



ISLAMIC MASUMEEN SCHOOL

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ISLAMIC STUDIES

LEVEL 10

TABLE OF CONTENTS

'AQĀ'ID

1.	KNOWING ALLĀH (SWT)	PG 4
2.	THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 1)	PG 11
3.	THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 2)	PG 16
4.	REVELATION	PG 22
5.	IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 1)	PG 27
6.	IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 2)	PG 32

FIQH

1.	ŞALĀT AL-JUMU'AH.....	PG 38
2.	ŞALĀT AL-ĪD.....	PG 40
3.	TAYAMMUM.....	PG 42
4.	FOOD & DRINK.....	PG 44
5.	RADD AL-MAZĀLIM.....	PG 46

AKHLĀQ

1.	HUMILITY	PG 50
2.	CHEATING & STEALING	PG 52
3.	MODESTY & CHASTITY	PG 54
4.	ĤUSN AND SŪ' AL-ZANN	PG 56
5.	SPYING	PG 58
6.	ALCOHOL & DRUGS (PART 1).....	PG 60
7.	ALCOHOL & DRUGS (PART 2).....	PG 62
8.	VOLUNTEERING.....	PG 64
9.	JUSTICE.....	PG 66
10.	OPPRESSION.....	PG 68
11.	PERSONAL INTEGRITY	PG 71
12.	SINCERITY	PG 74
13.	TAWBAH.....	PG 76
14.	PORNOGRAPHY.....	PG 79
15.	MATERIALISM	PG 82

TĀRĪKH

1.	QĪŞAŞ AL-ANBIYĀ' - NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) (PART 1)	PG 86
2.	QĪŞAŞ AL-ANBIYĀ' - NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) (PART 2)	PG 88
3.	QĪŞAŞ AL-ANBIYĀ' - NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) (PART 3)	PG 90
4.	QĪŞAŞ AL-ANBIYĀ' - NABĪ ZAKARIYYAH (A) AND NABĪ YAĤYĀ (A).....	PG 92
5.	WAFĀT OF RASŪL ALLĀH (S)	PG 94
6.	THE EVENT OF SAQĪFAH BANŪ SAĪDAH	PG 96
7.	THE THREE CALIPHS (PART 1)	PG 98
8.	THE THREE CALIPHS (PART 2)	PG 100
9.	THE A'IMMAH - IMĀM 'ALĪ AL-NAQĪ (A).....	PG 102
10.	THE A'IMMAH - IMĀM ḤASAN AL-'ASKARĪ (A)	PG 104
11.	PEOPLE IN FOCUS - IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN (A)	PG 106
12.	PEOPLE IN FOCUS - SAYYIDAH ZAYNAB (A).....	PG 108
13.	SIGNS OF THE REAPPEARANCE OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A)	PG 110

'AQĀ'ID

What is 'Aqā'id?

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

The *Uṣūl al-Dīn* comprise of 5 basic principles:

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

This Chapter Consists Of:

Islam and Muslims

This part explains the meaning of Islam and what it means to be a Muslim. It provides us with an insight into the teachings of Islam and how Muslims are expected to live their lives. It also introduces other sects within Islam and the principle differences between these sects.

Uṣūl al-Dīn

This part looks at the five basic principles of our beliefs mentioned above: *Tawḥīd* (a study of Allāh (SWT) and His unity); *'Adālah* (the Justice of Allāh); *Nubuwwah* (Allāh (SWT)'s guidance to mankind through His messengers and revelations); *Imāmah* (the continuation of Allāh (SWT)'s guidance after the demise of the Prophet (S)); and *Qiyāmah* (a study of the resurrection and the Hereafter).

I am a Muslim

In this part, we look at some of the teachings of Islam and the beliefs of Muslims, and how best we can put them to practice in everyday life.

Why Study 'Aqā'id?

