or the Hereafter. In order to get to such a level of sincerity, we must constantly purify our souls by doing good deeds and keeping away from all sins.

Apart from having sincerity in our intentions, we must also have sincerity in our actions, and maintain that sincerity even after the action is complete. Sometimes people start an action such as praying ṣalāt al-layl with a pure intention to seek closeness to Allāh (SWT), and then perform the whole prayer in sincerity as well. However, they then feel proud that they have done a really great thing and start telling others that they wake up for ṣalāt al-layl. When this happens, the ṣalāh is no longer purely for Allāh (SWT)'s sake and sincerity is lost. It is therefore essential that we not only have sincerity in our intentions and in our actions, but continue maintaining that sincerity even after the action is complete.

Q: What does performing good deeds purely for the sake of Allāh (SWT) mean?

When we perform a good deed, we usually perform it for one of three main reasons: It is either purely for Allāh (SWT), or for our own personal benefit, or to show off to others. There is nothing wrong in performing good deeds for personal gain. For example, we may give zakāt to have an increase in wealth. Such an action is valid and acceptable. However, there is a higher level of sincerity where we perform good acts purely for Allāh (SWT)'s pleasure, and not for any personal gain. Such deeds have the greatest reward from Allāh (SWT).

ACTIVITY

Can you think of an action from the life of Imām ʿAlī (A) which personified sincerity for the sake of Allāh (SWT)?

WHAT CAN WE DO TO PRESERVE SINCERITY IN ALL OUR ACTIONS?

We must remember that Shayṭān always tries to take us away from sincerity and therefore, it is necessary that we constantly ask Allāh (SWT) to protect us from him. We should also be careful not to boast about our good actions, especially those that we have done in secret and no one knows about them. For example, when we wake up for ṣalāt al-layl in the middle of the night, we may feel like hinting at our friends that we wake up for ṣalāt al-layl by mentioning the weather at that time or something similar. We should not give in to such temptation because we would then lose the reward of having performed a good action secretly purely for the pleasure of Allāh (SWT).

We should remind ourselves of this verse of the Qurʾān every day, and live our lives according to it:

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Say, "Indeed my prayer and my worship, my life and my death are for the sake of Allāh (SWT), the Lord of all the worlds." [6:162]

One of the main reasons why we struggle to keep our intentions pure is because of our ego and our love for this world. If we love ourselves and our possessions more than we love Allāh (SWT), we will not be able to acquire complete sincerity in our intentions and actions. Therefore, we must try to control our egos to be able to achieve total purity of heart. This is not easy, but Allāh (SWT) has promised to help us if we try hard to get closer to Him.

Imām al-Bāqir (A) has said that the reward of a good deed performed in secret purely for the pleasure of Allāh (SWT) has a greater reward compared to a good deed done openly in front of others.

Remember, it is Allāh (SWT) who grants respect for His sincere servants in the eyes of others and attracts them to him/her, just like he has done for Rasūl Allāh (S) and the Aʾimmah (A)!

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the meaning of Ikhlāṣ?
2. How can we ensure that our intentions are sincere?
3. What can we do to ensure that our good actions are solely for the sake of Allāh (SWT)?
4. How can an action performed sincerely for the sake of Allāh (SWT) lose its value later on?

DID YOU KNOW?

Rasūl Allāh (S) has said:

"The person who devotes himself sincerely to Allāh (SWT) for forty days, streams of wisdom will flow from his heart to his tongue."

MY NOTES

KEY POINTS

1. Ikhlāṣ means sincerity in our intentions and actions.
2. In order to get closer to Allāh (SWT), we must ensure that our good actions are purely for His sake. One way in which we can achieve this is to perform good actions secretly and not tell others.
3. Shayṭān always tries to take us away from Allāh (SWT) by tempting us to show off and announce our good deeds to others. We should ask Allāh (SWT) to protect us from Shayṭān at all times.

11 PEOPLE IN FOCUS - IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is the day of ʿĀshūrāʾ?
2. What happened on that day?
3. Why was Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) killed in Karbalāʾ?

MY NOTES

IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN (A) AND THE DAY OF ʿĀSHŪRĀʾ

Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) is our third Imām. He is the son of Imām ʿAlī (A) and Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A).

In the year 60 AH, less than 50 years after the wafāt of Rasūl Allāh (S), Muʿāwiyah died and his son Yazīd became caliph. Yazīd was an evil man who loved to drink alcohol and play with monkeys and dogs. He committed every kind of sin and had no respect for Islam at all. He forced Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) to obey and follow him, but the Imām refused to do so. Had Imām accepted Yazīd's caliphate, he would have changed all the laws of Allāh (SWT). He would have made all sins permissible, and people would have forgotten the true values and principles of Islam. Imām was therefore prepared to leave his home in Madīnah rather than give allegiance to Yazīd.

Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) left Madīnah in Rajab 60 AH and first travelled to Makkah with his family. Whilst in Makkah, he got news that Yazīd had sent soldiers disguised as pilgrims to kill him. Imām did not want any bloodshed in the holy city of Makkah, so he left for Kūfah.



On the way to Kūfah, Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) was confronted by Ḥurr and his army, who led the Imām and his companions to Karbala. They arrived in Karbala on 2nd Muḥarram 61 AH. By 7th Muḥarram, food and water had run out in Imām's camp. Yazīd's soldiers would not allow any food or water to reach Imām's family and companions.

On the 10th of Muḥarram, Yazīd's commander in chief gave the order to start the battle and kill Imām al-Ḥusayn (A). This is known as the day of ʿĀshūrāʾ. Imām told his companions to leave Karbala to protect their lives, as Yazīd only wanted to kill him for refusing to pay allegiance to him. However, he had such loyal companions that they would not leave him. They fought bravely and continued protecting him until they were killed by Yazīd's soldiers.

Imām al-Ḥusayn's family were not spared either. All the men and young boys in Imām's camp, including his six month old son ʿAlī al-Aṣghar, died defending him and Islam.

The tragedy of Karbalāʾ is the greatest disaster in human history. No religion has mistreated the family of their own prophet like the so-called 'Muslims' of Shām and Kūfah mistreated the Ahl al-Bayt of Rasūl Allāh (S).

GROUP ACTIVITY

In small groups, list the companions and family members of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) you know of who sacrificed their lives for Islam in Karbalāʾ.

REMEMBERING IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN (A) AND HIS SACRIFICE

Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) taught us to be brave and never give in to a tyrant even if we have to give our lives for justice. We should always remember Karbalāʾ because it gives us courage and increases our love for Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) and the Ahl al-Bayt of Rasūl Allāh (S).

Imām al-Ḥusayn's love for Allāh (SWT) was so intense that it is reported that even in his last moments in the battlefield, as he lay alone, wounded, thirsty, bleeding and dying on the hot sands of Karbalāʾ, he performed sajdah to Allāh (SWT) and was heard reciting:

I have abandoned all of creation in Your Love,
And I have orphaned my children that I may come to see You;
For it they cut me to pieces because of my love for You,
My heart would still not yearn for anyone besides You!



Every Muḥarram, the Shīʿah of the Ahl al-Bayt gather in majālis to talk about Karbalāʾ and remember the tragedy of ʿĀshūrāʾ. Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) taught us that it is better to fight and die then to accept an evil leader like Yazīd. He taught us how to be brave and defend the weak against the cruel and evil leaders of the world at all times.

Imām al-Ḥusayn's story gives inspiration to millions of people until today, to stand up for truth and justice, and oppose evil, oppression and injustice. Some of the ways in which we remember Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) include majālis where we learn the teachings of Islam, recite poetry (marthīyyah) and ziyārah of the Imām.

