ZAINABIA ACADEMY

BAB UL HAWAIJ

Quran

Level -8



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

ZAINABIA ACADEMY

BAB UL HAWAIJ



Full Name: _____

Students Contact No: _____

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HOMEWORK

DATE	HOME WORK	PARENTS INITIALS

Quran Level-8 Teaching Schedule

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم



In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

O Allah, (please do) send blessings to Muhammad and the Household of Muhammad,
O Allah, be, for Your representative, the Hujjat (proof), son of Al-Hassan,
Your blessings be on him and his forefathers, in this hour and in every hour,
a guardian, a protector, a leader, a helper, a proof, and an eye.
until You make him live on the earth, in obedience (to You), and cause
him to live in it for a long time.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

ALLAAHUMMA KUN LE-WALIYYEKAL HUJJATIBNIL HASANE
SALAWAATOKA A'LAYHE WA A'LAA AAABAA-EHI
FEE HAAZEHIS SAA-A'TE WA FEE KULLE SAA-A'TIN
WALIYYAWN WA HAAFEZAWN WA QAA-EDAWN
WA NAASERAWN WA DALEELAWN WA A'YNAN
HATTAA TUSKENAHU ARZAKA TAW-A'N WA
TOMATTE-A'HU FEEHAA TAWEELAA.

LESSON: 1

Suratul Kafiroon

Introduction

This Surah was revealed in Makka, in answer to a proposal put forward by the leaders of the Quraish (The Kuffar).

The Quraish approached the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and said that they had thought of a compromise. They proposed that (the Kuffar) and the Muslims should both agree to worship each other's God.

They said that for one year the Muslims should worship what they (the Kuffar) worshipped and then the next year they (the Kuffar) would worship the God of the Muslims and then the pattern to be repeated.

The proposal by the Kuffar was a clever one to try to win over the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and to wreck his mission. The reply given to them in this Surah was firm and without compromise.

Our 6th Imam, Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (a.s.) was once asked why the same verse (Ayat 3 and 5) was repeated twice.

He replied that the repetition in the Surah was in response to the repetition in the proposal of the Kuffar. i.e. The Kuffar had asked the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) to worship their Gods for one year and they would worship His God the next year and alternate thereafter.

The last Ayat of the Surah tells us that there can never be a compromise between right and wrong and also there is no force to become a Muslim.

Text and Translation

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيم

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful.

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ

Say (O Muhammad), "O you who disbelieve!

لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ

I do not worship what you worship!

وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ

Nor do you worship Whom I worship!

وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَا عَبَدْتُمْ

Nor shall I worship whom you worship,

وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ

Nor will you worship Who I worship.

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ

Unto you be your religion and unto me my religion."

Merits of Recitation of Suratul Ikhlas

1. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (a.s.) has said that whoever recites this Surah and Suratul Ikhlas in their daily prayers will be forgiven and so will their parents.
2. The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that one who recites this Sura will be regarded as though he has read one quarter of the Holy Qur'an

References

Holy Qur’an, Tafsir by S V Mir Ahmed Ali
Ramadhan, Ahkam and Philosophy, Yasin T. al Jibouri

LESSON: 2

Importance of The Holy Qur'an

Learning Objectives:

- **To understand the importance of the Quran.**
- **To be able to acknowledge how to show the Quran respect.**
- **To know what is recommended to do when reciting the Quran.**

The Qur'an is the Book of Allah. It is in Arabic and every word in the Qur'an has come from Allah to Prophet Muhammad (S) through angel Jibra'eel. The Prophet (S) appointed special people known as "Scribes" to write down the words of Allah.

The Holy Qur'an is guidance to all. Other Divine Books were also sent to previous prophets.

These are:

- Suhuf to Prophet Ibrahim (A)
- Zabur to Prophet Dawood (A)
- *T*awrah to Prophet Musa (A)
- Injeel to Prophet Isa (A).

The difference between the Qur'an and past revealed books is that the Qur'an is the only Divine Book that has remained unaltered. The Qur'an we have with us contains exactly the same words that were told to Prophet Muhammad (S) by Allah.



Birmingham University in their archives actually have 4 pages (parts of Surah 18 to 20) of a Quran that has been found to date back to the time of Imam Ali (AS); 568CE and 645CE. Photograph: Birmingham University/EPA

Respect and Rights of The Holy Qur'an

Now that we know that the Holy Qur'an is not an ordinary book, but a Divine Book sent by Allah for the guidance of all people, we must show respect to it. Once you show something respect, you are acknowledging its greatness.

Here are some of the points we need to remember:

A part of the Qur'an carries the same respect as the entire Qur'an. Allah says:

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ وَأَنْصِتُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

And when the Quran is recited, then listen to it and remain silent, so that mercy may be shown to you. [7:204]

Allah uses the word Qur'an for the part that is being recited. Therefore, if you have a binder or a booklet that contains passages from the Qur'an, you must treat it like a Qur'an. So if your Madrasah bag contains the Qur'an, or a part of it (eg. In your manual), take extra care of the bag.

Do not leaving the Quran open, if you are not reading it and do not put any another book above the Qur'an.

It is Haraam (forbidden) to make Najaasaat (impure things like blood and urine) touch the Qur'an. In the event where the Qur'an becomes Najis, for instance if it falls in Najis water, it is Waajib (obligatory) to purify it (make it Taahir).

Old and worn out copies of the Qur'an should be disposed in safe places. This includes sending them for recycling, burying them in the earth or casting in rivers.

When the Qur'an is being recited, listen to it and pay attention. There is reward in this.

> Imam Ali Zaynul 'Aabideen (A) said: *Whoever listens to a letter of the book of Allah, the Glorious and Almighty, without even reading it, Allah will write down for him one good deed, forgive a sin, and raise him a degree.*

The Qur'an should be recited regularly. It is disrespectful to keep the Holy Qur'an unread.

> Prophet Muhammad (S) said: *Brighten your homes with reciting Qur'an; do not turn them into graves. Surely the house in which a lot of recitation takes place enjoys many blessings and the members benefit from it. Such a household shines for the inhabitants of Heaven as stars shine to the inhabitants of the earth.*

On the Day of Judgment the Prophet (S) will complain to Allah about some Muslims who abandoned the Qur'an

وَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا

And the Messenger cried out: O my Lord! Surely my people have treated this Quran as a forsaken thing. [25:30]

It is also the right and respect of the Qur'an that it should be followed.

> Imam Ja'far Sadiq (A) said: *Lo! One, who learns the Qur'an, teaches it and practices according to it, I will guide and lead him to Paradise*.

To know how to follow it, we need to turn to the Holy Prophet (S) and the Ahlul Bayt (A)

> Prophet Muhammad (S) has said: *I leave behind two weighty things among you: The Book of Allah and my family – the Ahlul Bayt. Indeed these two will never separate until they reach me near the pool of Kawthar*.

When reciting the Holy Quran

Perform Wudhoo before you prepare to read the Qur'an. Allah says:

None can touch it (the Qur'an) save the purified ones (56:79).

Once Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (A) asked his son Ismail to read the Qur'an. The latter said that he was not in Wudhoo. The Imam said in that case he could recite it but should not touch the writings of the Qur'an.

When you begin reading the Qur'an, say:

اَعُوْذُبا اللهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيْم

I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed Shaytaan.

This is what Allah instructs us to do in the Holy Quran itself:

فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ {98}

So when you recite the Quran, seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Shaitan, [16:98]

Then say:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيْم

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

It is highly recommended to sit facing Qiblaah when reciting the Qur'an.

Recite the Qur'an with Tarteel (in a good voice with rhythm) and slowly:

وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا...

…and recite the Quran as it ought to be recited. [73:4]

لَا تُحَرِّكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ

Do not move your tongue with it to make haste with it, [75:16]

Read from the Qur'an by looking at the words instead of reciting from your memory.

Be Humble when reciting the Qur'an and open your heart and mind to the Qur'an and ponder over what you read.

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا

Do they not then reflect on the Quran? Nay, on the hearts there are locks. [Shakir 47:24]

Finish your recitation with:

صَدَقَ اللّٰهُ العَلِيُّ العَظِيْمُ

Allah, the Sublime, the Great, is truthful in what He has said

Key Points:

1. The Quran is important because it is the words of Allah which has not been altered.
2. One of the main ways of showing respect to the Quran is to recite it regularly and follow its teachings.
3. The Quran is not an ordinary book, so when we recite it there is an etiquette that should be followed

LESSON: 3

The Event of Ghadeer

Learning Objectives:

- To become acquainted with the event of Ghadeer
- To memorise the Arabic and English translation of the verses related to the event of Ghadeer (5:67 & 5:3)

In the last year of the Holy Prophet's life, the year 10 AH, he performed his first and only Hajj. This was known as Hajjatul wida (the Farewell Hajj). In this journey lots of Muslims from different parts of Arabia including the Muslims of Madina took part in the pilgrimage with the Holy Prophet (S) to gain a great honour and credit.

While returning from his Hajj, the Holy Prophet (S) was with a huge caravan of nearly 100,000 Muslims. Suddenly he ordered the marching caravan to stop at Ghadeer Khum, a midway stop between Makka and Madina, which is today known as Johfa. Then this verse was revealed:

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

O Messenger! Convey what has been sent to you from your Lord and if you do not do it then (it will be as if) you have not conveyed His message (at all) and surely Allah will protect you from (the mischief) of men. Verily Allah does not guide a disbelieving people. [5:67]

The Holy Prophet (SAW) mounted a tall pulpit, which was made out of saddles of the camels. Then he delivered a long sermon recounting his services towards the fulfilment of his mission as the messenger of Allah (SWT). He then told them that he will soon depart from this world and that he is leaving them with 2 weighty things - the Qur'an and his Ahlul Bait. These 2 will never get separated from each other until they meet him in heaven. Then he asked the audience whether he had conveyed to them the commands of Allah (SWT), enumerating them one after another.

The huge gathering in one voice said "yes." Then he said: "Do I have authority over your souls more than you yourselves?" They replied: "Certainly, O Messenger of Allah."

Then he asked Imam Ali (A) to come up. He held his hand and raised it up so high that the whole assembly of men and women saw him clearly.

He again addressed them: "O Men and Women! Allah is my Mawla (Master) I am the Mawla of the believers. I have a clear authority over your souls."

Then he added: "To whomsoever I am the Mawla, this Ali is his Mawla" and he repeated this 3 or 4 times. Then he said: "O Allah! Love him who loves Ali, and hate him who hates Ali."

At the end of the declaration, Jibra'il came down and revealed this verse to the Holy Prophet (SAW):

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

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

Analysis

"O Messenger! Deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord and if you do not do it, then you have not delivered His message and Allah will protect you from the people, Indeed Allah does not guide the unbelieving people."

In this verse only the Holy Prophet (SAW) is addressed. It states his duty, it begins with "O Messenger!" and continues very clearly commanding him only.

Then, the verse warns him that if he refrains from fulfilling this commandment, then he has not conveyed the message of Islam to the people at all.

After that, the revelation consoles him, that if he is anxious and worried about anything in particular, he should not be afraid of people for performing this duty. Allah (WT) will protect him.

At the end of the verse, as a threat and punishment to those who reject or deny this message the verse says: "Verily Allah does not guide the unbelieving people."

This was the most important task the Holy Prophet (S) had to perform during the last few months of his life, such that not conveying this has been counted equivalent to the lack of Messengership wholly!

In different books of the scholars of both Sunnis and Shi'ah schools of thought, there are many authentic traditions recorded to say that this verse has been revealed at Ghadeer-e- Khum about the appointment of the successor for the Prophet (S) and the future fate of Islam and Muslims.

After the declaration at Ghadeer Khum, the Holy Prophet (S) said takbeer twice and then said,

> *"Allah is the Greatest upon the perfection of religion and completion of favour, and the Lord became pleased with my Messengership and Ali's Mastership after me."*

The crowd congratulated Imam Ali (A) including Umar and Abu Bakr, saying:

بَخٍ بَخٍ لَكَ يَابْنَ أَبِي طَالِب ، أَصْبَحْتَ مَوْلَايَ وَمَوْلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ وَمُسْلِمَةٍ

"Congratulations O son of Abi Talib. You have now become my Mawla and the Mawla of every Muslim man and woman."

HOMEWORK:

Memorise the Arabic and English translation of verse 5:67 and the portion of verse 5:3 that is related to the event of Ghadeer.

LESSON: 4

The Verses of Tathir

Learning Objectives:

- To provide an overview of the verse of Tathir
- To memorise verses 33:33

THE VERSE OF TATHIR [33:33]

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَىٰ ۖ وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

Stay in your houses and do not flaunt your finery like the former [days of pagan] ignorance. Maintain the prayer and pay the zakat, and obey Allah and His Apostle. Indeed Allah desires to repel all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification. [33:33]

According to all the scholars of Islam and commentators, the application of the term "*Ahlul Bait*" here refers to the family of the holy Prophet (SAW) and according to hadith recorded in Sunni and Shi'ah sources, the "Ahlul Bait" here are only 5 persons – the Ahlul Kisaa.

The time, occasion and people concerned in connection with the revelation of this verse have been discussed and made known in many authentic books of Muslim Scholars.