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

Dear Lord,

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

KNOWING ALLĀH (SWT)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Introduction to the Names and Attributes of Allāh (SWT)
2. Introduction to the various ways and levels of knowing Allāh (SWT)

MY NOTES



THE NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES OF ALLĀH (SWT)

Al-Asmā' al-Ḥusnā refers to the Beautiful Names of Allāh (SWT). Whenever we mention Allāh, we should say:

سُبْحَانَهُ وَ تَعَالَى

Glory be to Him, the Most High

We can also say:

عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ

The Mighty and Glorious

Allāh (SWT) tells us in the Qur'an that when we pray to Him, we can call Him by any of His Beautiful Names:

قُلْ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَانَ أَيَّمَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى



Say, 'Call "Allāh" or call "the Rahman (Merciful)". Whichever [of His Names] you may call, to Him belong the most beautiful Names.' [17:110]

Allāh (SWT)'s names refer to His attributes. They tell us about Him, and help us understand Him. In other words, we can know Allāh (SWT) through His attributes. In the Qur'an and through the *aḥādīth* of the Holy Prophet (S), Allāh (SWT) has informed us of many of His Names. For example:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ



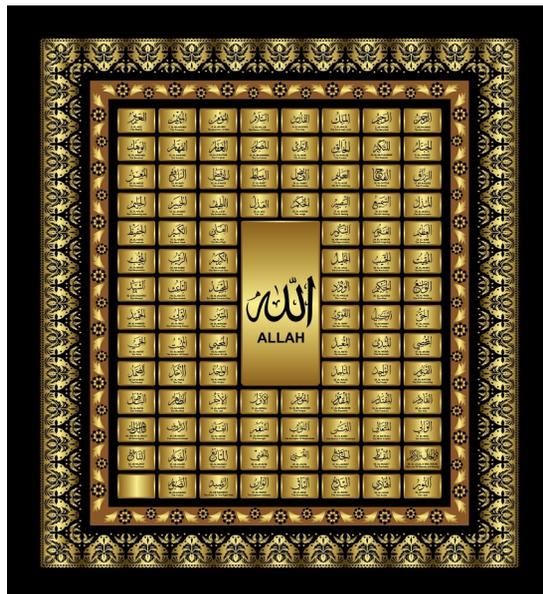
الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۗ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

He is Allāh: there is no god but He: the King, the Holy, the All-Peace, the Giver of security, the Overseer, the Most Mighty, the Overpowering, the All-Great. Exalted be He from whatever they associate with Him.

ACTIVITY



Memorise 10 Names of Allāh (SWT) that you didn't know by heart before along with their meanings.



هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِي الْمُصَوِّرُ ۗ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى ۗ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ



MY NOTES



He is Allāh, the Planner, Executer and Fashioner of creation. His are the names most beautiful. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth extols His Glory. He is the Most Mighty, the Most Wise. [59:23-4]

The Names of Allāh (SWT) are countless. In the beautiful *Du'ā' Jawshan al-Kabīr* taught to us by the Holy Prophet (S), we call out to Allāh (SWT) through 1000 of His Names and Attributes. However, we commonly refer to and memorise the famous 99 Names of Allāh (SWT).

Everything in creation reflects and manifests these different Names of Allāh (SWT). When we see the love and affection of our parents towards us, we are reminded of the Names of Allāh (SWT) *al-Raḥmān* - The All-Merciful and *al-Wadūd* - The Loving. When we eat food and earn money, we know that it is *al-Razzāq* - The Provider of Sustenance, who has blessed us with food and wealth. The deeper reality behind everything we see around us, from the great stars and planets to the small flowers and plants, are the Names of Allāh (SWT). We can hear and see through our ears and eyes, but in reality it is Allāh (SWT) who is *al-Samī'* - the All-Listening and *al-Baṣīr* - the All-Seeing. Our hearing and vision are just manifestations of these Names. For this reason, in *Du'ā' Kumayl*, we call out to Allāh (SWT) by His Names and refer to them as the following:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ... بِأَسْمَائِكَ الَّتِي مَلَأْتَ أَرْكَانَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

O Allāh, I ask You...by Your Names, which have filled the foundations of all things;

THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTES OF ALLĀH (SWT)

Al-Ṣifāt al-Thubutiyyah are the qualities of Allāh (SWT) that are true regarding Allāh (SWT). They are sometimes referred to as the "Positive Attributes" of Allāh (SWT). The opposite of this are *al-Ṣifāt al-Salbiyyah*, which are attributes that are not true regarding Allāh (SWT), or "Negative Attributes".

Among the Positive Attributes of Allāh (SWT) are:

1. *al-Qadīm* - He is Eternal. He has no beginning and no end. He wasn't born and won't die.
2. *al-Qādir* - He is all-Powerful. He has the power to do what He wishes.
3. *al-'Alīm* - He is all-Knowing. Nothing is hidden from Him.
4. *al-Ḥayy* - He is Ever-Living. He will never die.
5. *al-Murīd* - He does as He pleases. However, what He does is based on wisdom and reason.