We should also spread the message of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) to others as his teachings are universal.

IN SUMMARY

1. Why did Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) refuse to pay allegiance to Yazīd?
2. Why was Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) forced to Madīnah?
3. Why did Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) leave Makkah and head to Kūfah?
4. Who brought Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) to Karbalāʾ?
5. What is the day of ʿĀshūrāʾ?
6. What lessons can we learn from the tragedy of Karbalāʾ?

DID YOU KNOW?

For the rest of their lives, Sayyidah Zaynab (A) and Imām ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿAbidīn (A) told others the story of Karbala so that no one would forget what happened on the day of ʿĀshūrāʾ. They encouraged the Shīʿah to hold gatherings to remember the tragedy of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A).

KEY POINTS

1. After Muʿāwiyah's death, his son Yazīd came to power. He loved alcohol and had no respect for Rasūl Allāh (S) and Islam.

2. Yazīd forced Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) to accept him as caliph, but Imām al-Ḥusayn refused to do so. Imām did not want Yazīd to destroy all Islamic teachings.

3. Yazīd therefore ordered the killing if Imām al-Ḥusayn (A). Imām was killed in Karbalāʾ on the day of ʿĀshūrāʾ, and the women and children from his camp were taken prisoners.

11 ĪMĀN AND YAQĪN

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is Īmān?
2. What is the difference between īmān and islām?
3. What is yaqīn?

"Īmān is to know with the heart, speak with the tongue and act with the limbs."

Rasūl Allāh (S)

"Īmān is a tree. Its root is conviction (yaqīn). Its branches are taqwā (being God-conscious). Its light is modesty and its fruit is generosity."

Imām ʿAlī (A)

"Islām is to accept the truth without action. Īmān is to accept it with action."

Imām al-Bāqir (A)

ACTIVITY

In pairs, recite verses 8:2-4 and list down the five qualities of a muʾmin mentioned in these verses.

ĪMĀN IS A HIGHER LEVEL OF FAITH THAN ISLĀM

Īmān is loosely defined as "faith". Some people define it as "belief" but that is incorrect. Belief is what one believes with the mind, whereas faith is what one carries in the heart. Most atheists do not believe in the ability to realise anything with the heart. They believe everything is a scientific, mental and rational process.

Muslims believe the mind is useful in making day-to-day decisions and determining good from bad or right from wrong, but true knowledge of Allāh (SWT) and understanding spiritual concepts deeply is only possible with the heart, because it is a matter of having faith and not just believing in words with the mind and thoughts. A person with īmān is called a **muʾmin** (female: muʾminah). Īmān is a higher level of faith than islām (submission). Any person who recites the shahādah is a Muslim, but a muʾmin is one whose actions also show faith in Allāh (SWT) and submission to Him. A muʾmin completely surrenders to Allāh (SWT).

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

قَالَتْ الأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُلْ لَمْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ

The Bedouins say: 'We have faith (īmān).' Say: 'You do not yet have faith; rather, say: 'We have embraced Islam', because faith has not yet entered into your hearts... [49:14]

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ

The faithful (muʾminūn) are only those who have attained faith in Allāh and His Messenger and then have never doubted, and who wage jihād with their possessions and their persons in the way of Allāh. It is they who are sincere. [49:15]

Shakk (doubt) is a sign of weak īmān. A muʾmin without yaqīn may sometimes doubt in Allāh (SWT) or His mercy, but as soon as he/she realises his/her mistake, he/she repents. On the other hand, hypocrites never recover from their doubt. The more signs they see, the more they doubt. Nothing convinces them. Our level of īmān, yaqīn and shakk vary depending on how much importance we give to our souls and how hard we struggle against our egos. Everything we do physically affects us spiritually. What we eat, wear, say, do, watch, think, the friends we keep, our careers and livelihood, all affect our souls and therefore determine our level of īmān, yaqīn and shakk.

WHAT IS YAQĪN?

Above the level of īmān is the level of yaqīn (conviction). A muʾqin (or muʾqinah) is one who has total conviction and trust in Allāh (SWT). Nothing can shake his/her faith or trust in Allāh (SWT). Even in the bleakest situations and greatest dangers, their faith (īmān) does not waver. In sūrat Āl al-ʿImrān, Allāh (SWT) describes people with yaqīn as follows:

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ
فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

Those to whom the people said, 'All the people have gathered against you; so fear them.' That only increased them in faith (īmān), and they said, 'Allāh is sufficient for us, and He is the best One to trust.' [3:173]

Allāh (SWT) also mentions the story of Nabī Ibrāhīm (A), one of the greatest prophets of Allāh (SWT), when he asked Allāh to show him how He would raise people back to life after they were dead. It is not that Nabī Ibrāhīm did not believe Allāh (SWT) could do this, but because he wanted to have yaqīn so that his heart would be at rest. Nabī Ibrāhīm (A) said, "My Lord! Show me how You revive the dead". Allāh (SWT) said, "Do you not believe?" Nabī Ibrāhīm replied, "Yes indeed, but in order that my heart may be at rest."

Allāh then told him, "Take four birds. Then cut them into pieces, and place a part of them on every mountain, then call them; they will come to you. Know that Allāh is all-Mighty and all-Wise." [2:260]

In the case of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A), it was his martyrdom (shahādah) that would save Islam, so he wasn't looking to be saved from physical death. He was looking for his message and sacrifices not to be lost in the desert of Karbalāʾ. We are witnesses to the miracle of Karbalāʾ even today and how Allāh (SWT) has kept Imām al-Ḥusayn's message alive.

DID YOU KNOW?

When Nabī Musa (A) left Egypt with the Banū Isrāʾīl and got to the sea, everyone amongst them was certain this was their end and that they would never survive the attack from Firʿawn who was approaching with his powerful army to massacre them. Even at that moment, Nabī Musa (A) did not waver in faith and conviction. He said, "(We will) certainly not (be massacred)! Indeed my Lord is with me. He will guide me." It was then that Allāh (SWT) commanded him to strike the sea, and it parted, allowing the Banū Isrāʾīl to cross safely.

KEY POINTS

1. Īmān can be defined as faith. However, it is a higher level of faith compared to 'islām' (submission), because it is a level where faith has become deep-rooted within one's heart.

2. Yaqīn (certainty) is an even higher level of faith. A person with yaqīn does not waver even when he/she is faced with the most difficult circumstances.

3. Shakk (doubt) is the opposite of yaqīn.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is īmān? Why is it a higher level of faith than islām?
2. What is yaqīn? How is it different from īmān?
3. What is shakk? How does it affect one's īmān and yaqīn?
4. What are the qualities of a person with īmān?
5. Why did Nabī Ibrāhīm (A) ask Allāh (SWT) to show him how He raises the dead back to life?

12 PEOPLE IN FOCUS - SAYYIDAH ZAYNAB (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. An introduction into the life of Sayyidah Zaynab (A).
2. Sayyidah Zaynab's role in the aftermath of the tragedy of Karbalāʾ.

MY NOTES

SAYYIDAH ZAYNAB (A) AND THE AFTERMATH OF KARBALĀʾ

Sayyidah Zaynab was the eldest daughter of Imām ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (A) and Sayyidah Fāṭimah al-Zahrāʾ (A) and therefore the granddaughter of Rasūl Allāh (S). She was also the sister of Imām al-Ḥasan (A) and Imām al-Ḥusayn (A). She was married to her cousin ʿAbd Allāh ibn Jaʿfar al-Ṭayyār. Jaʿfar was the brother of Imām ʿAlī (A).