The one and only reference available to the commentators is the event of the blanket (Hadith al-Kisa).

The event of the revelation of this verse is reported by Jabir bin Abdullah Ansari, one of the most reliable Companions of the holy Prophet (SAW).

The story of the "Event of the Blanket" should be narrated to the students.

The word "*innamaa*" in verse 33:33, which is a particle of restriction in Arabic, shows that the merit of purification is only presented to the family of the Prophet (SAW).

The infallible ones, due to Divine aid, as well as their own pure deeds, are in a state that they do not approach sins. It is just like a wise person would never put a piece of fire in his mouth, while there is neither a compulsion nor any aversion in this action.

The Arabic term "*rijs*" means an impure thing, whether it is impure from the view of man's nature, or according to the intellect or religion or all of them.

The Qur'anic word "*tathir*" means "purification". It is an emphasis on the negation of any kind of uncleanness; and its mentioning here in the form of 'absolute object' is counted as another emphasis on this meaning.

Aqa Mehdi Puya makes the following points about this verse:

1. “Innamaa” (verily or only) signifies exclusive distinction. To emphasise this exclusiveness, the second object of the verb “*yudh-hiba*” (keep off) - the phrase “ankum” (from you) - has been put before the object “*rijs*” (uncleanness); and for further emphasis, the phrase “*Ahlul Bayt*” has been mentioned to explain the pronoun “*ankum*” (from you). The grammatical structure of the whole clause indicates that this is a unique privilege or distinction granted to the Ahlul Bayt only, excluding all others.
2. This verse is a Preface to verses 77 to 79 of Surat al-Waqia: *“Verily this is an honourable Qur’an in a hidden book, no one can touch it (i.e. its deeper meanings) except the purified ones.”*
3. The excellence of Ahlul Bayt has been openly demonstrated in the event of Mubahila 3:61.
4. The Ahlul Bayt have been thoroughly purified by Allah (SWT) because of their total submission to Allah’s will and their state of being always in communication with Allah (SWT).

LESSON: 5

The Verse of Mubahila

Learning Objectives:

- To provide an overview of the verse of Mubahila
- To memorise verses 3:61

THE VERSE OF MUBAHILA [3:61]

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

Should anyone argue with you concerning him, after the knowledge that has come to you, say, 'Come! Let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, our souls and your souls, then let us pray earnestly, and call down Allah's curse upon the liars.' [3:61]

"MUBAHILA" is a Spiritual Contest by invoking the curse of Allah on the liars.

The holy Prophet (SAW) sent invitations to all to accept the true religion of Islam. Tribes after tribes and regions after regions were coming into the fold of Islam. One invitation was sent to the Christians of Najran - a town in Yemen in the 9th year after Hijrah. The Christians sent a delegation of 60 Scholars to discuss the matter with the holy Prophet (SAW). They discussed about Prophet Isa (A) and that they believed he was the son of God. Verse 3:59 was revealed:

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِندَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ ۖ خَلَقَهُ مِن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ

Indeed the case of Jesus with Allah is like the case of Adam: He created him from dust, then said to him, 'Be,' and he was.

They discussed so many other matters, but the Christians did not agree with the Prophet (SAW) and finally, verse 3:61, the verse of Mubahila, was revealed.

The Christians agreed to Mubahila. The holy Prophet (SAW) did not come with hundreds of Muslims. Instead, he only brought his close family members. He came with Imam Husayn (AS) in his arms, Imam Hassan (AS) holding his index finger while walking beside him, Sayyida Fatema (AS) close to his heels and Imam Ali (AS) just behind her. They represented his sons, women and selves, as per the verse revealed. When the Christians saw this, they became afraid that if these people were to pray to Allah (SWT), even mountains could be moved. They immediately requested a settlement, instead of participating in the Muhabila, fearing that otherwise the whole Christian world would be wiped out from this planet.

Then the holy Prophet (SAW) raised his hands to the heaven and said:

"O my Lord! These are the people of my house."

Many Muslim scholars, commentators and traditionalists, have given the details of this event with the following conclusions:

1. The seriousness of the occasion demanded that only those with spiritual purity could take part in the fateful event.
2. Only the best of Allah's creations (the Ahlul Bayt) were selected by the Holy Prophet (SAW) under Allah's guidance.
3. It, beyond all doubts, established the purity, the truthfulness and the sublime holiness of the Ahlul Bayt (A).
4. It also unquestionably confirmed as to who the members of the family of the Holy Prophet (SAW) were.

Why did the Holy Prophet (SAW) take these 4 personalities for Mubahila?

This is because they were partners in the claim of the Messenger of Allah and his mission. It is one of the most excellent virtues which were given exclusively to these family members of the Prophet.

Another exclusive distinction of the Ahlul Bait: Allah (SWT) gave them the names 'selves', 'women' and 'sons' of the Prophet to the exclusion of all the men, women and children of the

LESSON: 6

The Verses of Wilayah

Learning Objectives:

- To study the verses of *wilāyah*
- To memorise the verses of *wilāyah*

VERSES ON WILAYAH

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

Your guardian is only Allah, His Messenger, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down. [5:55]

Occasion of Revelation:

A beggar entered the mosque (Masjidun Nabawi) and asked people for charity. Nobody gave him anything. Imam Ali (AS) pointed his finger to him while he was bowing (*ruku*) in the prayer and gave his ring to that beggar. And this verse was revealed.

After this verse was revealed, Ammar b. Yasir reports that the holy Prophet (SAW) said: *"The one upon whom I am Master, then this Ali is his Master."* The holy Prophet also said this in Ghadeer Khum in order to state the position of Imam Ali (AS).

Abu Dhar, who himself witnessed the event in the sacred mosque explained what occurred in detail for the people.

Unlike the interpretation of our Sunni brothers/sisters, the term *"wali"* mentioned in this verse does not mean 'friend' and 'helper', since befriending and helping one another is the duty of all Muslims, not specifically those who give charity while bowing down in prayer. According to traditions, the person intended in it is only Imam Ali (A), and the usage of the plural form of the word (the faithful) *"aamanuu"* for a singular subject is to show the importance of the one mentioned, i.e. Imam Ali (A). A similar case is found in the "verse of Mubahila" when it says *"anfusanaa wa anfusakum"* (ourselves and yourselves, i.e. in plural). Many Islamic scholars and commentators of the Qur'an have said that the meaning of the word *"wali"* mentioned in this verse, is *"wilāyah"* in the sense of "guardianship" and "leadership".

Therefore, this verse is one of the verses that indicate to Mastership and Imamate of Ali b. Abi Talib (AS).

Explanations

1. In this verse, we are commanded to take and follow Allah (SWT), His Messenger (SAW) and Imam Ali (AS) as our Masters.
2. The essence of the Mastership of Allah (SWT), the Messenger (SAW) and Imam Ali (AS) is the same, and it is essentially one in nature as well as in effect. That is why the verse says *"waliyyukum"* (your guardian) in a singular form, not *"awliyaakum"* (your guardians) in plural form.
3. The terms of prayer and zakat (charity) are usually mentioned in the Qur'an besides each other, but in this verse, they are mixed together with, (giving zakat while is Ruku).

4. Those who did not give zakat, while in prayer do not have the guardianship and leadership over people.
5. This verse mentions the qualities and the characteristics of a particular person without mentioning his name, and it is up to the readers and audience to find out as to who fits in these qualities.

Verses of Wilayah Part 2

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ ۖ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

O you who have faith! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those vested with authority among you. And if you dispute concerning anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you have faith in Allah and the Last Day. That is better and more favourable in outcome. [4:59]

Explanations:

The discussion of this verse is one of the most important matters of Islam, the subject of leadership. They determine the true source of guidance for Muslims for the different social and religious affairs that they may have.

1. The first part of the verse commands those who believe to "Obey Allah". For a believing person, all obedience must led to the obedience of Allah. For example, we obey our parents because this is in line with the obedience to Allah (SWT).
2. The second stage it says: "....and obey the Messenger....." Obey the Prophet (SAW) who is immaculate and never speaks out of desire: *"Nor does he speak out of desire."* [53:3]. An Apostle appointed by Allah amongst the people whose word is the word of Allah and whose rank and position have been bestowed to him by Allah (SWT).
3. And for the third stage, it says: *"...and those charged with authority among you..."* Obey those who are from the *Ummah* and protect both the divine religion and worldly affairs of the people.

Who are 'Those charged with Authority'?

All the shi'ah commentators are on the same opinion on this matter that the purpose of the phrase *'ulil-amr'* mentioned in this verse is the immaculate Imams to whom the physical and spiritual leadership of the Islamic society, consisting of all affairs of life, have been given by Allah and his messenger and doesn't include any other than them.

Commentary:

It is irrational and senseless to accept any ruler as 'Ulil Amr' otherwise men like Yazid and Muawiya will have to be included in the category of 'Ulil Amr' and no sane person would say that Allah has enjoined to obey men like Yazid, just as one obeys Allah (SWT) and the Holy Prophet (SAW).

As from the time of *Da'wat dhul asheera* (feast of near relatives) to the Day of Ghadeer Khum, our Holy Prophet (SAW) repeatedly announced the successor ship of Imam Ali (AS). Therefore, the first step a true Muslim must take to obey the Messenger of Allah is to obey and follow Ali ibne Abi Talib (AS).

The Messenger's obedience is in reality Allah's obedience because it is Allah who has obliged the believers to obey the Messenger.

1. As far as "Ulil Amr" is concerned they do not have the privilege of the revelation for the "Message of Islam" ended with the Holy Prophet (SAW) who was the last Prophet, there were no new laws after that. That is why the verse says "then if you quarrel about anything refer to Allah and His Messenger". Allah has ordered the believers to obey "Ulil Amr".
2. If they give an order contrary to Qur'an or sunnah, it would be invalid and would not be obeyed. Hadith of the Prophet (SAW): "No creature is obeyed in disobedience of the Creator".
3. When Allah (SWT) ordered people to obey their parents and He said in sura Al Ankabut 29:8 "....and if they tell you that you should associate others with Me, of which you have no knowledge do not obey them...." but in this verse, Allah (SWT) did not put any such conditions, therefore the "Ulil Amr" were Ma'sum, sinless in the same way as the Messenger.
4. Jabir ibne Abdullah asked the holy Prophet (SAW) who are the "Ulil Amr", Prophet (SAW) replied: "They are my khalifs, the Imams of the Muslims after me. The first of them is Ali, son of Abu Talib and he went on until 5th Imam and said that Jabir you will meet him so convey my salaams to him". Then he went on with the Imams' names until 12th Imam and he said he will be the proof of Allah on this earth and "Baqiatullah" ,(the one who is kept safe by Allah) among His servants, he will conquer the whole world from east to west, he will be kept hidden from his followers for such a long time that no-one will remain firm on the belief of his Imamah except he whose heart has been tested by Allah (SWT) for faith. Then Jabir asked if they will benefit while he is in occultation and he said they will be guided by his light and benefit from his "Wilalah" as people benefit from the sun behind the cloud. Ref: Al Mizan

LESSON: 7

The Principles of *Imāmah* in the Qur'ān

Learning Objectives

- Become familiar with important Qur'anic verses relating to *Imāmah*
- Understand that only Allāh (SWT) has the right to choose His representatives
- Understand that one of the essential attributes of an Imām is *'iṣmah*

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 Allah. 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: What! wilt Thou place in it such as shall make mischief in it and shed blood, and we celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy 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]

When Prophet Mūsā (A) was entrusted with his mission to rescue the Banū Isrāʾīl, 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:

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]

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 Imāmate is a Divinely-appointed status.
2- Although Allāh (SWT) granted Prophet Ibrāhīm (A)'s wish for Imāmate 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 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]

Qur'anic Imamah

Learning Objectives:

- To become familiar with the meaning of verses 28:5-6
- To memorise versed 38:5-6

وَنُرِيدُ أَن نَّمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ

"And We have intended to bestow (Our) favour upon those who were oppressed in the earth, and make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs." (28:5)

وَنُمَكِّنَ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنُرِيَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا يَحْذَرُونَ

"And to grant them power in the earth, and to show Pharaoh and Haman, and their hosts, what they were dreading from them." (28:6)

Commentary:

It is Allah's will that the oppressed ones will be able to establish the worldly government eventually. There is no doubt that when Allah's will is issued for a thing to occur, that thing will certainly be performed and no barrier can hinder it. The holy Qur'an says: *"Whenever He wills a thing, He just commands it "Be" and it is." (36:82)*

These two verses (28:5 & 6) are expressive and hope giving. They are expressed in the form of Arabic present tense (which shows the continuation of action) and as a general law so that no one thinks it belongs only to the oppressed ones of the children of Israel and the government of Pharaoh. The verse implies that Pharaoh intended to disperse the children of Israel and destroy their power and greatness, but Allah intends them to become strong and victorious.

Pharaoh wanted their power to be in the hand of the oppressors forever but Allah (SWT) intended to give the government to the oppressed, and that is exactly what happened.

In these two verses from Sura Al-Qasas, Allah (SWT) has removed the curtain from His will concerning the oppressed and states 5 affairs in this ground which are closely connected to each other.