KNOWING ALLĀH (SWT)

MY NOTES



Among the Negative Attributes of Allāh (SWT) are that:

1. Allāh (SWT) has **no** partners and **no** family. He has **no** sons or daughters.
2. Allāh (SWT) is **not** made up of anything.
3. Allāh (SWT) does **not** live in any specific place. He is everywhere.
4. Allāh (SWT) **cannot** enter anything (e.g. the body of a human). He **cannot** come in human form.
5. Allāh (SWT) does **not** change (e.g. He doesn't grow old, or become happy or sad)

HOW CAN WE KNOW ALLĀH (SWT)?



In one of his sermons, Imām 'Alī (A) described Allāh (SWT) as follows:

"Praise is due to Allāh whose praise cannot be achieved by speakers, whose bounties cannot be counted by those who count, and whose right cannot be fulfilled even by those who strive to do so. He, whom the highest of intellectual efforts cannot comprehend and the deepest diving of understanding cannot grasp. He, for whose attributes there is no limits; no eulogy of praise exists, no time is ordained and no duration is fixed."

According to this passage, it is clear that Allāh (SWT) is so great that it is not possible for us to fully comprehend Him. However, this does not mean we cannot know Him at all. There are various ways and levels to which we can understand and get to know Allāh (SWT). Some of these are the following:



1) The *Fitrah*: The belief in God has been hard-wired within every human being and hence it's something that comes naturally to us. For this reason, from the beginning of human life on earth, there has been record of the belief in the existence of some sort of God. We do not require to read books or to formally educate ourselves in order to access *fitrī* knowledge. Even the person who lives in the middle of the Amazon jungle is able to reach the conclusion that Allāh (SWT) exists without being exposed to any religions.

It is like a light that is within all of us, providing us with knowledge about basic truths. However, years of sinning and spiritually polluting ourselves dims the brightness of the light of our *fitrah*. Religious teaching in the form of the revelation and prophetic guidance adds to the basic knowledge base already available to us from the *fitrah*.

2. The external signs of Allāh (SWT): Allāh (SWT) is recognised through His signs present in the world around us. When we see the beautiful and intricate creation around us and the harmony with which everything in nature works, we know that all these things could not have come by chance and that they require a Wise Creator. In the Qur'ān, Allāh (SWT) commands us in many places to ponder over His creation:

MY NOTES



الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ۗ مَّا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفَوتٍ ۗ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ



Who created the seven heavens one above another; you see no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent Allāh; then look again, can you see any disorder?

ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنْقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ

Then turn back the eye again and again; your look shall come back to you confused while it is fatigued. [67:3-4]

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ



Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day there are signs for men who understand. [3:190]



In the profound *Du'ā' 'Arafah*, Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) mentions that he realises that all the life experiences that Allāh (SWT) makes us go through, all the good and the difficult times, were all His way of introducing Himself to us:

KNOWING ALLĀH (SWT)

MY NOTES



إِلٰهِي عَلِمْتُ بِأَخْتِلَافِ الْآثَارِ

O my God, I have known, through variety of signs

وَتَنَقُّلَاتِ الْأَطْوَارِ

and changes of phases,

أَنَّ مُرَادَكَ مِنِّي أَنْ تَتَعَرَّفَ إِلَيَّ فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

that what You want from me is that You introduce Yourself to me in all things

حَتَّى لَا أَجْهَلَكَ فِي شَيْءٍ

so that I will not ignore You in anything.

Hence Allāh (SWT) commands us to reflect upon the countless blessings He has bestowed upon us:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ هَلْ مِنْ خَالِقٍ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنْ

السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَآنتَى تُؤْفَكُونَ

O mankind! Remember Allāh's blessing upon you! Is there any creator other than Allāh who provides for you from the sky and the earth? There is no god except Him. So where do you stray? [35:3]



3. The Qur'ān: The creation around us forms the external signs of Allāh (SWT). The Qur'ān features the written signs of Allāh (SWT). It was the miracle of our Holy Prophet (S). It is so powerful that it even managed to shake the hearts of those who used to bury their baby girls alive without any hesitation.