She was very knowledgeable, chaste and patient. During the days in Madīnah, before the tragedy of Karbalāʾ, she used to hold classes for women and teach them tafsīr of the Qurʾān and aḥādīth of Rasūl Allāh (S). Imām Zayn al-ʿAbidīn (A) called her ʿālimah ghayr muʿallimah (A scholar without a tutor).

She was very close to Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) and played an important role in the Tragedy of Karbalāʾ. The Message of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) did not disappear in Karbalāʾ because of her and Imām Zayn al-ʿAbidīn (A). She is therefore often referred to as 'Sharīkat al-Ḥusayn' (the partner of al-Ḥusayn).



Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) respected and valued his sister's piety so much that when he was leaving her for the last time to go to the battlefield, he said to her, "do not forget me in your ṣalāt al-layl."

After the Battle of Karbalāʾ, the message of Imām al-Ḥusayn's sacrifice was carried to Kūfah and Shām (Damascus) and back to Madīnah by his son Imām ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿAbidīn (A) and his sister Sayyidah Zaynab (A).

Imām Zayn al-ʿAbidīn (A) was too ill in Karbalāʾ to fight with the other men. He was therefore taken prisoner by Yazīd's soldiers, along with the ladies and children from Imām al-Ḥusayn's camp in Karbalāʾ. They were taken to Kūfah and then to Shām. Sayyidah Zaynab's sermons in front of Yazīd's governor ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād in Kūfah and Yazīd in Shām were so powerful they reminded people of Imām ʿAlī's sermons. It is through these sermons that she spread the message of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A).

ACTIVITY

Read the excerpts from Sayyidah Zaynab's sermon in Yazīd's palace in Damascus. What 3 lessons can we learn from this sermon?

After the Ahl al-Bayt (A) were released from the prison of Yazīd in Shām, Sayyidah Zaynab (A) held gatherings to mourn for her brother and to let everyone know what Yazīd had done to the family of Rasūl Allāh (S). She was one of the first ones to establish the practice of majālis to mourn the killing of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A).

She faced many hardships after the tragedy of Karbalāʾ, and passed away in Shām (Damascus), where she is buried.

SAYYIDAH ZAYNAB IN THE COURT OF YAZĪD IN DAMASCUS

After the battle of Karbalāʾ, the women and children from Imām al-Ḥusayn's camp were taken prisoners. They were paraded in the streets of Kūfah and Shām (Damascus) for show the people what would happen to anyone who opposed Yazīd's rule. When the prisoners arrived at Yazīd's court in Damascus, he openly declared that he had taken revenge on the family of Muḥammad (S) for his ancestors who had been killed in the battle of Badr.

Sayyidah Zaynab addressed the gathering in Yazīd's court saying:
"O Yazīd! Do you think that we have become humiliated due to the martyrdom of our people and our own captivity? As you have blocked all the paths for us, and we have been made captives and are being taken from one place to another, do you think that Allāh has taken away his blessings from us? Do you think that by killing the godly persons you have become great and respectable and the Almighty looks at you with special grace and kindness?

You have become boastful because you think you have won. However, you have forgotten what Allāh says:

The disbelievers must not think that our respite is for their good. We only give them time to let them increase their sins. For them there will be a humiliating torment. [3: 178]

O son of the freed ones! Is it justice that you keep your women in seclusion but have made the helpless daughters of Rasūl Allāh (S) ride on swift camels from one city to another? You have shed the blood of the sons of the Holy Prophet. However, you shall go before Allāh soon. You shall meet your ancestors and wish you had not said what you've just said.

You will soon go before Rasūl Allāh (S) and see that his children are in Paradise. This is the promise which Allāh has made in the Qurʾān:

Do not think of those who are slain for the cause of Allāh as dead. They are alive with their Lord and receive sustenance from Him. [3: 169]"

IN SUMMARY

1. Who are Sayyidah Zaynab (A)'s parents?
2. How did she help spread the message of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A)?
3. Who was she married to?
4. Sayyidah Zaynab (A) had the titles ʿālimah ghayr muʿallimah and 'sharīkat al-Ḥusayn'. What do these titles mean?
5. Where is she buried?

DID YOU KNOW?

The name "Zaynab" is made of up two words: Zayn (adornment or beauty) and 'Ab' (father). 'Zaynab' therefore means "the Adornment of her Father". Sayyidah Zaynab was given this beautiful name by Rasūl Allāh (S) himself.

KEY POINTS

1. Sayyidah Zainab (A) was the daughter of Imām ʿAlī (A) and Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A). She was the sister of Imāms al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn (A).

2. She was very close to her brother Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) and accompanied him to Karbalāʾ.

3. She was taken prisoner after the battle on the day of ʿĀshūrāʾ. She gave powerful sermons in the court of Ibn Ziyād and Yazīd, reminding people of Imām al-Ḥusayn's stand for justice and truth.

4. She passed away in Shām (Damascus) and is buried there.

12 MODESTY & CHASTITY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Why does Islam place a lot of importance on modesty and chastity?
2. How can we preserve our modesty and chastity?
3. Who is a maḥram?

MY NOTES

HAYĀʾ (MODESTY AND CHASTITY) IN ISLAM

Sins related to sexual behaviour are indicative of a lack of chastity and modesty. The words chaste and chastity stem from the Latin adjective castus meaning pure, and are defined as sexual behaviour that is acceptable to the moral standards and guidelines of one's culture, civilization or religion.

In Islam, a person who is pure and pious in character and behaviour, and whose sexual behaviour is strictly within the guidelines laid down by sharīʿah is said to be chaste. In other words, a Muslim can and should be chaste in speech, dress and interaction with others.

Modesty is often defined as downplaying one's achievements and being humble. However, in the context of this lesson, modesty refers to behaving and appearing in public decently, as opposed to, for example, dressing indecently or suggestively in order to attract attention to oneself or incite sinful desires and lust in others.

Chastity and modesty (ḥayāʾ) are particularly emphasised for those on whom ḥijāb is wājib. Ḥayāʾ is like self-respect. If a person loses it, it requires a lot of effort to regain it.

Rasūl Allāh (S) has said: **"Whenever there is indecency in something it makes it ugly, and whenever there is ḥayāʾ in a thing it makes it beautiful without exception."**

Imām ʿAlī (A) has said: **"The best clothing in this world is ḥayāʾ." and also "A lot of ḥayāʾ in a person is proof of his or her faith (īmān)."**

Imām al-Ḥasan (A) has said: **"One who has no religion has no shame (ḥayāʾ)."**

Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A) has said: **"Ḥayāʾ is from faith (īmān) and faith (īmān) is in Jannah."**

These aḥādīth of the Maʿṣūmīn (A) demonstrate the importance Islam places on ḥayāʾ (modesty and chastity).



ACTIVITY

In pairs, read verse 24:31 and list down all those who are maḥram according to this verse.

PRESERVING OUR MODESTY AND CHASTITY AT ALL TIMES

People sometimes lose their chastity and modesty when they are in a place where no one knows them, such as on holiday. Young people are also likely to behave without ḥayāʾ when their parents and relatives are not around. In fact, it is now increasingly common for young people to go away on holiday with their friends to places where they can behave in unchaste and immodest ways. However, it is important to remember that Allāh (SWT) is always watching our actions, and the guidelines laid down by Islam are for the protection of our own bodies and souls.

Rasūl Allāh (S) said: **"One who is not ashamed of Allāh in public will not be ashamed of Allāh in private."**

He also said: **"A person should feel shame from the two angels who are watching his/her actions as if he has two righteous neighbours who are with him night and day."**

Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A) has said: **"Be ashamed of (disobeying) Allāh in privacy as you are ashamed of people in public."**

DID YOU KNOW?