1. Allah intends to give them His bounties by saying: "And We have intended to bestow (our) favour, upon those who were oppressed in the earth....."
2. Allah intends to make them leaders when He says: ".....and to make them leaders (in faith)...."
3. Allah intends to make them the heirs of the government of the oppressed, where He says: ".....and make them heirs."
4. Allah gives them a strong and lasting government: "And to grant them power in the earth....."
5. Allah showed their enemies that which they were afraid of and they had mobilised all their forces against them: "....and to show Pharaoh and Haman, and their hosts, what they were dreading from them."

Such is Allah's favour and grace unto the oppressed ones. But who are the oppressed, and what qualities do they have?

These verses do not speak about a private, local and limited program related to the children of Israel, but they are stating a general law for all centuries and the entire people and generations. The verse says: *"And We have intended to bestow (our) favour upon those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them leaders (in faith) and make them their heirs." (28:5).*

This is good news on the victory of the truth over the untruth and faith over disbelief.

This is good tidings for all the free men who seek for the government of justice and wiping out injustice and cruelty.

An example of the outward existence of Allah's will was the actual government of the children of Israel and annihilation of the government of Pharaoh.

And a complete example was the government of the holy Prophet (SAW) and his followers after the advent of Islam. It was the government of the faithful, poor, indigent and purified oppressed people who were always mocked and despised by the Pharaohs of their time and were under their pressure, injustice and cruelty.

At last, by the hand of this very group, Allah (SWT) opened the gates of the castles of those kings and brought them down of the throne of power and humiliated the tyrants.

And a vaster example of it will be the advent of the government of justice and truth all over the world by the Imam of our time, Imam Al-Mahdi Sahebu Zaman (AF).

When Imam Mohammad bin Hassan Al-Mahdi (AF) would appear and Islam would be established in the whole world with his coming, the entire earth would be ruled by him and all the disbelievers will vanish from the face of the earth.

These verses are among the verses that clearly give the good news of the advent of such a government. Some Islamic traditions indicate that, commenting on this verse, the Imams of the Ahlul Bait (AS) have pointed to this great advent.

Qur'anic Imamah (part 2):

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ ۖ وَكَانُوا لَنَا عَابِدِينَ

"And We made them leaders guiding (the people) by Our Command, and We revealed to them the carrying out of good deeds, and the establishment of prayer and giving of alms, and they worshipped Us (alone)." (21:73)

This verse generally refers to the rank of Imamat and leadership of great Prophets as well as a part of their important and valuable programs:

1. "And we made them leaders....." This means that, in addition to the rank of Prophethood and messengership, Allah gave the rank of Imamat. Divine leadership is the last stage of development course of mankind which means the absolute leadership of people; material and spiritual, internal and external, physical and mental.

   Similar to prophethood, imamat should be assigned by Allah (SWT). If imamat is gained by force and injustice, it is an invitation to hell. The Qur'an says: .... *"leaders (who) call to the fire...." (28:41).* But when Allah (SWT) chooses a leader, that leadership is blessed. And it is also the path of the truth.

2. "....guiding the people by Our Command....." The guidance of prophets and imams is neither from their own accord nor by their own personal tastes, but it is guidance by Allah's command.

3. Ritual prayers and almsgiving (zakat) are 2 basic principles in all religions, since without prayer and almsgiving none reaches the rank of servitude. The verse says: "....and We revealed to them the doing of good deeds, and the establishment of prayer, and the giving of alms and they worshipped Us (alone)."

4. One can comprehend from this verse that religion is not separate from government. "And We made them leaders, guiding (the people) by Our command...."

LESSON: 8

Tawassul & Shafāʿah

Learning Objectives

- Understand the difference between Tawassul and Shafāʿah.
- Understand the role and importance of Tawassul and Shafāʿah.
- Be acquainted with various Qurʾānic verses relating to Tawassul and Shafāʿah.
- Memorise verse 5:35

The words *Tawassul* and *Shafāʿah* are both often translated into English as "intercession". This concept the 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 *Shafīʾ*.

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).

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) Allah 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). When 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) can accept our prayers faster, for their sake.

In our every 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 more likely to forgive us faster if we go through our mum and ask her to request dad to forgive us.

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 Allah's permission; and had they, when they were unjust to themselves, come to you and asked forgiveness of Allah and the Apostle had (also) asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allah 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 Allah'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.

Shafāʿah

1) The Qurʾān tells us that the Day of Judgement will be a very difficult time for those that 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 (Allah'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 of 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]

Class 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)*?

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 fulfil. 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!

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.

Summary Questions

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*?

LESSON: 9

Sayyidah Fatema (AS) described as "Kawthar"

Learning Objectives

- To provide an explanation of Surat al-Kawthar
- To memorise Surat al-Kawthar

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ

"Surely, We have given you Abundance of good (Kawthar)"

The term Kawthar is derived from the word "*Kathrah*" which means "a lot of goodness, or blessing". Sayyidah Fatema (AS) represents the "abundance" given to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and that is why she is called "Kawthar".

What is the purpose of using the term "Kawthar" here?

A narration says that when the holy Prophet (SAW) sat on the pulpit and recited this surah, some of the companions asked him what was it that Allah (SWT) had given him and he answered: *"It is a stream in heaven, whiter than milk, more clear than a goblet (of crystal) with dome shaped ornaments from pearls and rubies...."*

Another tradition from Imam Sadiq (AS) says: *"Kawthar is a stream in Heaven that Allah granted His Messenger for his son (who died in his lifetime)."*

Some have also said the purpose of using the word Kawthar is for the pool of Abundance that belongs to the Prophet (SAW), where the believers quench their thirst when arriving in Paradise.

Some have commented on it as the "Abundance of descendents" all of whom came from his daughter Sayyidah Fatema (AS) and they multiplied to such an extent that it is impossible to count them. They are not only now, but until the advent of the Hereafter, the reminder of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

Sayyidah Fatema (AS) and Kawthar

Our scholars believe that one of the most clear examples of that word is the auspicious existence of Lady Fatema Zahra (AS), because the occasion of revelation of the verse says that the enemies of Islam accused the Prophet (SAW) of being without offspring, but the Qur'an says: "Surely We have given you abundance of good (Kawthar)."

From this meaning we understand that this "abundance of good" is the very Lady Fatema Zahra (AS) of whom the descendants of the Prophet (SAW) increased abundantly and thousands of them are scattered in the world preaching his religion and preserving it. It is a fact that no one can correctly count the number of descendants of Imam Ali (AS) and Sayyidah Fatema (AS) who are recognised as the descendants of the Holy Prophet (SAW), among whom so many great scholars, scientists, writers, commentators, jurisprudents, traditionalists and leaders left some outstanding works and unmatched fame in this world, and tried to protect Islam with their donations and devotions.

فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ

Therefore turn to your Lord in Prayer and Sacrifice

This great Blessing and "abundance of good" needs a lofty thankfulness, although creatures can never thank the Creator for His Blessings fully, because even the ability to be thankful is another blessing from Him, which in turn needs thankfulness.

The last verse of this short surah is regarding the taunts made by the chiefs of the Pagans to the Holy Prophet (SAW):

إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ

Surely your enemy is the one without offspring

The word "*Shani*" is derived from *"Shana'anan"* which means "enmity" or "spitefulness" and "*Shani*" is the one who possesses these characteristics.

"Abtar" originally means "the animal whose tail is cut off". The enemies of Islam taunted the Holy Prophet (SAW) by saying this with the hope that after his departure from this world and having no son to inherit his position, the religion of Islam would come to an end. However, the Qur'an, consoling the Holy Prophet (SAW), tells him that it is not him but his enemy who will be without offspring.

Today, we see the great number of the children of the Prophet (SAW) around us. However, there is no sign of the descendants of the enemies of Islam.

LESSON: 10

The verses of *Mawaddah*

Learning Objectives

- To become familiar with the verses of Mawaddah in the Qur'an
- To memorise verse 42:23 of the Qur'an

Surat al-Shura (42:23):

ذَٰلِكَ الَّذِي يُبَشِّرُ اللَّهُ عِبَادَهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ۗ قُل لَّا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ ۗ وَمَن يَقْتَرِفْ حَسَنَةً نَّزِدْ لَهُ فِيهَا حُسْنًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ

Such is the good news that Allah gives to His servants who have faith and do righteous deeds! Say, 'I do not ask you any reward for it except the love of [my] relatives.' Whoever performs a good deed, We shall enhance its goodness for him. Indeed Allah is all-forgiving, all-appreciative.

When our holy Prophet (SAW) migrated to Madina and Islam's foundation was established, some of the Helpers (*Ansar*) went to the holy Prophet (SAW) and told him: *"You may make use of all our wealth and properties without any condition for the cause."*

In answer to them, the Prophet (SAW) was instructed by inspiration to say: *"I do not ask you for any reward for it, except love to my close relatives."*

This verse commands the Muslims to love the Ahlul Bayt (AS) if they want to repay the holy Prophet (SAW) for his toils of Prophethood:

1. They should follow the Ahlul Bayt (AS) in word and deed.
2. Because they have been thoroughly purified by Allah Himself.
3. Because they are the truthful ones
4. Because they the custodians of the word of Allah.
5. Because they alone know the true interpretation of the guidance sent for all mankind.

A large number of narratives reported by the most reliable authorities of the Islamic History prove that this verse was revealed in Madina after the birth of Imam Hassan (AS) and Imam Husayn (AS).

Surat Saba (34:47):

قُلْ مَا سَأَلْتُكُم مِّنْ أَجْرٍ فَهُوَ لَكُمْ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ ۖ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

Say: Whatever reward I have asked of you, it is for yourselves; my reward is only with Allah; and He is witness over all things."

The Divine leaders have to announce to the people that they expect nothing from them; because if a spiritual leader expects material benefit from people, the society may not accept him. In this holy verse, the words are about the lack of asking any reward from people for the messengership.

The verse says: *"Say 'Whatever reward I have asked of you, it is for yourselves..."*

"...my reward is only with Allah..."

This matter points to the fact that whatever a wise person does must naturally have a motive. When my perfect intellect is proved to you and you see that I have no material motive, you should know the Divine and Spiritual motive has made me do it.

In other words, I invited you to ponder. Now think and ask your own conscience what has caused me to warn you against the intense punishment of Allah? What benefit do I get from this, and what kind of material profit does it have for me? In addition, if your excuse for turning away from truth is because you have to pay a dear price for it, principally, I have not asked for any compensation or reward from you.

Secondly if you see that in some of my words that I have brought from my Lord, I have told you *"...No reward do I ask of you for this except the love of my close relatives..."* The profit of this also returns to you, because the concept of the sentence: "The love of my close relatives returns to '*Wilayah*' which is the continuation of messengership which is also necessary for the continuation of your guidance.

Surat al-Furqan (25:57):

قُلْ مَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِلَّا مَن شَاءَ أَن يَتَّخِذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا

"Say: 'I do not ask any recompense of you for this (my preaching) except from him who wishes to choose a way unto his Lord'."

A successful leader is one who declares to people that he does not expect anything. Man gets the rank of sincerity when he does not want or demand any physical and verbal reward.

Thus Allah (SWT) commands the holy Prophet (SAW) to tell the people that he does not ask of them any reward for this Qur'an and conveying this heavenly religion, except that people may choose a way unto their Lord.

It implies that the only reward and compensation of the holy Prophet (SAW) is people's guidance that has happened intentionally and wilfully in them and not reluctantly compulsorily. This is an interesting phrase that shows maximum kindness and benevolence of the holy Prophet (SAW) towards his followers, for he counts their happiness and bliss as his reward.

It is clear that guidance of the nation (*Umma*) has got an extraordinary spiritual reward for the holy Prophet (SAW) because whoever leads people to a good deed is like the one who does this deed.

This testifies to the truthfulness of Prophet's call and purification of his thought and program, for false claimers do this certainly for the sake of some direct or indirect reward.

LESSON: 11

Knowledge of Ta'weel of Qur'anic verses

Learning Objectives

- To become familiar with the meaning of verse 3:7
- To understand the importance of the Ma'sumin (A) as the possessors of the knowledge of the interpretation (*ta'weel*) of the Qur'an

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُّحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ ۖ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ ۗ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۗ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ رَبِّنَا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

"It is He who has sent down to you the Book. Parts of it are definitive verses, which are the mother of the Book, while others are metaphorical. As for those in whose hearts is deviance, they pursue what is metaphorical in it, seeking dissension, and seeking to misinterpret it. But no one knows its interpretation except Allah and those firmly grounded in knowledge; they say, 'We believe in it; all of it is from our Lord.' And none takes admonition except those who possess intellect." (3:7)

Fundamentals and ambiguous verses:

This verse discloses one of the important qualifications of Qur'an which may give us an important clue to the interpretation of our Holy Book: Allah has sent down to you a Book, the verses of which have either established meaning or metaphorical.

These metaphorical verses which might be figurative, ambiguous or allegorical can be used as a criterion to separate the truthful Scholars who are firmly rooted in knowledge, from the obstinate seditious people who pretend to be wise and learned: "Those in whose hearts is perversity, follow the ambiguous part seeking dissensions by misinterpreting the verses."