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمٌ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ

الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا

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



4. Self-Purification: In multiple verses, *aḥādīth* and *aḥādīth qudsīyyah*, Allāh (SWT) tells us that the human **spiritual heart** is the source of truly attaining deep knowledge of Allāh (SWT).

مَا وَسَعَنِي سَمَاوَاتِي وَلَا أَرْضِي ، وَلَكِنْ وَسَعَنِي قَلْبُ عَبْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِ

My heavens and my earth could not contain Me, but the heart of My believing servant contains Me.



The main purpose of our life is to "know" Allāh (SWT). This knowing, however, is not a rational or intellectual knowing that is often called *‘ilm* (knowledge). Rather, it is *ma‘rifah*, which is better translated as "realisation". *‘Irfān* (the science of "realising" God), is derived from the word *ma‘rifah*.

There are numerous verses in the Qur‘ān that encourage people to embark on a journey of self-discovery and the *ma‘rifah* of Allāh (SWT). Similarly, there are numerous *aḥādīth* that encourage us to understand *Tawḥīd* deeply and realise who Allāh (SWT) is (i.e. gain *ma‘rifah*), not just through the mind and its logical deductions and philosophical arguments, but through purifying the heart and making this purification process a "journey" towards Allāh (SWT), so that He is known directly through personal experience.

IN SUMMARY



1. What do the names of Allāh (SWT) tell us about Him?
2. Explain what *al-Ṣifāt al-Thubutiyyah* are and give three examples.
3. Explain what *al-Ṣifāt al-Salbiyyah* are and give three examples.
4. Explain in detail at least two ways in which one can try to know Allāh (SWT).

DID YOU KNOW?



The name of God, Allāh, encompasses all the other names of God. This is why we call Him by the name Allāh more than any other Name.

KEY POINTS



1. *Al-Asmā‘ al-Ḥusnā* refer to the Beautiful Names of Allāh (SWT). Allāh (SWT) tells us in the Qur‘ān that when we pray to Him, we can call Him by any of His Beautiful Names. The Names of Allāh (SWT) are countless.

2. Allāh (SWT)‘s names refer to His attributes. Everything in creation reflects and manifests these different Names of Allāh (SWT).

3. *Al-Ṣifāt al-Thubutiyyah* are the qualities of Allāh (SWT) that are true regarding Him. The opposite of this are *al-Ṣifāt al-Salbiyyah*, which are attributes that are not true regarding Allāh (SWT).

4. It is not possible to fully understand Allāh (SWT). However, we can try to know Him to our capacities through different ways, such as our *fiṭrah*, the external signs of Allāh (SWT), the Qur‘ān and self-purification.

ACTIVITY PAGE

Find the Names of Allāh (SWT) mentioned in the word bank below. Although all the letters of each word are connected together, most words are not going to be horizontal or vertical in a straight line. You will have to think outside the box!

One has been done for you – The Name of Allāh (SWT) (AL-)MATIN.

Y	Y	F	I	T	A	T	I
A	I	R	N	Q	L	M	N
H	S	A	A	Z	A	I	S
W	B	H	M	Z	I	D	R
A	D	I	Q	A	R	A	Y
D	U	F	A	T	I	R	K

WORD BANK

WADUD
 RAHIM
 RAHMAN
 RAZZAQ
 HAMID
 KARIM
 ALIM
 QADIR

QADIM
 SAMI
 BASIR
 LATIF
 ALI
 HAYY
 FATIR
 MATIN

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 1)

MY NOTES



ATHEIST: Why are natural disasters not evil? What is the correct definition of evil?

BELIEVER: The correct definition of evil is “**the willful rejection of good**”. In other words, when someone who has **free will** to choose to either do good or reject good decides to reject good, evil is brought about. Anything else cannot be called “evil”.

ATHEIST: Can you please explain further.

BELIEVER: If a person is killed by another person, but there was **no intent** to kill, we call it an **accident**, no evil has taken place. Although the result of the accident was death and someone was killed, we cannot call such an incident “evil”. It may be a sad event, but it is not evil.

Notice that **evil is directly connected to free will**, in that someone chooses to do something bad. If you take free-will out of the equation, there is no evil left.

Therefore, when natural disasters such as a tsunami takes place, such an event cannot be called evil, because there is no notion of choice there. It is just a physical reality taking place, where water moves in a specific direction to fill a certain space which it is supposed to fill based on the laws of physics.