Nabī Yūsuf (A) was bought as a slave by the governor of Egypt. The governor's wife Zulaykhā desired to have an immoral relationship with Nabī Yūsuf (A) and she threatened to imprison him if he refused to be with her.

Nabī Yūsuf (A) prayed to Allāh (SWT):

"My Lord! The prison is dearer to me than what they invite me to. If You do not turn away their schemes from me, then I will incline towards them and become one of the senseless." [12:33]



IN SUMMARY

1. What is ḥayāʾ?
2. Why is ḥayāʾ considered a very important quality in Islam?
3. Why should there be such great emphasis on chastity and modesty in society?
4. What did Nabī Yūsuf (A) ask from Allāh (SWT) when the governor's wife desired him?
5. What steps can we take to ensure that we maintain our ḥayāʾ at all times?

KEY POINTS

1. Ḥayāʾ (modesty & chastity) are very important qualities of a Muslim. Imām ʿAlī (A) has said that it is a proof of faith (īmān).

2. Islam has laid strict guidelines for ḥayāʾ in Muslims because these qualities help us protect our own bodies and souls.

3. We should observe ḥayāʾ at all times, even when we think no one is watching us because Allāh (SWT) sees everything we do.

13 SIGNS OF THE REAPPEARANCE OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. How do we refer to Imām al-Mahdī (A)?
2. What are the general signs of reappearance of Imām al-Mahdī (A)?
3. What are the definite signs of reappearance of Imām al-Mahdī (A)?

MY NOTES

IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A) - SIGNS OF HIS REAPPEARANCE

Imām al-Mahdī (A) is our living Imām. His name is Muḥammad, but he is never referred to by his own name. Instead, we refer to him using his titles, some of which 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))
* **Sāhib al-ʿAsr wa al-Zamān** (Master of the present age and time)
* **Al-Muntaẓar** (the Awaited Imām)
* **Baqiyyat Allāh** (Allāh (SWT)'s remaining representative on earth)

When we refer to Imām al-Mahdī (A), we say 'ajjalalāhu taʿāla farajahu sharīf which means "may Allāh hasten his return".

Imām al-Mahdī (A) is currently in ghaybah. The Shīʿah believe that he lives amongst people but they do not recognise him when they see 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.



No one except Allāh (SWT) knows when the Imām will reappear. However, the Aʾimmah have told us the signs that will indicate his reappearance. Some of these signs are general, whereas others are definite.

The general signs indicating the return of Imām talk of a world filled with injustice such as open disbelief in Allāh (SWT), widespread adultery, widespread drinking of alcohol, disobedience and disrespect of parents, the taking and giving of interest (usury), the use of music and intoxicants, obsession with the world and excessive materialism, the lack of any sense of shame or modesty, the inability to distinguish good from bad and right from wrong, the rule of oppressors and the righteous being weak in power.

ACTIVITY

In pairs, list as many titles of Imām al-Mahdī (A) as you know, and state what they mean.

THE DEFINITE SIGNS INDICATING DHUHOOR OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ

These definite signs will occur very close to the time of the Imām's return.

* A loud shout will be heard in the heavens announcing the return of Imām al -Mahdī (A). Everyone will hear it and understand it in their own language.
* There will be a lunar eclipse at the start or end of the month of Ramaḍān, and in the same month a solar eclipse will occur in the middle of the month.
* The sun will rise from the West.
* A man will rise from Khurāsān (Iran) and invite people to join his army for amr bil maʿrūf and nahy ʿan al-munkar. This army will ultimately join Imām al-Mahdī (A). The Imāms have said that anyone who hears of al-Khurāsānī should rush to join him.
* An evil man from the descendants of Abū Sufyān will rise to power in Syria, Palestine and Egypt. He will fight Imām al-Mahdī (A) but will be killed. The army of Sufyānī will be "swallowed" by the earth at a place between Makkah and Madīnah.
* Nabī ʿĪsāʾ (A) will return to help Imām al-Mahdī (A).
* Dajjāl (known amongst Christians as the Antichrist) will come at a time when people are starving all over the world and will dominate over people by demanding that they worship him in exchange for food. Nabī ʿĪsāʾ (A) will ultimately kill Dajjāl.
* The Murder of Nafs al-Zakiyyah (the Pure Soul). A very saintly man will be murdered in Makkah in front of the Kaʿbah between Rukn al-Hajar (where the Black Stone is placed on the Kaʿbah) and Maqām Ibrāhim.

These are just some of the definite signs. Many other signs can be found in books of aḥādīth.



IN SUMMARY

1. State any five titles of Imām al-Mahdī and state what they mean.
2. Where does Imām al-Mahdī (A) live?
3. What should we say when we mention the name of Imām al-Mahdī (A)?
4. What are the general signs for the reappearance of the Imām?
5. What are the definite signs for the reappearance of the Imām?

DID YOU KNOW?

Sunnī Muslims also believe in Imām al-Mahdī (A) who is a descendant of Imām ʿAlī (A) and Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A). They quote aḥādīth from Rasūl Allāh (S) that the world will never come to an end until the Mahdī comes forth and establishes peace and justice. However, they believe the Mahdī is to be born in the future in time for his rising to power.

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 'ajjalalāhu ta'āla farajahu sharif which means "may Allāh hasten his return".

3. The Aʾimmah (A) have told us the general and definite signs indicating the return of Imām al-Mahdī (A).

14 HUMILITY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is humility?
2. Why is it important to be humble at all times?
3. How can we show humility?
4. We must be humble in our worship.

MY NOTES

WHAT IS HUMILITY?

Humility is the opposite of being boastful and proud. It is a very important characteristic to have, because it makes our worship more meaningful and helps us serve others for the sake of Allāh (SWT).

We should be humble only for Allāh (SWT), and not humiliate ourselves in front of others, especially for the sake of worldly gain. Imām ʿAlī (A) has said, **"One who respects a rich person and humbles himself before him only because for his wealth, loses one-third of his faith."**

HUMILITY AT WORK

A person with humility does not feel it is below his or her dignity to help out with a simple task or have a basic job. Similarly, a humble person will not feel ashamed to pick up any litter from the ground or volunteer to serve others.



Working in a profession that is ḥarām (such as working in a bar, casino or other place of sin) is a disgrace and humiliation. However, working hard to earn a ḥalāl livelihood as a doctor or a cleaner, is not humiliating. What matters most is that we place our trust in Allāh (SWT) and work hard instead of begging from others.

HUMILITY IN WORSHIP

Rasūl Allāh (S) described humility as the main ingredient that brings sweetness in worship. In other words, when we pray with humility, our worship has a unique pleasure and sweetness. That is why people who are humble are often seen to pray for long periods with prolonged rukūʿ and sujūd in their ṣalāh. The more they humble themselves before Allāh (SWT), the more honourable Allāh (SWT) makes them in the eyes of His creation. Sometimes a humble person reaches a status that even the angels of Allāh (SWT) admire.

A humble person is not embarrassed in admitting his/her mistakes and asking for forgiveness, especially in front of Allāh (SWT). However, a proud person would feel embarrassed and will not want to ask for forgiveness when he/she makes a mistake in front of people, as well as in front of Allāh (SWT).

ACTIVITY

State any 3 qualities of a humble person and 3 qualities of a proud person.

HUMILITY COMES THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

Imām ʿAlī (A) described humility as "the fruit of knowledge". The more knowledgeable we become in religion, and the more we get to know and understand Allāh (SWT), the less materialistic we become, and the more humble and forbearing we become.