But those learned ones with correct understanding and deep knowledge say: "We believe in the Book and all its verses whether fundamental or ambiguous are from our Lord."

The verse implies that some of the verses are so clear and established in meaning that leaves no room for any sort of doubt or to waver. These verses cannot be misused or misapplied. Literally these verses are named the mother of Qur'an or the foundation. Some other of the verses, due to their high level, many shades and phases of meaning, seem to be figurative, metaphorical or equivocal, which are capable of being understood in several possible senses.

Perverted people with mental disease, seek to misinterpret and misapply such verses, in order to seduce and attract people to them.

Most of the verses of the Qur'an are clear and decisive. There is no ambiguity in them. They are known as the 'Muhkamat'. They relate to the fundamentals of faith, such as oneness of Allah, the directions pertaining to the practice of faith and the laws governing the day to day life of the faithful. These laws can neither be changed nor modified. Any person of average intelligence can understand and follow them.

The ambiguous verses are known as 'Mutashabihat'. These are the verses which have been composed in subtle and profound diction and style. They carry implications other than literal meanings, and therefore, are capable of giving different significations, like:

يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ

"The hand of Allah is above their hands" (48:10).

This phrase refers to the fact that Allah (SWT) regards His Messenger's hand like that of His Own. In other words, the holy Prophet's hand at the time of pledging allegiance with him is actually His Hand, since the holy Prophet's hand symbolises that of Allah (SWT).

Those who are firmly rooted in knowledge:

"...But no one knows the hidden meaning except Allah and those who are firmly rooted in knowledge..."

Those firmly rooted in knowledge are those whom Allah Himself gives the knowledge, as verse 49 of sura Al-Ankabut says:

بَلْ هُوَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ ۚ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَّا الظَّالِمُونَ

Nay! these are clear communications in the breasts of those who are granted knowledge; and none deny Our communications except the unjust. (29:49)

It is clearly disclosed that besides Allah (SWT), only those endowed with divine knowledge, know the true meanings of the ambiguous verses. The firmly rooted in knowledge are the holy Prophet (SAW) and his Ahlulbayt, the thoroughly purified ones who possess the desired purity of the heart and soul, essential for receiving and holding the truth in order to use it, to do good to themselves and to others.

In reply to Anas bin Malik's query about "those firmly rooted in knowledge", the holy Prophet (SAW) said:

"They are those whose hands do not do anything but that which is just, righteous and good; whose tongues do not utter anything but that which is true; whose hearts and minds are enlightened and rational; whose stomachs are free from that which is forbidden."

The verse of 'Tathir' (33:33) confirms that only the thoroughly purified, the holy Prophet (SAW) and his Ahlulbayt (AS) are the firmly rooted in knowledge. They are the ones who were free from impurity of polytheism right from the day they were born.

The Ahlulbayt as the possessors of the knowledge of the *ta'weel* of the Qur'an

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) prophetic mission, he had to deal with many difficult problems 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 immigrate 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 Medina. In the ten years of the Holy Prophet (S)'s life in Medina, the Muslims were occupied with multiple battles, including the battles of Badr, Uḥud, 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 تَأْوِيْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ كَمَا قَاتَلْتُ عَلَى تَنْزِيْلِهِ

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.

LESSON: 12

Prophet Adam's Repentance Accepted through the Names of the Holy Five (AS)

Learning Objectives:

- To become familiar with the meaning of verse 2:37
- To memorise verse 2:37

فَتَلَقَّىٰ آدَمُ مِن رَّبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

"Then Adam received (certain) words from his Lord. And He turned towards him (mercifully). Verily He is oft-forgiving, the most Merciful." (2:37)

Adam's return to Allah (SWT)

After the temptation of Iblis and removal of Adam from the Garden, Adam realised that he had truly done injustice to himself when he was removed from the quiet environment, full of bounties as a result of the temptation of Iblis and was placed on the earth, a grievous environment, full of toil and pain. At this time, Adam thought of compensation for his mistake and earnestly attended to the Lord with his whole heart and soul, with a great deal of regret and sorrow.

At the same time, the mercy of Allah was bestowed on him with 'some effective words' by means of which Adam repented and He accepted his repentance mercifully as Qur'an says: *"Then Adam received (certain) words from his Lord..." "...And He turned towards him (mercifully)...."* It happened because: *".....Verily He is oft-forgiving, the most Merciful."*

The term '*tawba'* originally means 'to return'. In the statements of the Qur'an, it means: 'to return from sin'. In this case, it means, 'to return to His Mercy'.

The Arabic word '*tawba'* which is generally understood as 'repentance' does not imply the mere utterance of any verbal prayers. It demands a real and active change in the behaviour as well as the active attitude of the individual towards the purity of his life. It demands a moral conversion with a strong and definite determination on the part of the repenting individual, never again to return to the mistake or the wrongs that had been committed before.

The term '*tawba'* is a word commonly used both for Allah and His servants. When it is used for the servants of Allah, it means that 'they returned to their Lord'. When Allah is attributed with '*tawba'*, it means that He returns His extra mercy and favour to them.

Prophet Adam, indeed, did not do any unlawful thing against the Lord, but the very mistake was counted against as 'comparative wrong' regarding him. Adam (AS) immediately felt his condition and returned to his Lord. He repented by the means of the 'words' he received, and his repentance was accepted.

The 'words' Adam (AS) learnt from the Lord:

Commentators have cited different ideas on the quality and the meaning of the 'words' that Allah (SWT) taught Adam (AS).

The 'words' that were bestowed upon Adam (AS) by the All-Knowing, All-Merciful Lord could not have been anything of an ordinary prayer. It must have been something very special or extraordinary which the All-

Merciful Himself bestowed upon him by means of which Adam (AS) or anyone could unfailingly invoke the mercy of the Lord after having displeased Him.

It is popularly accepted the 'words' were the same words and meaning revealed in Sura Al-'A'raf, verse 23, thus:

قَالَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

They said: 'Our Lord! We have wronged our own souls: if you do not forgive and have mercy on us, we shall certainly be of the losers'.

Many Islamic traditions narrated from the Ahlulbayt (AS) denote that the objective meaning of the 'words' taught to Adam (AS) by Allah (SWT), were the holy names of the highest beings, the holy Five (AS) whom Allah (SWT) had already introduced to Adam (AS).

These are:

1. Mohammed (SAW) the most praised, derived from Allah's name, the Praised One.
2. Ali (AS) the high, derived from Allah's name, the Most High.
3. Fatima (AS), the original, derived from Allah's name, the Originator of the heavens and earth.
4. Hassan (AS), the bountiful, derived from Allah's name, the Benefactor.
5. Husain (AS), the good, derived from Allah's name, the Good in Origin.

Adam (AS) relied on these 'words' and asked Allah (SAW) to forgive him. Then Allah (SWT) accepted it and forgave him.

LESSON 13:

SURATUL ASAR

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْـمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

وَ الْعَصْرِ ۙ

By the Time!

اِنَّ الْاِنْسَانَ لَفِیْ خُسْرٍ ۙ

Verily man is in a loss!

اِلَّا الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ عَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ

Except those who believe, and do good deeds,

وَ تَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ ۙ وَ تَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ع

And encourage each other to the truth and encourage each other to be patient

This Surah was revealed in Makka.

It has 3 verses.

The name of the Surah comes from the subject of its 1st Verse.

The Surah deals with the teaching of truth and patience.

LESSON: 14

Suratul Falaq

Introduction

This Surah was revealed in Makka. It has five verses. It is Surah number 113 in the Holy Qur'an. Al-Falaq means "The Dawn". The Surah deals with seeking the protection of Allah from the evil of magic and witchcraft.

Text and Translation

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيم

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful.

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ

Say, "I seek refuge in the Lord of the Dawn,

مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ

From the evil of His creation,

وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ

And from the evil of the dark night when it overtakes,

وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ

And from the evil of the witchcraft (blowing on knots),

وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ

And from the evil of the envious when he envies!"

Tafsir

Ayah 1. The Dawn refers to destroying the darkness of witchcraft, just as the light of the dawn overcomes the darkness of the night.

Ayah 2. Allah has created all sorts of creatures. Some are visible, others are invisible. Some are known to man, others are not. We ask protection from the evil of all harmful creatures.

Ayah 3. "Ghasiq" here refers to darkness of difficulties (both physical and mental) that are faced by us.

Ayah 4. The blowing on knots in a piece of thread was a kind of witchcraft practised by some women to try to cause mental harm to others. Here we seek protection from such witchcraft.

Ayah 5. The evil of the envious of jealous person can cause harm in many ways. Here we ask for protection from this sort of evil.

In short, in this Surah, we are asking Allah for help against all sorts of harm that other people seek to do to us.

This Surah should be recited when we feel that people mean to do us harm.

Merits of Recitation of Suratul Ikhlas

1. The Messenger of Allah (S) is quoted saying that one who recites both this Sura and the next (al-Nas) will be as though he recited all the Books which Allah Almighty has revealed, and he, peace be upon him and his progeny, ordered his companions to recite them upon waking up and upon going to bed.

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LESSON: 15

Importance of the lineage of Prophet Ibrahim (A) and how the Banu Isra'il settled in Egypt

Learning objectives:

- **Learning about the importance of the lineage of Prophet Ibrahim (A)**
- **Understanding how and why the Banu Isra'il moved to Egypt**

Who are the Banu Isra'il? Where are they from and why are they important?

Banu Isra'il are the children of Prophet Yaqub (A). 'Isra'il' was a title given to Yaqub (A) because he worshipped Allah SWT sincerely.

The children of Isra'il or Banu Isra'il were a nomadic people and they used to live in the deserts of Palestine. They were an honoured community because they were from the lineage of Prophet Ibrahim (A). The status given to them was from the mercy of Allah (SWT) because Prophet Ibrahim (A) was a righteous person. Furthermore, Prophet Ibrahim (A) had prayed for his progeny and in answer to his prayer he was 'gifted' Prophet Ishaq (A), as well as his grandson, Prophet Yaqub, as a bonus. The following verses shed some light on the status of the lineage of Prophet Ibrahim (A) and why they hold such a high esteem.

Verse 1:

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ نَافِلَةً ۖ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا صَالِحِينَ

And We bestowed upon him Isaac and Jacob as an additional gift, making each of them righteous [21:72]

Verse 2:

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ ۚ كُلًّا هَدَيْنَا ۚ وَنُوحًا هَدَيْنَا مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِهِ دَاوُودَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

And We bestowed upon Abraham (offspring) Ishaq (Isaac) and Ya'qub (Jacob) and each of them did We guide to the right way as We had earlier guided Noah to the right way; and (of his descendants We guided) Da'ud (David) and Sulayman (Solomon), Ayyub (Job), Yusuf (Joseph), Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron). Thus do We reward those who do good. [6:84]

Verse 3:

فَلَمَّا اعْتَزَلَهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ ۖ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا نَبِيًّا

Thereupon Abraham dissociated himself from his people and the deities they worshipped instead of Allah, and We bestowed upon him Isaac and Jacob and made each of them a Prophet;

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُم مِّن رَّحْمَتِنَا وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ عَلِيًّا

and We bestowed on them Our mercy, and granted them a truly lofty renown.

وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ مُوسَىٰ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مُخْلَصًا وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَّبِيًّا

And recite in the Book the account of Moses. He was a chosen one, a Messenger, a Prophet. [19:49-51]

Verse 4:

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِ النُّبُوَّةَ وَالْكِتَابَ وَآتَيْنَاهُ أَجْرَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

and We bestowed upon him (offspring like) Isaac and Jacob, and bestowed prophethood and the Book on his descendants and granted him his reward in this world; he will certainly be among the righteous in the Hereafter. [29:27]

How did the Banu Isra'il settle in Egypt?

Prophet Yaqub (A) had 12 sons and one of those sons was Prophet Yusuf (A). Prophet Yaqub really loved Prophet Yusuf a lot. This made Prophet Yaqub's other sons (the brothers of Prophet Yusuf) very jealous of Prophet Yusuf (A). They made a plan to kill their brother. Eventually they changed their mind and threw him in a well instead. Prophet Yusuf (A) was found by a group of traders and he was sold as a slave to the governor of Egypt. This is how the journey of the Bani Isra'il began in Egypt. Prophet Yusuf were one of the chosen people from the lineage of Prophet Ibrahim as can be understood from the following verse:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ يَجْتَبِيكَ رَبُّكَ وَيُعَلِّمُكَ مِن تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ وَيُتِمُّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ آلِ يَعْقُوبَ كَمَا أَتَمَّهَا عَلَىٰ أَبَوَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

That is how your Lord will choose you, and teach you the interpretation of dreams, and complete His blessing upon you and upon the house of Jacob, just as He completed it earlier for your fathers, Abraham and Isaac. Your Lord is indeed all-knowing and all-wise. [12:6]

Once Prophet Yusuf became established in Egypt as a great advisor of the Pharaoh, the Pharaoh gave him a large piece of land and said that his entire family could immigrate to Egypt. This is when the Bani Isra'il immigrated to Egypt. This was all the plan of Allah (SWT) to get the Banu Isra'il to move and settle in Egypt.

وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَتَبَوَّأُ مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ ۚ نُصِيبُ بِرَحْمَتِنَا مَن نَّشَاءُ ۖ وَلَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

Thus did We establish Joseph in the land so that he could settle wherever he pleased. We bestow favour, out of Our Mercy, on whomsoever We please, and We do not cause the reward of those who do good to go to waste. [12:56]

Why did Bani Isra'il moved to Egypt?

On the surface, it may seem that the Banu Isra'il moved there because of draught and famine in Palestine. It may also seem that due to the status of Prophet Yusuf in Egypt. However, the most important reason why they moved to Egypt was because Allah (SWT) wanted the Banu Isra'il to move to Egypt. What was special about Egypt? Egypt was the cradle of civilization. It was the centre of learning at the time. Many knowledgeable people would come to discuss ideas. It was a hub of knowledge. These people excelled in worldly sciences, yet they did not have spiritual guidance. Therefore, Allah (SWT) sent Banu Isra'il to this heart of knowledge so that they could learn the different science and combine it with the guidance they received from Allah (SWT) making them have greater wisdom and understanding.

The status of Banu Isra'il before the birth of Prophet Musa

Learning objectives:

- **To understand the position of Banu Isra'il before the birth of Prophet Musa**
- **To understand the importance of gratitude**
- **To understand the shift in status of the Banu Isra'il that took place before the birth of Prophet Musa (A)**

Banu Isra'il were very wealthy

After immigrating to Egypt, the Banu Isra'il were gifted a land where they could settle and build their homes. The land was given to Prophet Yusuf (A) as a gift from the Pharaoh of that time. This land was called 'Goshin'. Banu Isra'il were very intelligent people, they quickly learned the knowledge available to them and became part of the Egyptian civilization to the point that the whole Egyptian administration became dependent on them. This made Banu Isra'il a wealthy community.

The Qur'an expresses how much wealth one individual had within the Banu Isra'il. Qarun was amongst the wealthiest men from the Banu Isra'il. The Qur'an describes the keys of his safe:

وَآتَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوزِ مَا إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُ لَتَنُوءُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ أُولِي الْقُوَّةِ

….We had bestowed on him such treasure that their very keys would have been raised with difficulty by a whole group of strong people… [28:76]

Not only did Allah (SWT) bestow Banu Isra'il with wealth, He also honoured them with prophethood from within their community:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ وَرَزَقْنَاهُم مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

Indeed We endowed the Children of Isra'il with the Book and Wisdom and Prophethood, and provided them with good things as sustenance, and exalted them above the peoples of the whole world. [45:16]

Why were the Banu Isra'il given so many blessings and 'exalted above all the people of the world'?

The key to this answer lies with Prophet Ibrahim (A):

شَاكِرًا لِّأَنْعُمِهِ ۚ اجْتَبَاهُ وَهَدَاهُ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ

He showed his gratitude for the favours of Allah, who chose him, and guided him to a Straight Way. [16:12]

Prophet Ibrahim was very grateful for all the blessing Allah (SWT) gave him. He is called '*Shakir*' which means that he was a thankful person. However, when Allah (SWT) calls him '*Shakir*' it means that he was not just thankful like you and I, he was thankful in the truest of ways.

Hence looking back at a verse discussed last week:

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِ النُّبُوَّةَ وَالْكِتَابَ وَآتَيْنَاهُ أَجْرَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

And We bestowed upon him (offspring like) Isaac and Jacob, and bestowed prophethood and the Book on his descendants and granted him his reward in this world; he will certainly be among the righteous in the Hereafter. [29:27]

Prophet Ibrahim (A) was granted the above as a reward from Allah (SWT) for being such a grateful person. This also means that the Banu Isra'il were bestowed all their blessings because of Prophet Ibrahim (A)'s gratefulness.

REFLECTION: At this point it is important for us to reflect on how we can learn from the gratefulness of Prophet Ibrahim (A). How can we be grateful and show our gratitude to Allah (SWT)?

The answer is simple. Just know that whatever we have is from Allah (SWT). Every little thing from our ability to breathe unconsciously, to our parents and every other great blessing we take for granted. The first step is acknowledgement. Acknowledgement is considered gratitude on a very basic level. Once a person acknowledges the blessings granted to him/her, love of Allah (SWT) penetrates this person's heart. Through this blessing of acknowledgement, one becomes grateful. The more grateful a person is the closer they become to Allah (SWT).

Now that we have looked at the reason and the status the Banu Isra'il had before the birth of Prophet Musa (A). We now move to the story of Prophet Musa (A).

The shift in status of the Banu Isra'il

The Banu Isra'il lived a respectable life alongside the Egyptian people for around 400 years. However, one day the Pharaoh decided that he wanted to divest Banu Isra'il of the power and status they held. The Pharaoh felt that Banu Isra'il had benefitted a lot from his country and economy and now it was time for them to give back all they had gained. They were all branded and treated as slaves, losing all their wealth and position to the native Egyptians. When this shift in status happened, many elders and leaders of the Banu Isra'il told their people to not become disheartened and that a saviour would come to free them from slavery. Banu Isra'il did not know who, when or how this saviour would come. These people were now waiting for a saviour…. just like we are waiting for the reappearance of our living Imam, Imam al-Mahdi (A).

LESSON: 16

Pharaoh's crimes against the Banu Isra'il

Learning objectives:

- **To learn about the similarities between Banu Isra'il and the Muslims.**
- **To be introduced to some of the crimes committed by Pharaoh against the Banu Isra'il.**
- **For students to begin memorising Surat al-A'la – verses 1 to 5**

The story of Prophet Musa (A) has been narrated in the Qur'an in two different ways. Surat al-Qasas retells the story of Prophet Musa (A) in a chronological order, whereas Surat Taha divulges into the story of Prophet Musa (A) in the form of a 'flashback'.

For the subsequent lessons we will follow the chronological order of events mentioned in Surat al-Qasas with references being made to Surah Taha for a wholesome understanding inshAllah.

Surat al-Qasas [28:1-4]

طسم

Ta. Sin. Mim.

تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ

These are Verses of the Book that makes (things) clear.

نَتْلُو عَلَيْكَ مِن نَّبَإِ مُوسَىٰ وَفِرْعَوْنَ بِالْحَقِّ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

We rehearse to thee some of the story of Moses and Pharaoh in Truth, for people who believe.

إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضْعِفُ طَائِفَةً مِّنْهُمْ يُذَبِّحُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

Truly Pharaoh elated himself in the land and broke up its people into sections, depressing a small group among them: their sons he slew, but he kept alive their females: for he was indeed a maker of mischief.

Verse 3 indicates that the story of Prophet Musa (A) is being narrated to the Holy Prophet (S) and the people who believe, in order to provide an example to the Muslims in Makkah who were facing prosecution and hardship. This narrative of the story of Prophet Musa (A) should bring a sense of hope for the believers in Makkah: *"by hearing this story, that how abundant the enemy's power, number of persons, and their forces is, and how the number of believers is apparently little and they are under pressure, the power of Allah is above all and they must not feel weakness in themselves."* (An Enlightened commentary, vol. 13)

Reflection:

The same then applies to us! As we await our 12th Imam (AJFS), we should be steadfast and not lose hope, no matter how strong or powerful our enemies may appear. Discuss with the class some of the current difficulties faced by Muslims across the world. (Example: Persecution of Shi'ahs in Yemen and Saudi Arabia).

Verse 4 states some of the major crimes committed by Pharaoh. The first of these crimes was that he elevated his status - he proclaimed himself to be 'god'. His second crime was (as mentioned before) that he split the people into two groups: the native Egyptians (Coptic group) and the Banu Isra'il (Sebtian group).

The Sebtian group was treated as inferior to the Coptic group. History shows us that many tyrants split the people into castes, classes or races, etc, in order to maintain and command power (divide and rule). As long as the people are divided, they will not be able to unite to overthrow or destroy the tyrant leader.

Reflection:

This 'divide and rule' policy can be observed within the Muslim Ummah. Today, Islam is under attack, those against Islam want Muslims to fight each other rather than be united. These people make Muslims fear and blame each other rather than to work together for the greater good. The Qur'an teaches us:

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۚ وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَأَنقَذَكُم مِّنْهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited, and remember the favor of Allah on you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts so by His favor you became brethren; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it, thus does Allah make clear to you His communications that you may follow the right way [3:103]

Pharaoh's third crime was abhorrent. He commanded that for one year, every son born to the Banu Isra'il should be killed. Many baby boys were killed due to this command.

Why did Pharaoh do this?

The Pharaoh saw a dream that a fire emerged from the North, destroying all of Egypt including his palace except for Goshin, leaving all of Banu Isra'il safe. He asked his dream interpreters to explain his dream to him. According to the dream interpreters, the dream meant that a boy (saviour) will be born to the Banu Isra'il and this boy will destroy Pharaoh's power. In the greed to keep his power, he thought he could outwit the plan of Allah (SWT) by commanding that all the newborn boys of Banu Isra'il should be killed.

However, no one can outwit the plan of Allah (SWT), as the following verse states:

وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ ۖ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ

And they planned and Allah (also) planned, and Allah is the best of planners. [3:54]

LESSON: 17

Allah (SWT)'s plan and the birth of Prophet Musa (A)

Learning objectives:

- **To understand the plan of Allah (SWT) against the evil plan of Pharaoh**
- **To learn how Allah (SWT) protected Prophet Musa (A) once he was born**
- **For students to continue with the memorisation of Surat al-A'la – verses 6-8**

Pharaoh planned to kill all the baby boys born to the Banu Isra'il, however Allah (SWT) had another plan. The following verses of Surat al-Qasas (5-6) elaborate Allah (SWT)'s plan:

وَنُرِيدُ أَن نَّمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ

And We desired to bestow a favor upon those who were deemed weak in the land, and to make them the Imams, and to make them the heirs,

وَنُمَكِّنَ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنُرِيَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا يَحْذَرُونَ

And to grant them power in the land, and to make Firon and Haman and their hosts see from them what they feared. [28:5-6]

Allah (SWT) wanted to bestow His favour on the Banu Isra'il – 'those who were deemed weak in the land' – indicating that no matter how 'weak' one appears, when Allah (SWT) wills, these people would become the leaders and heirs of this world. Banu Isra'il were the progeny of Prophet Ya'qub (A) and Allah (SWT) would not leave them in this destitute state unless they decided to move away from the worship of Allah (SWT). Banu Isra'il had placed their trust in Allah (SWT) and hence Allah (SWT) bestowed His favour on them.

Reflection:

Similarly with us, when we put our trust in Allah (SWT), all the blessing of Allah (SWT) will be bestowed on us. However when we turn our backs to Allah (SWT), we are turning our backs on all the blessings of Allah (SWT).

Allah (SWT) wanted to complete His blessings on the Banu Isra'il as well as to show oppressors like Pharaoh and Haman that no matter what they plan against Allah (SWT), they will always fail as Allah (SWT) is always with the oppressed.

The Birth of Prophet Musa (A)

Banu Isra'il were a big community, how did Pharaoh make sure that all the new born boys are killed?

Pharaoh ordered that a Coptic midwife should be placed at every house that was expecting a baby and a Coptic guard should guard those houses, so that when a baby boy is born, he is immediately killed. Of course, this was the case with Prophet Musa (A). There were guards outside his house. The midwife was waiting for him to be born and when he was born, she saw that the baby was a boy! However, Allah (SWT) states in Surat Taha, verse 39:

وَأَلْقَيْتُ عَلَيْكَ مَحَبَّةً مِّنِّي وَلِتُصْنَعَ عَلَىٰ عَيْنِي

and I cast down upon you love from Me, and that you might be brought up before My eyes [20:39]

Allah (SWT) placed love for Prophet Musa (A) on anyone who saw him. So when the midwife saw him, she felt a sense of love for him and decided that she could not get him killed. The midwife came out and the guards asked her about the baby. She lied to them by saying that the baby was a girl who died at birth and she had buried her in the garden. The guards believed her and left. Prophet Musa (A) was saved! However, keeping a baby in the house was not easy and Prophet Musa (A)'s mother was worried that someone will find out and report it to the authorities.

Allah (SWT) then revealed to the mother of Prophet Musa (A) what to do next. The revelation from Allah (SWT) coming straight to the mother of Prophet of Musa (A) is indicative of her high status in the eyes of Allah (SWT).

Surat al-Qasas, verses 7-9 continues from here:

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ ۖ فَإِذَا خِفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي ۖ إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكِ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

And We revealed to Moses' mother, [saying], 'Nurse him; then, when you fear for him, cast him into the river, and do not fear or grieve, for We will restore him to you and make him one of the apostles.' [28:7-9]

The mother of Prophet Musa (A) now knows that this baby is going to be the saviour that the Banu Isra'il have been waiting for. She then places him in a box and casts him into the river. Allah (SWT) protected Prophet Musa (A) from the crocodiles and other animals that could harm him in the river, leading him straight to the palace of the Pharaoh. The guards picked up Prophet Musa (A) and immediately wanted to kill him. However, the Pharaoh's wife – Lady Asiyah stopped them.

فَالْتَقَطَهُ آلُ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا وَحَزَنًا ۗ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا خَاطِئِينَ

And Firon's family took him up that he might be an enemy and a grief for them; surely Firon and Haman and their hosts were wrongdoers.

وَقَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرَّتُ عَيْنٍ لِّي وَلَكَ ۖ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَىٰ أَن يَنفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

And Firon's wife said: A refreshment of the eye to me and to you; do not slay him; maybe he will be useful to us, or we may take him for a son; and they did not perceive.

Reflection:

Look at how Pharaoh had planned on making sure that all baby boys would be killed and how Allah (SWT) guaranteed to save Prophet Musa (A). Allah (SWT) led him straight to Pharaoh's palace, making Pharaoh raise the saviour of Banu Isra'il and his own eventual destroyer, right in front of his eyes. This teaches us a lesson that no matter how much control and power evil doers seem to have, Allah (SWT) will always ruin their plans right in front of their eyes.

Discussion:

If Allah (SWT) could do this for Prophet Musa (A) and the Banu Isra'il, has He not done a similar thing for us as Muslims by keeping our 12th Imam (A) alive and protected for so many years!

LESSON: 18

A Promise Fulfilled!

Learning objectives:

- **To learn about a promise made by Allah (SWT) to the mother of Prophet Musa (A) and how it was fulfilled.**
- **To learn that the outcome of always placing one's trust in Allah (SWT) has the best outcome.**

Surah Qasas : Verses 7-13

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ ۖ فَإِذَا خِفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي ۖ إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكِ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

And We revealed to Moses' mother, [saying] 'Nurse him; then, when you fear for him, cast him into the river, and do not fear or grieve, for We will restore him to you and make him one of the messengers.'

As discussed last week, the mother of Prophet Musa (A) was informed that her son would become a Prophet in the future. She was also a woman who had great faith in Allah (SWT) and hence, when it was revealed to her to place Prophet Musa (A) in the river, she did exactly that.

As one can understand the love of a mother for her child, she became fearful and Allah (SWT) **promised** her that Prophet Musa (A) would be returned back to her very soon. The mother of Prophet Musa (A) showed great '*tawakkul*' – reliance in Allah (SWT) by placing her son in the river.

Reflection:

Are we able to put our trust and reliance in the Hands of Allah (SWT) when we face difficulties in our lives?

فَالْتَقَطَهُ آلُ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا وَحَزَنًا ۗ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا خَاطِئِينَ

And Firon's family picked him up (from the river): (it was intended) that he might become an enemy and a source of grief for them; surely Firon and Haman and their hosts were wrongdoers.

وَقَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرَّتُ عَيْنٍ لِّي وَلَكَ ۖ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَىٰ أَن يَنفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

And Firon's wife said: (This infant will be) a (source of) comfort to me and to you; do not slay him; maybe he will be useful to us, or we may take him for a son; and they did not perceive.

The box Prophet Musa (A) was placed in floated down the river and reached the shores of the palace of Pharaoh where the guards found the box. They opened the box and found a baby boy and immediately wanted to kill him. However, Lady Asiya, the wife of Pharaoh saw the baby and stopped the guards from killing Prophet Musa (A). Lady Asiya was one of Pharaoh's favorite wives, she did not have any of her own

children and hence when she saw Prophet Musa (A), she immediately wanted to adopt him. When Pharaoh was informed about the baby in the box and he saw Prophet Musa (A), he too could not order for the baby to be killed due to the love Allah (SWT) (ref. Surah Taha: 39) had placed for Prophet Musa (A). Also the insistence of Lady Asiya on keeping Prophet Musa (A) made Pharaoh adopt him. Prophet Musa (A) now became Musa ibn Fir'aun instead of Musa ibn Imran.

Reflection:

Were it not for Lady Asiya being by the shores and finding the box in which Prophet Musa (A) was kept, the guards would have killed him. This shows how precise the plan of Allah (SWT) is. Lady Asiya was at the right place at the right time! How can someone not put their faith and reliance in Allah (SWT)?

وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ فَارِغًا ۖ إِن كَادَتْ لَتُبْدِي بِهِ لَوْلَا أَن رَّبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قَلْبِهَا لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

The heart of Moses' mother became desolate, and indeed she was about to disclose (his case) had We not fortified her heart so that she might have faith (in Allah's promise).

After the mother of Prophet Musa (A) placed Prophet Musa (A) into the river, she began to panic and become anxious. She was very close to telling the people of Goshin that she had put her son in the river and to send someone to bring Prophet Musa (A) back. However, Allah (SWT) strengthened her heart so that she becomes one of the *Mu'mineen* – believing servants of Allah (SWT).

Reflection:

Again, when a person puts their trust in Allah (SWT), no matter how hard the situation is, Allah (SWT) will strengthen the hearts of the believers. Furthermore, the outcome of placing one's trust in Allah (SWT) will always be the best of outcomes.

وَقَالَتْ لِأُخْتِهِ قُصِّيهِ ۖ فَبَصُرَتْ بِهِ عَن جُنُبٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

And she said to his sister: 'Follow him.' So she watched him from a distance while they did not perceive,

The mother of Prophet Musa (A) then sent the sister of Prophet Musa (A) to follow the box in which he was kept. His sister ran by the coast of the river until she reached the point where he was picked up by the guards. She watched them until she was sure they were not going to kill him and then she happily returned to her mother to inform her that Prophet Musa (A) was safe.

Question:

Now that Prophet Musa (A) has been adopted by Pharaoh, how will he go back to his mother? How will the Promise of Allah (SWT) be fulfilled?

وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاضِعَ مِن قَبْلُ فَقَالَتْ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ يَكْفُلُونَهُ لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ نَاصِحُونَ

And We ordained that he refused to suck any foster mother before, so she said: Shall I point out to you the people of a house who will take care of him for you, and they will be benevolent to him?

When the time came to give Prophet Musa (A) milk, he would not accept the milk from the wet nurses in Pharaoh's palace. Biologically, Prophet Musa (A) could not accept the milk from these women, every time they tried, he would vomit the milk out.

Lady Asiya became worried that this baby will die of hunger if he does not accept the milk from the wet nurses. This is when the sister of Prophet Musa (A) approached Lady Asiya and asked her, '*Shall I point out to you the people of a house…*'

Lady Asiya immediately understood that the person being referred to by the girl is his real mother. However, she was reluctant to hire someone from Banu Isra'il to take care of him and feed him. Nonetheless, she had no choice since he would not accept milk from anyone else. So Lady Asiya ordered for the mother of Prophet Musa (A) to be brought to the palace with honour and respect. As soon as Prophet Musa (A) was fed by his mother, he immediately began to take her milk and was satiated.

There were now two options for nursing Prophet Musa (A) - either the mother of Prophet Musa (A) would require to stay in the palace or she could take him with her to Goshin and keep him with her until the period of nursing ends. The second option was agreed on.

فَرَدَدْنَاهُ إِلَىٰ أُمِّهِ كَيْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ وَلِتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

So We gave him back to his mother that her eye might be refreshed, and that she might not grieve, and that she might know that the promise of Allah is true, but most of them do not know.

This was the way Prophet Musa (A) was returned back to his mother, just like Allah (SWT) promised – '*We will restore him to you*'.

Such is the outcome when one places their trust in Allah (SWT). The mother of Prophet Musa (A) placed her faith and trust in the guidance given to her by Allah (SWT) and her son was returned back to him safely. However, if she had taken matters in her hands by not placing him in the river or telling someone about him, then Prophet Musa (A) would not have survived.

Reflection:

Today's lesson should show us that placing one's trust in Allah (SWT) will lead to the best of outcomes. Allah (SWT) has control over everything. Therefore, when things don't go the way we plan for them to go, then we should know that Allah (SWT) has a better plan then we could have ever imagined. As the verse explains:

...وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُ مَخْرَجًا ، وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ وَمَن

and whoever is careful of (his duty to) Allah, He will make for him an outlet, and provide for him from whence he does not count upon. And whoever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him. Indeed Allah carries through His commands. Certainly, Allah has ordained a measure [and extent] for everything. [65:2-3]

LESSON: 19

Prophet Musa (A)'s early life in the palace

Learning objectives:

- **Learning about the life of Prophet Musa (A) within the palace.**
- **To understand that even though living in a corrupt environment one can still become one of the Muhsineen.**
- **For students to continue with the memorisation of Surat al-A'la verses 9 – 13.**

Prophet Musa (A) was raised in the palace of Pharaoh just like a prince. He was given all the luxuries of the palace and was treated similar to the other sons of Pharaoh. He was well liked amongst the people of the palace due to his virtuous character. He was actually known to be the most beloved prince of the palace.

Even though being raised in a corrupt environment where alcohol was readily available and many other evil deeds took place, he would never take part in such iniquities. If he so pleased he could kill any of the servants in the palace and no one would say anything to him, that's how much power he had. However, he never used his power or liberties as a prince in the wrong way.

Allah (SWT) tested Prophet Musa (A) in such an environment and every time Prophet Musa (A) chose *Ihsan* (righteousness) rather than *Ifsad* (corruption). Therefore, Allah (SWT) decided to bestow him with *hikmah* (wisdom) and *'ilm* (knowledge).

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَاسْتَوَىٰ آتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

When he came of age and became fully matured, We gave him judgement [wisdom] and knowledge, and thus do We reward the virtuous. [28:14]

Prophet Musa (A) at this stage in his life has reached the stage of being one of the *Muhsineen* – the good-doers in every situation and every environment. This is also an indication that he has been short listed for prophethood, however he has not yet reached the stage of prophethood.

Reflection:

'Ilm and *hikmah* are the rewards for the *Muhsineen*. *The Muhsineen* may not be given wealth and power in this world because that is given also to the worst of tyrants and disbelievers. However, *'ilm* and *hikmah* are only reserved for the *Muhsineen* – those who do the right things no matter what the situation or place they are in.

Can you find another Prophet mentioned in the Qur'an who was also raised in a palace, in a very corrupt society and has been referred to as one of the Mhsineen?

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ آتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

When he came of age, We gave him judgement and [sacred] knowledge, and thus do We reward the virtuous. [12:22]

Answer: Prophet Yusuf (A).

Both Prophet Musa (A) and Prophet Yusuf (A) were placed in very corrupt and difficult environments, yet they became righteous servants of God. This is also possible for us! There is so much immorality within

our society. However, this makes it possible for us to work on ourselves, such that we can reach closer to Allah (SWT) faster than people living in a different environment. The more corrupt a society and the more a person protects themselves from the corruption, the closer such people become to Allah (SWT).

Prophet Musa (A)'s relationship with Banu Isra'il

Despite being raised in the palace, Prophet Musa (A) had very good relations with his original family. As Prophet Musa (A) lived with his mother for the first few years of his life, he knew who his real mother was. He also respected Lady Asiya a lot and she was very nice to him. While growing up, he used to visit his parents and siblings in Goshin. This is how he also became really close to Harun who was his brother. The importance of Harun will be discussed later in the story of the life of Prophet Musa (A).

As Prophet Musa (A) was considered a prince, every time he used to visit Goshin, the place where Banu Isra'il used to live, he would be escorted with guards and officers. Goshin used to be specially prepared for his arrival and all the oppressions such as lashing of the Banu Isra'il and bad treatment of the Banu Isra'il would be hidden from the sight of Prophet Musa (A).

The Banu Isra'il had many expectations from Prophet Musa (A) as they saw him as a possible leader and saviour for them. Pharoah and his council were beginning to worry about Prophet Musa (A) and his popularity within Goshin and Egypt in general. Pharoah was starting to feel that Prophet Musa would be of danger to him so he kept sending him to different wars and battles so that he might die in battle and Pharaoh would not be held responsible for getting Prophet Musa (A) killed.

It appears that Prophet Musa (A) had a soft corner for the Banu Isra'il and he always wanted to free these people from slavery. He was always thinking of plans and ways to free his people. It is possible that he felt that due to being in a position of power, he is the most probable person to be able to free his people. However, one day he entered Goshin unannounced and saw a sight that would change his destiny forever.

وَدَخَلَ الْمَدِينَةَ عَلَىٰ حِينِ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا فَوَجَدَ فِيهَا رَجُلَيْنِ يَقْتَتِلَانِ هَٰذَا مِن شِيعَتِهِ وَهَٰذَا مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ ۖ فَاسْتَغَاثَهُ الَّذِي مِن شِيعَتِهِ عَلَى الَّذِي مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ فَوَكَزَهُ مُوسَىٰ فَقَضَىٰ عَلَيْهِ ۖ قَالَ هَٰذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۖ إِنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ مُّضِلٌّ مُّبِينٌ

[One day] he entered the city at a time when its people were not likely to take notice. He found there two men fighting, this one from among his followers, and that one from his enemies. The one who was from his followers sought his help against him who was from his enemies. So Moses hit him with his fist, whereupon he expired. He said, 'This is of Satan's doing. Indeed he is clearly a misguiding enemy.' [28:15]

Reflection:

Ponder over the verse mentioned above. Why is the term "Shi'ah" used in the verse? The term Shi'ah is not used for tribal or racial links, it is used to express one's following of a person. Even though Prophet Musa (A) had not reached the stage of prophethood, he was still considered a leader amongst the Banu Isra'il.