When we see someone who is proud and boastful, wanting praise and recognition, greedy for material wealth, always judging others, never forgiving others, always ready to take revenge and fight for his/her wants, even at the expense of the rights of others, these are all signs of ignorance and a lack of true knowledge and wisdom.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا

The servants of the All-beneficent (Allāh) are those who walk humbly on the earth, and when the ignorant address them, they say, "Peace!" [25:63]

When people becomes more humble, they pay less attention to the faults of others and concentrate on their own shortcomings, so that they can continuously improve their own character. They become more concerned with what Allāh (SWT) expects of them, and how they can become better people, so that Allāh (SWT) is more pleased with them.

Imām ʿAlī (A) has said:

"Blessed is one who is so occupied with his own faults such that he does not notice the faults of others."

IN SUMMARY

1. What are the qualities of a humble person?
2. What is the opposite of humility?
3. Rasūl Allāh (S) said that humility brings sweetness in worship. What does this mean?
4. Imām ʿAlī (A) described humility as the "fruit of knowledge". What did he mean by this?
5. How does being humble help us improve ourselves?

DID YOU KNOW?

Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) said:

"Humility is to sit in a crowd without expecting special recognition; to greet everyone you meet instead of expecting them to greet you first; and to give up your right to others even though you have a greater right than them."

KEY POINTS

1. Humility is the opposite of being proud and boastful. It is a quality that comes as a result of knowledge and a deeper understanding of Allāh (SWT).

2. We must be humble only for the sake of Allāh (SWT), and not humiliate ourselves in front of others for the sake of worldly gain.

3. A humble person does not see any job to be beneath him/her, and is always happy to help others.

4. Humility also makes our worship more meaningful.

15 ḤUSN AND SŪʾ AL-ẒANN

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is ḥusn al-ẓann?
2. What is sūʾ al-ẓann?
3. Why is it important to think positive of others at all times?

MY NOTES

WHAT IS ḤUSN AL-ẒANN AND SŪʾ AL-ẒANN?

Islam teaches us to think positively of others and give them the benefit of doubt. This is called ḥusn al-ẓann in Arabic. Sūʾ al-ẓann is the opposite of ḥusn al-ẓann. It means thinking negatively of others.



Ḥusn al-ẓann = thinking positively and well of others
sūʾ al-ẓann = thinking negatively of others

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِنْ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ...

O you who have faith! Avoid much suspicion (ẓann). Indeed some suspicions are sins. [49:12]

Q: How can we practice ḥusn al-ẓann in the following scenarios?

Scenario 1: A person says something to us but we are not sure what he/she meant. Did he/she mean to praise us, or was he/she being sarcastic and was actually insulting us?

Imām ʿAlī (A) has said, **"If someone says something to you that can mean a good or bad thing, always assume the good" (i.e. give them the benefit of doubt) and "If someone thinks well and good of you then make what he thinks come true!"**

Scenario 2: We see a person going into or coming out of a place of sin (e.g. a pub, betting shop or casino).

We usually suspect and blame others because we only judge them by their actions and are not aware of their intentions. We do the same actions but don't blame ourselves because we know the intentions behind our actions and use them to justify our deeds. Allāh (SWT) is aware of everyone's intentions. We have no right to judge other people whether they are Muslims or not. The only exception is the judge in an Islamic court who passes judgement based on evidence in order to uphold law. Imām Zayn al-ʿAbidīn (A) has said that we should always think of people younger than us to be better than us because they have had less time than us to do bad deeds. On the other hand, we should think of those older than us to be better than us as they have had more time to do good deeds. We should

GROUP ACTIVITY

In small groups, discuss the two scenarios on this page. How can you apply ḥusn al-ẓann and keep away from sūʾ al-ẓann in each situation?

always think of a person the same age as us to be better than us because we do not know what they have done but we know exactly all the bad that we have done.

THE EFFECTS OF SŪʾ AL-ẒANN

There was a farmer who owned a guard dog. He had trained the dog well and took great care of it. When the farmer and his wife went out to the fields to work, they would leave their young son at home with the dog.

One day, when the farmer and his wife were returning home from the fields, they saw the dog sitting at the gate, its mouth stained with blood. The farmer thought the dog had killed his son, so he started hitting it with his spade until it died.

The farmer's wife ran into the house, and saw that their son was alive and there was a dead snake in the room. When the farmer came in and saw the dead snake, he realised his mistake. The dog had actually saved his son's life. The blood on the dog's mouth was that of the snake, but it was too late to do anything for the faithful dog. The farmer made the mistake of suspecting the dog.

This simple anecdote teaches us how easily we can be so unjust and cruel to others when we assume things and suspect them without any proof. In aḥādīth we are told to think of 70 different excuses in defence of others before even thinking of suspecting them.

However, it is a different matter if a person regularly sins in public without any care for Allāh (SWT)'s commandments. Such a person is called a fāsiq.



IN SUMMARY

1. What is the meaning of ḥusn al-ẓann and sūʾ al-ẓann?
2. Why should we always think positively of others?
3. Why do people usually suspect and blame others without any evidence of wrong-doing?
4. Who is a fāsiq?
5. What are the harmful effects of sūʾ al-ẓann on relationships?

DID YOU KNOW?

Nabī ʿĪsāʾ (A) once said to the people, **"O slaves of evil! How come you blame others purely on suspicion but you never blame yourselves even though you are sure?"** (i.e. although you are certain of the wrong you have done, you never blame yourself, but you easily blame others though you have no certain proof of their wrong-doing).

MY NOTES

KEY POINTS

1. Islam teaches us to think positively of others and give them the benefit of doubt. This is called ḥusn al-ẓann in Arabic.

2. Sūʾ al-ẓann is the opposite of ḥusn al-ẓann. It means thinking negatively of others.

3. We should not be quick to judge others because sūʾ al-ẓann can have very bad consequences.

16 SPYING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is the Islamic perspective on spying?
2. Understand that spying on others is forbidden in Islam.
3. Understand the consequences of spying on others.

MY NOTES

THE ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON SPYING

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۖ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا ۚ

O you who have faith! Avoid much suspicion. Indeed some suspicions are sins. And do not spy or backbite one another. [47:12]

In this verse, Allāh (SWT) has mentioned three negative qualities: suspicion, spying and backbiting. It is interesting to note the order in which Allāh (SWT) has mentioned these qualities. This is because one leads to another. When we suspect people of wrongdoing and do not trust them, we start prying into their private life to try and find evidence to support our suspicion. Once we think we have some form of evidence, we start putting two and two together to form judgements about that person. We then share this information with others (backbiting). It is because of this reason that the Qur'ān mentions these three negative traits in that order, so that the relationship between them is made clear.

Although Islam has forbidden spying and prying into the private lives of others, there are circumstances where it may become permissible to find out personal information about others. This includes parents looking out for the safety and welfare of their children and when someone's safety or life is at serious risk.

When we need information or advice about others, we must only speak to those who are honest, just and reliable. It would not make sense to ask the town's gossip to share information about someone because such information would not be reliable.



ACTIVITY

Is it okay for parents to look through their children's phone, email and internet use?

WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL DANGERS OF SPYING ON OTHERS?

One of the main dangers brought about as a result of spying into the lives of others is that the victim's honour and dignity is put in disrepute and an irreversible damage is done to one's status within in society. Through spying into the private affairs of another person and then spreading this information to others, the respect and honour of a believer is trampled upon and destroyed.

The essential pre-requisite of religious brotherhood is that a true believer does not spread those things which would result in the loss of a Muslim's character and honour amongst the people.

Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) has said: **"The furthest state that a person can be from the spiritual presence of Allāh (SWT) is when he befriends another person and remembers whatever shortcomings and weaknesses that person has so that he can dishonour him one day."**

Another consequence of spying is that the spy will find it difficult to trust anyone and will start suspecting everyone of wrongdoing. He/she may then start withdrawing from society, become reclusive and will not be able play a constructive role within society.



Thirdly, Islam has given us freedom to make our own choices to a great extent. What we do in our private life is up to us, as long as our actions do not harm others. When spying is prevalent in society, this personal freedom is taken away from people. If other people were to have complete knowledge of a person's actions, then the pleasure of life that comes about through the freedom of doing as one wishes in his/her privacy would be taken away.

IN SUMMARY

1. How are suspicion, spying and backbiting related?
2. State any three negative effects of spying.
3. Give any two examples when it may be necessary and therefore permissible to spy on others.
4. When we need private information about someone, what sort of people should we ask?
5. How is people's personal freedom taken away when they become victims of spying?

DID YOU KNOW?

Islam places great emphasis on social harmony and has provided four types of security for the community of believers:

* Security of one's life. Security of one's property.
* Security of one's honour and dignity.
* Security of one's character and personality

KEY POINTS

1. Allāh (SWT) tells the believers not to spy on one another.

2. Spying is closely related to suspicion (suspecting others of wrongdoing) and backbiting. A person who engages in one of these is likely to engage in all three.

3. Spying has many negative consequences on people as well as society, such as ruining people's reputation, taking away their freedom, privacy, dignity and honour.

17 ALCOHOL & DRUGS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Why are intoxicants ḥarām in Islam?
2. What does the Qurʾān say about alcohol?
3. What are the negative effects of alcohol and drugs?

MY NOTES

WHY IS ALCOHOL ḤARĀM 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. For example, drink driving can cause the death of innocent people. Similarly, children whose mothers take alcohol in pregnancy are born with its harmful effects.

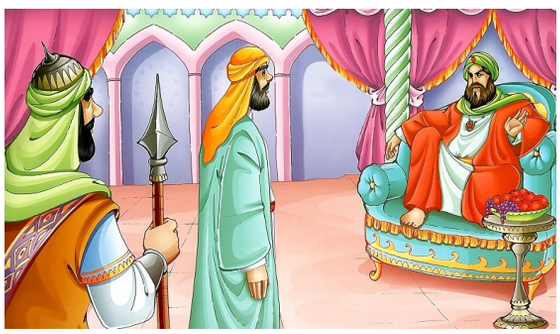
ACTIVITY

What are the negative effects of alcohol on society?

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, does not fear committing any sin, respects the rights of no one 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 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."

WE SHOULD NOT EAT AT A TABLE WHERE ALCOHOL IS SERVED



The ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Manṣūr often invited Imām Jaʿfar al-Sadiq (A) to Iraq to keep an eye on the Imām's activities as he feared the Imām would gather support and overthrow him. During one of his visits to Iraq, the army commander invited the Imām to a banquet to celebrate the birth of his son. The caliph al-Manṣūr and other senior officials were also invited.

The tablecloth was laid with guests seated on both sides, and dinner was served. A guest asked for a drink, and was handed a glass of wine. As soon as the Imām saw the wine, he got up and left. The people at the banquet urged him to return but he refused saying: **"Rasūl Allāh (S) has said that a person who sits at a table where alcohol is served will invoke the curse of Allāh upon himself."**

When we go out with friends or colleagues, it is important that we do not sit with them if they are drinking alcohol. We should avoid any restaurant that has a bar or sells alcohol.

Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) advised Muslims not to marry a person who drinks alcohol. He also said, **"If a person who drinks alcohol falls ill do not visit him, and if he dies do not attend his funeral."**

DID YOU KNOW?

Rasūl Allāh (S) cursed ten groups of people who have anything to do with alcohol:

- Those who cultivate a crop with the intention of producing alcohol from it
- Those who crush the fruit to make wine
- Those who transport it
- Those who take delivery of it from the supplier
- Those who sell it
- Those who buy it
- Those who serve it
- Those who drink it
- Those who sit at a table where alcohol is drunk
- 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. According to the ḥadīth of Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A), why is alcohol ḥarām in Islam?
4. What are the ten groups of people that Rasūl Allāh (S) has cursed due to their involvement in alcohol?
5. What are the harmful effects of alcohol abuse on a person?

17 ALCOHOL & DRUGS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Why are drugs ḥarām in Islam?
2. What are the negative effects of drugs?

MY NOTES

WHY ARE DRUGS ḤARĀM IN ISLAM?

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, marijuana, etc. Sometimes pain-killers are taken in larger quantities or stronger doses to give the same effect as narcotics. Such usages is also considered ḥarām.

Recreational drugs exist in many forms including plants, liquids, tablets, powders and injections. Drugs are highly addictive and anyone who makes the mistake of 'just trying' them will soon find it very hard to break the habit and will constantly go back for more.



It is increasingly common for dealers to sell drugs of poor quality or 'fakes' which can lead to death within a few hours of taking them. It is therefore very important that you keep away from 'friends' who may be using and dealing with drugs. Never give in to any pressure to even try once. When you find yourself in such a situation, stand up and walk out immediately even if such 'friends' laugh at you, call you names or tease you for being a coward. You will always be glad and thankful you walked away.

If you know people with a drug problem, do not try to help them on your own or get too close to them even if you feel sorry for them. They need professional help and you can put yourself in danger by becoming close friends with them.

There are times when you will feel bored, lonely, confused and feel your parents don't understand you. Whatever the issue is, talk to an elder or your teacher, but never turn to alcohol or drugs because it will ruin your life and your Hereafter and you will regret it when it's too late.

Not only is drug use absolutely ḥarām in Islam, selling or passing on drugs to others is also ḥarām. This is because people who deal in drugs destroy many lives. They prey on innocent lives for money, so there should be zero tolerance towards them in society.

ACTIVITY

Discuss the reasons why young people may want to experiment with drugs, and what they can do to prevent getting involved with drugs.

WHAT ARE THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF DRUGS?

Often, addicts are the last to know they have a problem because they cannot see the outward signs of addiction. They attempt to hide their drug use from loved ones by escaping to a 'safe' space where they can be alone. The addict believes that he/she is keeping the drug use secret from everyone else, when in fact, the physical and behavioural signs of addiction are often immediately apparent.

Young people addicted to drugs lose interest in studies and have little ambition for a career. They prefer isolation and dark spaces, and may suffer from mood swings. They may also become increasingly paranoid and may hallucinate.

When they have no money to purchase drugs they will turn to theft and crime to feed their addiction. They may also constantly borrow money from friends and family until they are heavily in debt. Dealers often exploit desperate addicts by getting them involved in crime and violence. Drugs also expose people to serious illnesses and diseases because of the exchange of contaminated needles and apparatus.

It is important to know that many of the drug addicts we see on the streets were once active, healthy and good people. They had career ambitions, wanted to succeed in life, and had loving families. They then became victims of drug abuse, eventually ending up on the street as their friends and families gave up on them. They did not turn to drugs because they were poor and homeless – they became poor and homeless because of their addiction to drugs.

People who risk experimenting with drugs not only risk ruining their lives in this world, but destroy their ākhirah (Hereafter) as well. It is for this reason that we must keep good friends, so that we continue visiting the masjid regularly and be part of a youth group at our local masjid, rather than have friends who tempt us to sin.

DID YOU KNOW?