Furthermore, how do you think Prophet Musa (A)'s life changed after this incident?

The next lesson will focus on this incident and how it changed all the plans of Prophet Musa (A).

LESSON: 20

Prophet Musa (A)

Learning objectives:

- **To know that Prophet Musa (A) had Shi'ahs before he became Prophet.**
- **To learn about the incident that changed Prophet Musa (A)'s life.**

Surat al-Qasas: Verse 15

وَدَخَلَ الْمَدِينَةَ عَلَىٰ حِينِ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا فَوَجَدَ فِيهَا رَجُلَيْنِ يَقْتَتِلَانِ هَٰذَا مِن شِيعَتِهِ وَهَٰذَا مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ ۖ فَاسْتَغَاثَهُ الَّذِي مِن شِيعَتِهِ عَلَى الَّذِي مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ فَوَكَزَهُ مُوسَىٰ فَقَضَىٰ عَلَيْهِ ۖ قَالَ هَٰذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۖ إِنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ مُّضِلٌّ مُّبِينٌ

[One day] he entered the city at a time when its people were not likely to take notice. He found there two men fighting, this one from among his followers, and that one from his enemies. The one who was from his followers sought his help against him who was from his enemies. So Moses hit him with his fist, whereupon he expired. He said, 'This is of Satan's doing. Indeed he is clearly a misguiding enemy.'

Reflection:

Ponder over the verse mentioned above. Why is the term Shi'ah used in the verse? Even though Prophet Musa (A) had not reached the stage of prophethood, he was still considered a leader amongst the Banu Isra'il due to his position within the palace. How do you think Prophet Musa (A)'s life changed after this incident?

As the verse states, Prophet Musa (A) entered the city when the people were not expecting him and hence he witnessed how the Banu Isra'il were really treated. This was an eye opening experience for Prophet Musa (A). He now saw the reality of how his people were actually being treated. He then noticed that there were two men fighting each other. They were actually trying to kill each other. One of the men was from Banu Isra'il. The Qur'an refers to this man as a "Shi'ah" of Prophet Musa (A). "Shi'ah" in this verse does not signify cultural or racial ties, it is used to express one's following of a person. This man calls out to Prophet Musa (A) for help.

The other man was a Coptic guard, the Qur'an refers to this man as the enemy of Prophet Musa (A). Prophet Musa (A) intervened trying to stop the two men from fighting and punched the Coptic guard which caused the guard to die on impact.

The verse continues and describes the reaction of Prophet Musa (A) after the death of the Coptic guard. He states: *'This is of Satan's doing. Indeed he is clearly a misguiding enemy.'* From many interpretations of this line, what is understood is that his act of punching the guard ruined all his plans of bringing a change and freeing the Banu Isra'il from captivity. It can also mean that the Shi'ah of Prophet Musa (A) was wrong to have started a fight and he did not help the plans of Prophet Musa (A) by being radical and outspoken.

In the next verses, it becomes clear that this Shi'ah would continuously pick fights and then call Prophet Musa (A) for help.

Reflection:

This "Shi'ah" of Prophet Musa (A) caused him more harm than good by picking fights with the Coptic guards. Are we like such Shi'ahs? Are we going to help the Imam (A) of our time or are we going to be foolish like this follower of Prophet Musa (A) and unknowingly cause the Imam more difficulty in his mission? What are we doing to help the cause and plans of our Imam (A).

Surat al-Qasas: Verse 16

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَغَفَرَ لَهُ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

He said, 'My Lord! I have wronged myself. Forgive me!' So He forgave him. Indeed, He is the All-forgiving, the All-merciful.

One could claim that killing a guard was a sin and that is why Prophet Musa (A) is asking for forgiveness. First of all, Prophet Musa (A) did not intend to kill the Coptic guard. His intention was to protect his Shi'ah. Secondly, he did not think that by punching the guard, the guard would die on impact. When this happened he immediately felt that he had ruined all his plans of saving his people and he immediately asked Allah (SWT) for forgiveness.

Prophet Musa (A) was now in trouble because people from the Palace would take action against him for killing the guard.

Reflection:

This verse is a beautiful *munajaat* – whispered prayer between Prophet Musa (A) and Allah (SWT). This is also a verse we should memorise and recite immediately after we have committed a sin as Allah (SWT) loves the ones who repent immediately after making a mistake. This verse also gives hope to the one who has made a mistake as the end of the verse states that Allah (SWT) forgave Prophet Musa (A) and that He is the All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.

After reciting this *munajaat*, Prophet Musa (A) felt inspired that he had been forgiven by Allah (SWT) and he then responded with the following verse:

Surat al-Qasas: Verse 17

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ فَلَنْ أَكُونَ ظَهِيرًا لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ

He said, 'My Lord! As You have blessed me, I will never be a supporter of the guilty.'

Reflection:

Is this our attitude when we make a mistake? Do we continue to support the unjust and oppressors even though we know it is the wrong thing to do? Prophet Musa (A) is showing us that his apology was sincere and that being forgiven is a great blessing from Allah (SWT) and hence he makes a promise to himself never to support the guilty people.

Surat al-Qasas: verse 18-19

فَأَصْبَحَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ خَائِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي اسْتَنصَرَهُ بِالْأَمْسِ يَسْتَصْرِخُهُ ۚ قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّكَ لَغَوِيٌّ مُّبِينٌ

The next morning he proceeded to the city in fear and looking around as one apprehensive of danger when all of a sudden, the man who had sought his help the day before again called out to him for his help. Moses said to him: "Clearly, you are a very misguided fellow."

فَلَمَّا أَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يَبْطِشَ بِالَّذِي هُوَ عَدُوٌّ لَّهُمَا قَالَ يَا مُوسَىٰ أَتُرِيدُ أَن تَقْتُلَنِي كَمَا قَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا بِالْأَمْسِ ۖ إِن تُرِيدُ إِلَّا أَن تَكُونَ جَبَّارًا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُرِيدُ أَن تَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ

But when he wanted to strike him who was an enemy of both of them, he said, 'Moses, do you want to kill me, just like the one you killed yesterday? You only want to be a tyrant in the land, and you do not desire to be one who brings about reform.'

Prophet Musa (A) is now a fugitive, he is in hiding because he knows that Pharaoh's guards are looking to arrest him. The next day, the same Shi'ah gets into another fight and calls Prophet Musa (A) for help. This time Prophet Musa (A) replies to this Shi'ah and tells him that he is clearly misguided and that he is causing disruption with no benefit to anyone.

Earlier it was mentioned that Pharaoh treated Prophet Musa (A) like his own son and that killing a guard was not a big deal because Prophet Musa (A) was one of the princes. However, Prophet Musa (A) is now around the age of 20 and Pharaoh over the years began to realise that he had made a mistake by keeping Prophet Musa (A) in his palace. Pharaoh was now looking for excuses to get rid of Prophet Musa (A) so he started to send him into the front lines of many battles. This incident with the Coptic guard was now the perfect excuse for Pharaoh to get Prophet Musa (A) killed.

The news of the death of the guard reached the palace of Pharaoh and Pharaoh held a meeting with his council to decide the fate of Prophet Musa (A).

Reflection:

This incident with the Coptic guard changed the ideas and plans of Prophet Musa (A). However, this incident again shows us that we plan and Allah (SWT) plans. This incident was the plan of Allah (SWT). Even though Prophet Musa (A) thought that he made a mistake, through hindsight, one knows that this was all part of Allah (SWT)'s greater plan.

LESSON: 21

Prophet Musa (A) and Khidhr (A)

Learning objectives:

- **To learn about journey undertaken by Prophet Musa (A) in his quest to find Khidhr (A).**

Before we go further into the exile of Prophet Musa (A) from Egypt, let us step back and look at a very important event in the life of Prophet Musa (A), which took place while he was still a prince. As we learned from previous lessons, Pharaoh had become suspicious of Prophet Musa (A) and was starting to feel that adopting him was a bad idea. Therefore, Pharaoh kept looking for ways to have Prophet Musa (A) killed without being directly responsible for it.

One narrations states that Pharaoh decided to send Prophet Musa (A) on a mission to find the origins of the river Nile. This task was considered very difficult as this meant that Prophet Musa (A) would have to travel through difficult terrain and take on a very long journey. Previous men who had taken on this mission did not come return.

There was also another possibility why Prophet Musa (A) went on this journey. He was inspired by Allah (SWT) to go to a place where two rivers meet and find a man who will teach him. Prophet Musa (A) had already been granted '*hukm*' (judgement/ wisdom) and '*ilm*' (knowledge) as a mercy from Allah (SWT). However, Allah (SWT) wanted to increase Prophet Musa (A)'s wisdom and knowledge; hence, He (SWT) sent Prophet Musa (A) on the mission to find a man who was given great knowledge and wisdom.

Reflection:

Why do Prophets also have to learn more during their lives?

The Qur'an answers this question in the following verse:

وَفَوْقَ كُلِّ ذِي عِلْمٍ عَلِيمٌ...

…and above every man of knowledge is One who knows best. [12:76]

The close servants of Allah (SWT) always learn from each other. An example of this is Imam Ali (A). Even though he possessed knowledge and wisdom, he still learned a lot from the Holy Prophet (S), which, of course, helped him grow spiritually.

Therefore, always be open to learning no matter how much knowledge you already feel you have. As the Qur'an states, there is always someone more knowledgeable than you!

The story of the meeting of Prophet Musa (A) with Khidhr (A) begins in Surah Kahf (18:60):

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِفَتَاهُ لَا أَبْرَحُ حَتَّىٰ أَبْلُغَ مَجْمَعَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ أَوْ أَمْضِيَ حُقُبًا

And when Musa said to his servant: I will not cease until I reach the junction of the two rivers or I will go on for years.

Prophet Musa (A)'s servant told him that they should just leave this mission and go back. How will they find the 'meeting of the two waters' and find a man from whom Prophet Musa (A) has to learn from? Prophet Musa was very determined to find this man. The term '*huqubah*' means 80 years which is equal to a

lifetime. Therefore, Prophet Musa (A) was either going to find this man or spend his entire life looking for him.

Reflection:

Prophet Musa (A) was determined to spend his entire lifetime in search for this knowledge. Why was he so adamant?

Prophet Musa (A)'s determination is just an indication of how important it is to seek knowledge. He understood the **importance of knowledge** and was willing to go to any lengths to gain it. The knowledge that Khidhr (A) was to provide him was worth spending a lifetime searching for.

How often are we determined to spend our time in the search of knowledge and wisdom? How often do we concentrate and focus on attaining the knowledge that is provided to us in school and Madressa? How much do we enjoy learning?

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَا مَجْمَعَ بَيْنِهِمَا نَسِيَا حُوتَهُمَا فَاتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ فِي الْبَحْرِ سَرَبًا

So when they had reached the junction of the two (rivers) they forgot their fish, and it took its way into the sea, going away. [18:61]

Prophet Musa and his servant were looking for a sign that would guide them to Khidhr (A). So when they reached the meeting of the two rivers, the servant saw the fish they were carrying for their meal come out of the container it was kept in and made its way to the sea. The servant saw this; however, he fell asleep, thought it was all a dream and forgot to tell Prophet Musa (A).

فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَا قَالَ لِفَتَاهُ آتِنَا غَدَاءَنَا لَقَدْ لَقِينَا مِن سَفَرِنَا هَٰذَا نَصَبًا

But when they had gone farther, he said to his servant: Bring to us our morning meal, certainly we have met with fatigue from this our journey. [18:62[

'…we have met with fatigue from this our journey' - this is an indication on how difficult and long the terrain was that they had to travel. (Attached in a map that shows the possible journey undertaken by Prophet Musa (A) and his servant).

قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِذْ أَوَيْنَا إِلَى الصَّخْرَةِ فَإِنِّي نَسِيتُ الْحُوتَ وَمَا أَنسَانِيهُ إِلَّا الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ أَذْكُرَهُ ۚ وَاتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ فِي الْبَحْرِ عَجَبًا

He (the servant) said: Did you see when we took refuge on the rock then I forgot the fish, and nothing made me forget to speak of it but the Shaitan, and it took its way into the river; what a wonder!

قَالَ ذَٰلِكَ مَا كُنَّا نَبْغِ ۚ فَارْتَدَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِمَا قَصَصًا

He said, 'That is what we were after!' So they returned, retracing their footsteps.

This incident was to show how difficult it was for Prophet Musa (A) to find this man.

Reflection:

Why does Allah SWT make things difficult? Why couldn't Khidhr (A) just come to Prophet Musa (A) and teach him?

The main reason is that Allah (SWT) wanted Prophet Musa to appreciate knowledge and value it. If we are given knowledge without any effort, we do not value it. How often do you wake up in the morning and say '*Alhamdullilah*' I am going to school today to gain knowledge? How many times do we complain about going to school and the amount of 'work' we have to do at school? We are very fortunate to be able to access knowledge very easily however how grateful are we for this knowledge?

Prophet Musa (A) set an example to show us the value of knowledge and to appreciate it.

This is a map that looks at the possible origins of the Nile. The White Nile and the Blue Nile meet in Sudan's capital Khartoum. This could ***possibly*** be the place where Prophet Musa (A) met Khidhr (A). It can be seen that there are many places where two rivers meet, so it was very hard for Prophet Musa (A) to determine where exactly was he going to meet Khidhr (A). We cannot know for sure where exactly they met; however, this map gives a rough idea about the long journey taken by Prophet Musa (A).



LESSON: 22

Prophet Musa (A) and Khidhr (A) – Part 2

Learning objectives:

- **To learn about the interaction that took place between Khidhr (A) and Prophet Musa (A)**
- **To understand why certain Khidhr (A) acted in a very surprising manner.**

Prophet Musa (A) and his servant retraced their steps and reached the place where 'the two rivers meet'. Here they found Kidhr (A). The story continues from verse 65 of Surah Kahf up to verse 82.

فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا مِّنْ عِبَادِنَا آتَيْنَاهُ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِندِنَا وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ مِن لَّدُنَّا عِلْمًا

[There] they found one of Our servants whom We had granted a mercy from Ourselves, and taught him a knowledge from Our own. (65)

Allah (SWT) describes this man as His servant and this man was given a mercy in the form of special knowledge bestowed upon him from Allah (SWT). What was this knowledge? He could see how things transpire in the future and why certain instances took place.

Reflection:

Looking through the story think about what lesson Allah (SWT) is teaching Prophet Musa (A) and how these lessons are applicable to us?

قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَىٰ هَلْ أَتَّبِعُكَ عَلَىٰ أَن تُعَلِّمَنِ مِمَّا عُلِّمْتَ رُشْدًا

Moses said to him: "May I follow you that you may teach me something of the wisdom which you have been taught?" (66)

Prophet Musa (A) approached Khidhr (A) and asked to follow him so that he could learn from Khidhr (A). The term used for knowledge is '*Rushd*' meaning the ability to discern between right and wrong.

قَالَ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا

He said, 'Indeed you cannot have patience with me! (67)

Khidhr (A) accepted for Prophet Musa (A) to follow him. However, he said to Musa that he would not be able to bear with patience with his actions. The servant was not allowed to accompany them.

وَكَيْفَ تَصْبِرُ عَلَىٰ مَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ خُبْرًا

And how can you have patience about something you do not comprehend?' (68)

Khidhr (A) continued to say that it is natural that you are not going to be patient with me because you do not understand the reasoning behind my actions. Here Khidhr (A) is telling Prophet Musa (A) that it will be very difficult to accompany him without questioning him.

قَالَ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ صَابِرًا وَلَا أَعْصِي لَكَ أَمْرًا

Moses replied: "You shall find me, if Allah wills, patient; and I shall not disobey you in anything." (69)

Prophet Musa (A) very politely replied that he will be patient 'if Allah (SWT) wills'.

قَالَ فَإِنِ اتَّبَعْتَنِي فَلَا تَسْأَلْنِي عَن شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ أُحْدِثَ لَكَ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا

He said: "Well, if you follow me, do not ask me concerning anything until I myself mention it to you (70)

So Khidhr (A) allows Prophet Musa (A) to follow him under one strict condition. Do not ask any questions!

Prophet Musa (A) and Khidhr (A) spent a while together; however, the Qur'an mentions three incidents (below) when Prophet Musa (A) could not hold his thoughts in and questioned Khidhr (A).

فَانطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَكِبَا فِي السَّفِينَةِ خَرَقَهَا ۖ قَالَ أَخَرَقْتَهَا لِتُغْرِقَ أَهْلَهَا لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا إِمْرًا

Then the two went forth until, when they embarked on the boat, he made a hole in it, whereupon Moses exclaimed: "Have you made a hole in it so as to drown the people in the boat? You have certainly done an awful thing." (71)

Khidhr (A) was a nomad. He used to travel from place to place fulfilling the decree of Allah (SWT). So he and Prophet Musa (A) were travelling from place to place, until there came a point that they needed to embark on a boat. They had no money or food and the people on the boat were very kind to them. These people fed them and took them on board. Prophet Musa (A) began to really like these people for their generosity and kind-heartedness. However, Khidhr (A) went into a corner of the boat and damaged it by making a hole in it. Prophet Musa (A) was taken aback by this action and he spoke out against this action.

قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا

He said, 'Did I not say that you cannot have patience with me?' (72)

قَالَ لَا تُؤَاخِذْنِي بِمَا نَسِيتُ وَلَا تُرْهِقْنِي مِنْ أَمْرِي عُسْرًا

He said, 'Do not take me to task for my forgetting, and do not be hard upon me.' (73)

Khidhr (A) replied: 'Did I not say that you cannot have patience with me?' to which Prophet Musa apologised and said please don't stop me from following you.

فَانطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا لَقِيَا غُلَامًا فَقَتَلَهُ قَالَ أَقَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا زَكِيَّةً بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ لَّقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا نُّكْرًا

So they went on until they came upon a boy, whereat he slew him. He said, 'Did you slay an innocent soul, without [him having slain] anyone? You have certainly done a dire (horrible) thing!' (74)

They continued with their journey and arrived at a village. Here a group of children were playing and Khidhr (A) took a boy to the side and kills him. Prophet Musa (A) was horrified as this act and again spoke out against this action.

Reflection:

Was Prophet Musa (A) right to complain about the killing of the child?

Yes, of course he was. However, he only saw the action and had no idea about the reason why the boy was killed. The insight to understand such an action was lacking within Prophet Musa (A) at this time. Similarly, when natural disasters happen and many people die, we question Allah (SWT). However, we do not have the insight as to why such an event took place.

قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكَ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا

He said, 'Did I not tell you that you cannot have patience with me?' (75)

قَالَ إِن سَأَلْتُكَ عَن شَيْءٍ بَعْدَهَا فَلَا تُصَاحِبْنِي ۖ قَدْ بَلَغْتَ مِن لَّدُنِّي عُذْرًا

He said, 'If I question you about anything after this, do not keep me in your company. You already have enough excuse on my part.' (76)

Having realised that Khidhr (A) had been acting on the decree of Allah (SWT), Prophet Musa (A) immediately apologised with the condition that if he spoke out again, Khidhr (A) can choose to not take him along any further in his journey.

فَانطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَتَيَا أَهْلَ قَرْيَةٍ اسْتَطْعَمَا أَهْلَهَا فَأَبَوْا أَن يُضَيِّفُوهُمَا فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارًا يُرِيدُ أَن يَنقَضَّ فَأَقَامَهُ ۖ قَالَ لَوْ شِئْتَ لَاتَّخَذْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا

So they went on until they came to the people of a town. They asked its people for food, but they refused to extend them any hospitality. There they found a wall which was about to collapse, so he erected it. He said, 'Had you wished, you could have taken a wage for it.' (77)

So they continued and reached a town where the people were not hospitable. They asked for some food and were refused. They even asked to be given some work in exchange for food and yet they were denied. So they carried on and saw a garden surrounded by a wall. This wall was about to collapse so Khidhr (A) began to fix the wall with the help of Prophet Musa (A). Prophet Musa (A) became surprised and asked why they didn't charge for rebuilding the wall.

قَالَ هَٰذَا فِرَاقُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنِكَ ۚ سَأُنَبِّئُكَ بِتَأْوِيلِ مَا لَمْ تَسْتَطِع عَّلَيْهِ صَبْرًا

He said, 'This is where you and I shall part. I will inform you about the interpretation of that over which you could not maintain patience. (78)

This is when Khidhr (A) parted ways with Prophet Musa (A) because again Prophet Musa (A) asked a question. He then explains the reasoning behind the three incidents that made Prophet Musa (A) question Khidhr (A).

أَمَّا السَّفِينَةُ فَكَانَتْ لِمَسَاكِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ فِي الْبَحْرِ فَأَرَدتُّ أَنْ أَعِيبَهَا وَكَانَ وَرَاءَهُم مَّلِكٌ يَأْخُذُ كُلَّ سَفِينَةٍ غَصْبًا

As for the boat, it belonged to some poor people who work on the sea. I wanted to make it defective, for behind them was a king seizing every ship usurpingly. (79)

As the verse clearly explains, Khidhr (A) damaged the boat so that the king of that place would not take the ship away from these poor people. The ship was a means of sustenance for them and having their ship taken from them would have been a big loss for them. The damage made by Khidhr (A) meant that the king would not take the damaged boat and the people who own the boat could later fix the boat and use it easily.

وَأَمَّا الْغُلَامُ فَكَانَ أَبَوَاهُ مُؤْمِنَيْنِ فَخَشِينَا أَن يُرْهِقَهُمَا طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا

As for the boy, his parents were faithful [persons], and We feared he would overwhelm them with rebellion and unfaith. (80)

فَأَرَدْنَا أَن يُبْدِلَهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُ زَكَاةً وَأَقْرَبَ رُحْمًا

So We desired that their Lord should give them in exchange one better than him in respect of purity and closer in mercy. (81)

As for the boy, he was going to grow up to be an unfaithful and rebellious child. His parents were faithful people and therefore as a mercy from Allah (SWT), this child was killed so that the child and the parents were not held accountable for his misdeeds. They were then blessed with another child that was pious and pure.

وَأَمَّا الْجِدَارُ فَكَانَ لِغُلَامَيْنِ يَتِيمَيْنِ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ وَكَانَ تَحْتَهُ كَنزٌ لَّهُمَا وَكَانَ أَبُوهُمَا صَالِحًا فَأَرَادَ رَبُّكَ أَن يَبْلُغَا أَشُدَّهُمَا وَيَسْتَخْرِجَا كَنزَهُمَا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۚ وَمَا فَعَلْتُهُ عَنْ أَمْرِي ۚ ذَٰلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ تَسْطِع عَّلَيْهِ صَبْرًا

As for the wall, it belonged to two boy orphans in the city. Under it there was a treasure belonging to them. Their father had been a righteous man. So your Lord desired that they should come of age and take out their treasure—as a mercy from your Lord. I did not do that out of my own accord. This is the interpretation of that over which you could not maintain patience.' (82)

Reflection:

What did Allah (SWT) want to teach Prophet Musa (A)?

Things may seem very ugly on the surface and we do not know why this is happening. However, there is an inner meaning that we are not aware of. Whatever happens in this world, there is a reason behind it. What we should realise is that Allah (SWT) is in control of all things. However, Allah (SWT) has planned everything in such a way that it goes hand in hand with our free will. For example, Pharaoh adopted Prophet Musa (A) with his own free will, yet it was the plan of Allah (SWT) all along.

LESSON 23:
SURAH AL INSHIRAH

INTRODUCTION

This Surah was revealed in Makka. It has eight verses. It is Surah number 94 in the Holy Qur'an. "Inshirah" means "Expansion", and refers to the word "Nashrah" used in the first verse.

This Surah is considered as a continuation of the previous Surah (adh Dhuha).

Text and Translation

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ ﴿١﴾

1. Have We not expanded for you (O Muhammad) your heart,

وَوَضَعْنَا عَنكَ وِزْرَكَ ﴿٢﴾

2. And taken off from you your burden,

الَّذِي أَنقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ ﴿٣﴾

3. Which weighed down your back,

وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ ﴿٤﴾

4. And exalted your fame?

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ﴿٥﴾

5. Verily, with every difficulty there is ease,

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ﴿٦﴾

6. Verily, with every difficulty there is ease,

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ ﴿٧﴾

7. So when you have completed (the duties of your ministry), then establish (your successor),

وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ ﴿٨﴾

8. And to your Lord, return.

Tafsir

Ayah 1: The term “expanded your breast (or heart)” is an expression used in the Holy Qur’an to mean increasing the capacity of the person to receive knowledge and guidance from Allah. The Prophet (S) was specially blessed by Allah to understand and carry out His commands.

Ayat 2, 3: The burden is the great responsibility of spreading the message of Islam that the Prophet (S) worked so hard for. The Prophet (S) had prayed for a helper and Allah had appointed Imam `Alí (A) to help him to lighten the burden.

Ayah 4: The fame of the Holy Prophet (S) was secured for all time when Allah made Salawat on him Wajib in every Salaat and in the Adhan.

Ayat 5, 6: After declaring his Prophethood, the life of the Prophet (S) had been filled with struggle and difficulty. At times it seemed that Islam and the Muslims would not survive. He had faced all these trials with patience. Here, Allah assures him that after hardship there would be ease. The verse is repeated to emphasise the promise of Allah that the mission of the Prophet (S) would be successful and the whole of `Arabia would come under the fold of Islam.

Ayah 7: This important verse is a command to the Prophet (S) to inform the people of his successor. Now that his mission was coming to an end, the Prophet (S) would soon depart this world. One important task that remained was to nominate his successor. He appointed Imam `Alí (A) at Ghadir Khum on 18th Dhul Hijjah in 10 AH.

Ayah 8: An invitation from Allah to the Prophet (S) to retire from this world of his own will and return to Him.

Merits of Reciting Surah al Inshirah

The Prophet (S) has said that whoever recites it will be given a reward as though he had met the Prophet (S) grieved, and had removed the cause of his grief.

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