Imām al-Bāqir (A) warned that a person who drinks alcohol will be raised on the Day of Judgement with a darkened face, with his tongue hanging out, saliva dripping on his chest and with extreme thirst. He will scream "thirst! thirst!" until he enters Hell and drinks from its filth and dirt.

KEY POINTS

1. Recreational drugs taken to alter a person's state of mind are ḥarām in Islam.

2. Drugs destroy a person's life as well as their Hereafter.

3. People who become addicted to drugs often end up committing crimes to feed their addiction. They lose their friends, and their families also give up on them eventually, so they may end up on the streets.

4. Dealing in drugs is also ḥarām in Islam.

IN SUMMARY

1. What type of drugs are ḥarām in Islam?
2. What are the harmful effects of drugs on an individual?
3. How does drug abuse cause families to break down?
4. Why is dealing in drugs also considered ḥarām in Islam?
5. What can we do to keep away from drug abuse?
6. What are some of the signs of drug addiction?
7. How can we help an addict?
8. Why do drug addicts sometimes end up on the streets?

18 VOLUNTEERING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is the Islamic perspective on volunteering and community service?
2. How should Muslims contribute to society?

MY NOTES

ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is helping out in activities that benefit other people, animals or the environment. It can involve a great deal of work or just a small gesture of kindness, and can be physical, verbal, intellectual or moral, making it possible for everyone to get involved regardless of their abilities and workloads.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۚ

Cooperate in piety and righteousness, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression [5:2]

This verse underpins the Islamic perspective on community service. It tells the believers to cooperate with each other in good deeds. Rasūl Allāh (S) has said, **"Whosoever removes a grief from a believer, Allāh (SWT) will remove from him a grief on the Day of Judgment."**

This ḥadīth teaches us that even a single act of kindness to alleviate the suffering of another person has a great reward in the Hereafter. Therefore, even if we are not able to give much of our time to volunteer in our community, we should at least try to do a little bit whenever we can. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān that even an atom's weight of good will be rewarded in the Hereafter:

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ

So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it [99:7]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا

As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds —indeed We do not waste the reward of those who are good in deeds. [18:30]

When we volunteer in our community and carry out social work in the society at large, we not only help others but also help to spread the good teachings of Islam through our actions. During the times of Rasūl Allāh (S) and the Aʾimmah (A), a lot of people converted to Islam simply by observing the character and good nature of the Maʿṣūmīn (A). Our good actions and kindness can also have the same effect of bringing people to the right path. It is not necessary that we talk to people about Islam when we volunteer. Our good actions will speak for themselves - "actions speak louder than words".

GROUP ACTIVITY

In small groups, decide on an activity you can do as a group over the coming week to help others through volunteering.

WHY SHOULD MUSLIMS GET INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY SERVICE?

Allāh (SWT) has created us as social beings, meaning that we need each other for our survival. Islam encourages us to constantly help one another because we all have a common purpose in life: to reach perfection by getting closer to Allāh (SWT).

People who initiate change in their communities are greatly rewarded because the effects and benefits of such initiatives remain useful for generations. For example, if a person digs a well to benefit the people living around it, he/she will continue receiving the reward for it for as long as people continue benefitting from that well. This is also known as al-thāwab al-jāriyah (perpetual reward).

There are many ways in which we can get involved in community service. Examples include volunteering at a care home, helping out an elderly or disabled person with their household chores or gardening, keeping people company when they are lonely, sharing knowledge and skills, helping out in hospitals, volunteering at the mosque or community centre and helping the poor by volunteering at shelters and soup kitchens.



Volunteering and social service is very rewarding and gives a sense of contentment and self-worth. It also helps us appreciate Allāh (SWT)'s blessings on us when we interact with those who are less fortunate than us. Another great advantage of volunteering and community service is that it gives us an opportunity to make friends with similar interests who encourage us to spend our free time helping society rather than waste it on useless activities.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is volunteering?
2. What are the benefits of volunteering and community service?
3. Apart from helping others through volunteering, why is it also necessary to help protect the animals and the environment?
4. What sort of activities can we do to volunteer in our local community?

DID YOU KNOW?

In addition to being of service to humanity, we must also work to protect the animals, plants and our environment in general. These are gifts of Allāh (SWT) for us and it is necessary that we protect them for the future, as they are essential for our survival. Protecting the animals and the environment is also an indirect form of social work as through it we are helping the future generations.

KEY POINTS

1. Islam places great emphasis on volunteering and community service.

2. Any act of kindness, no matter how large or small, is rewarded by Allāh (SWT).

3. Volunteering helps us appreciate Allāh (SWT)'s blessings, and gives us an opportunity to serve Allāh (SWT)'s creation. It is very rewarding and also helps us make good friends.

19 TAWBAH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What do the terms tawbah and istighfār mean?
2. How do we do tawbah and istighfār?

MY NOTES

WHAT IS TAWBAH AND ISTIGHFĀR?

Asking Allāh (SWT) to forgive us for our sins is called istighfār. Making a firm resolution not to sin again and turning back to Allāh (SWT) is called tawbah. When a person repents, he/she first does istighfār (ask for forgiveness) and then tawbah (turn back to Allāh (SWT)). Tawbah is therefore a higher state of repentance than istighfār.

A complete and sincere change of heart and turning back to Allāh (SWT) is called tawbah naṣūḥa (sincere and complete repentance).

One of the greatest sins in Islam is to lose hope in Allāh (SWT)'s mercy. This means no matter how many times we fall and sin and no matter how many times we have already asked for forgiveness, we must never stop asking Allāh (SWT) to forgive us. The only condition is that every time we ask, we must be sincere and not say words of istighfār knowing very well that we plan to sin again.

قُلْ يَاعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ لاَ تَقْنَطُوا مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

O My servants who have committed excesses against their souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allāh. Indeed Allāh will forgive all sins. Indeed He is the All-forgiving, the All-merciful. [39:53]

Allāh (SWT) is too Merciful to allow a person to beg Him for forgiveness and then turn him/her away and refuse to forgive. If a beggar knocks on our door we feel bad turning them away empty-handed. How can Allāh (SWT) do that then? If Allāh (SWT) did not want to forgive us He wouldn't have asked us to pray for forgiveness.



ACTIVITY

Spend a few minutes in quiet contemplation and think about the sins you have committed in your life. Ask Allāh (SWT) to forgive you for all your sins.

Not asking Allāh (SWT) for forgiveness is a sign of pride. Allāh (SWT) wants us to ask Him for forgiveness and blessings. To recognise that Allāh (SWT) is our Master is a sign of humility. It makes us pure and sincere. For our repentance to be sincere, we must undo any harm we have done. For example, if we steal something, asking Allāh (SWT) to forgive us is not enough. We must first return what we stole. If we backbite, we must ask Allāh (SWT) for forgiveness but also ask the person we have hurt for forgiveness. If we missed our ṣalāh or ṣawm, we must perform qaḍāʾ in addition to asking for forgiveness.

MY NOTES



Istighfār and tawbah can be done by simply saying "astaghfirullāha wa atūbu ilayhi" (I seek forgiveness from Allāh (SWT) and turn back to Him), but it must come after sincere regret and remorse and after we undo any harm we have done - and we should have a sincere plan never to sin again before asking Allāh (SWT) to forgive us.

ALLĀH (SWT) FORGIVES THOSE WHO REPENT SINCERELY

Forgiveness is only for those who are sincere in their repentance. It cannot be for those who sin knowingly and don't bother repenting until the time when they are dying when it is too late. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ
فَأُوْلَئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا وَلَيْسَتْ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ
يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّى إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمْ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الآنَ وَلاَ
الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ أُوْلَئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

Acceptance of repentance by Allāh is only for those who commit evil out of ignorance, then repent promptly. It is such whose repentance Allāh will accept, and Allāh is all-knowing, all-wise. Repentance is not for those who go on committing misdeeds: then when death approaches any of them, he says, "I repent now." Nor is it for those who die while they are faithless. For such We have prepared a painful punishment. [4:17-18]

19 TAWBAH

DID YOU KNOW?

If we can shed tears of remorse when asking Allāh (SWT) for forgiveness, that is a sign of sincere repentance and proof that Allāh (SWT) has forgiven us.

MY NOTES

KEY POINTS

1. Istighfār is asking Allāh (SWT) to forgive us. Making a firm resolution not to sin again and turning back to Allāh (SWT) is called tawbah.

2. Tawbah naṣūḥa is sincere and complete repentance.

3. The steps towards sincere repentance include regret and remorse for committing the sin, undoing any harm done, and a sincere intention not to sin again.

4. If we repent sincerely, Allāh (SWT) will change our bad acts into good acts.

Rasūl Allāh (S) was once passing through an alley when a Muslim entered carrying a bottle of wine. He was terrified seeing Rasūl Allāh (S) and prayed, "O Allāh, I sincerely repent for this and shall never drink again. Please save me from being disgraced before your Messenger."

When Rasūl Allāh (S) came closer, he asked, "What is there in the bottle?"

"It contains vinegar", replied the man. Rasūl Allāh (S) asked him to pour a little bit on his palm. With trembling hands, the man did so and when Rasūl Allāh (S) examined it, it was indeed vinegar. The person was overwhelmed with emotion and began to weep and say: "By Allāh! It was wine! But just now I had repented and begged Allāh not to disgrace me."



Rasūl Allāh (S) confirmed this and said it was a practical example of how if a person repents sincerely, "Allāh will change their vices with good deeds, and Allāh is all-forgiving, all-merciful" [25:70]

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the difference between tawbah and istighfār?
2. What is tawbah naṣūḥa?
3. What are the steps towards true repentance?
4. Why is not asking Allāh (SWT) for forgiveness a sign of pride?
5. How does Allāh (SWT) change vices into good deeds when a person repents sincerely?

PORNOGRAPHY

20

WHAT IS PORNOGRAPHY?

Pornography is any material (books, pictures, photographs, websites, video clips, TV channels etc.) that depicts sexual acts and is intended to cause sexual excitement. To engage (read, look, listen, etc) in any form of pornography is absolutely ḥarām. Pornography also creates the temptation to commit other sins such as masturbation, fornication etc.



It is ḥarām to visit shops, bookstands, websites, etc, where one is exposed to pornography. We must also avoid friends who take an interest in pornography and could influence us. They are not true friends because they will lead our soul to Hell.

There are many reasons why pornography is ḥarām even though it may seem harmless. It destroys our sense of chastity, modesty, purity and faith in Allāh (SWT). It creates unnecessary sexual arousal and excitement, and leads to wicked thoughts and fantasies. It is very addictive and unhealthy for both body and mind. It decreases attraction towards marriage for the unmarried, and towards the spouse for the married. It also depicts violence and abuse of women or children, and can lead people to commit such acts.

Maintaining chastity in today's world is not easy because physical pleasure is greatly emphasised and sex is promoted everywhere – in novels, TV, computer games, internet, advertising, magazines, etc. Religion has no value in society and is seen as outdated. No one sees a problem with having a girlfriend/boyfriend, dressing indecently, drinking alcohol, listening to all kinds of music, swearing, partying and so on. Although these acts may seem to be fun on the outside, they take us away from our real purpose in life.

The desire for a spouse is not evil or wrong. It is natural. However, Islam has provided marriage as the means to acquiring that. One of the ways of remaining chaste is to be married.

Another way to be chaste is to observe ḥijāb when interacting with the opposite gender. Ḥijāb for men is to lower their gaze, dress modestly, speak with God-consciousness and not flirt with others. Ḥijāb for women is to dress decently with loose clothing as per the rulings of one's marjaʿ, not interact excessively with the opposite gender, whether in person or online, and so on.

We can also maintain our chastity by avoiding places where people are dressed indecently.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand that pornography is ḥarām in Islam
2. Understand the harmful effects of pornography
3. Understand that masturbation is ḥarām in Islam.

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Create a mind map showing the Islamic perspective on pornography.

20 PORNOGRAPHY

MY NOTES

MASTURBATION IS ḤARĀM IN ISLAM

Masturbation is any form of self-stimulation to get sexual pleasure. Many 'experts' teach students that masturbation is natural and normal because they are thinking from the perspective of the human body only. They are also hoping that this habit will keep young people away from zinā, which will in turn stop the spread of disease and prevent teenage pregnancies. Islam does not consider it to be natural. It considers it to be ḥarām. It is therefore wājib on all Muslims to keep away from this shameful act and to consider this as a serious sin.



A man asked Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) concerning masturbation (istimnāʾ). The Imām said: "It is a major sin. Allāh has forbidden it in His Book. If I knew that a man masturbates, I would not sit to eat with him." The man asked: "Please show me where it is mentioned in the Qurʾān". Imām replied: "Allāh says: The faithful are those…who guard their private parts except from their spouses… for then they are not to be blamed; but whoever seeks anything beyond that—it is they who are transgressors [23:5-7]. Istimnāʾ is part of "whoever seeks anything beyond that."

Islam does not view sex as being sinful or evil, but it wants people to use sex as a means to seek and provide physical satisfaction with one's lawfully wedded spouse and as a means to start a family. For those who attain puberty but are not able to get married as yet, the following advice may be helpful:

* Learn to control thoughts and as soon as a sinful thought comes to mind, remove it by saying astaghfirullāh and seeking protection from Allāh (SWT) from sinning.

* Seek inspiration from worship: ask Allāh (SWT) for help, recite the Qurʾān, adopt a habit for ṣalāt al-layl, reciting duʿāʾ, and acquiring taqwā.

* Never stay alone especially when you are free. Stay in the company of friends and family. If you are alone and are tempted to sin, distract yourself by doing something positive such as going out for a walk. Reflect on the punishment of the sin and the reward of one who remains chaste.

* Avoid being idle. Have hobbies and take up physical sports that will require you to channel your energy in healthy activities.

* Eat healthy foods and avoid eating excessively, especially junk and processed foods. Our thoughts and behaviour are influenced by the foods we eat, hence the saying, "You are what you eat!"

* Make a habit of fasting often. Rasūl Allāh (S) used to encourage those who were not married to fast in order to keep away from sinful desires.

* Avoid excessive sleep and lying in bed when you are not sleepy.

* Avoid watching TV programmes, reading books/magazines or visiting websites that will tempt you to sin.

* Avoid the influence of bad friends.

DID YOU KNOW?

Sometimes people who are chaste in front of people behave indecently when chatting with friends on the computer or phone. This is because it is easier to 'hide' behind a keyboard, webcam, text message etc. However, we must remember that Allāh (SWT) is watching us at all times and sees what we do.

KEY POINTS

1. Watching pornography is considered ḥarām in Islam. It destroys our sense of chastity and modesty, and leads us away from Allāh (SWT)'s remembrance. It also leads to more serious sins such as adultery.

2. Masturbation is also ḥarām in Islam.

3. We can refrain from both pornography and masturbation by keeping away from places and people that may tempt us to sin.

IN SUMMARY

1. What are the harmful effects of pornography?
2. What can we do to maintain chastity and keep away from sin?
3. Why do some experts think that masturbation is natural?
4. What can we do to control sexual urges if we are not able to get married?