ATHEIST: Ok fair enough. Natural disasters are not evil in themselves, but what about when people die as a result of such events? If you had the ability and power to save someone from a tsunami, would you not save him or her?

BELIEVER: Yes, of course I would.

ATHEIST: Then how can God, whom you believe to be all-Powerful and all-Merciful, allow innocent children to die from tsunamis?

BELIEVER: Good question. However, in your argument, you have made certain incorrect assumptions, which have led you to wrong conclusions about God.

ATHEIST: Which incorrect assumptions have I made?

BELIEVER: First of all, you have assumed that death is a bad thing and that it is *wrong* for a child to die. Your conclusions are also based on the assumption that



THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 1)

KEY POINTS



1. The correct definition of “evil” is the “willful rejection of God”, i.e. evil is directly connected to free will.
2. Natural disasters cannot be called “evil”, because there is no free will associated with such events.
3. If we correctly understand death as the end of the difficulties and trials in this world and as the gateway to our true life, then it is no longer seen as a “bad” thing in itself.
4. Allāh (SWT) allows people to die from natural disasters because of a greater mercy and wisdom. It is only through witnessing such incidents that we appreciate the good.
5. Trials and difficulties in this world give meaning to this life. They are part of the system Allāh (SWT) has created to give us the opportunity to grow as human beings.

He wishes. This cannot be called evil.

BELIEVER: And even beyond all of this, although we question what kind of God can see people die in natural disasters, especially innocent children, there is actually great mercy and wisdom associated with such occasions...

ATHEIST: Really? How so?

BELIEVER: How could you and I understand the value of human life if we didn't see it go away? How could we understand the fragility of the human race if we didn't experience such events? How could we appreciate the value of the stable earth if it didn't shake during an earthquake?

We can only understand, appreciate and become thankful for good things in this life when we experience the opposite of these things. For example, if we never become ill, we would not appreciate good health. If we never experience hunger, we would never appreciate food.

ATHEIST: Yes, you are totally right. I never thought of it in this way. You have totally changed my perspective on this. Thank you very much!

DID YOU KNOW?

Allāh (SWT) informs us in many places in the Holy Qur'ān that we will face trials and difficulties in this world. That is part of the system of this world, which He has created. These trials give meaning to this life and allow us to grow as human beings.

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ
وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ



*We will surely test you with a measure of **fear** and **hunger** and a **loss of wealth, lives, and fruits**; and give good news to the patient -*

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

those who, when an affliction visits them, say, 'Indeed we belong to Allāh and to Him do we indeed return.' [2:155-6]

IN SUMMARY



1. What is the true definition of “evil”?
2. Why can we not call natural disasters evil?
3. How can a Merciful God allow children to die through natural disasters?

ACTIVITY PAGE

CIRCLE THE CORRECT ANSWER

1) Death is a joyous occasion for:

Children

Disbelievers

Good-doers

2) Is it true that natural disasters are evil?

True, because they cause massive destruction.

True, because they cause death intentionally.

False, because the statement is based on a wrong assumption about “evil”.

3) Evil comes about when:

A person chooses to do good.

A person chooses to do bad intentionally.

A person does bad unintentionally.

4) Is it evil for Allāh (SWT) to allow children to die from natural disasters?

Yes, because they had their entire lives ahead of them.

No, because we all belong to Allāh (SWT) and He can take us away from this world whenever He wishes.

Yes, because children are innocent.

5) There is Wisdom and Mercy associated with natural disasters.

Yes, because they teach us the value of life.

No, because people lose their valuables.

Yes, because people need to be punished.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Understand Divine Justice in relation to the occurrence of “man-made evil”
2. Understand why believers go through trials and difficulties in this world

MY NOTES



WHY DOES GOD NOT STOP HUMAN BEINGS FROM COMMITTING EVIL?

ATHEIST: In our last discussion, you explained to me that it is incorrect to refer to natural disasters as “evil”, because the correct definition of evil is “**the wilful rejection of good**”. You also explained to me some of the benefits and wisdom behind the occurrence of natural disasters in this world and you raised good points. However, what about when human beings are responsible for murders and countless other crimes? Would you not call such actions “evil”?

BELIEVER: Yes, such actions are evil, because human beings use their free will to do them.

ATHEIST: When the bombings took place in London on 07/07/2005, if you were there and had the ability and power to stop it from taking place, would you have stopped it?

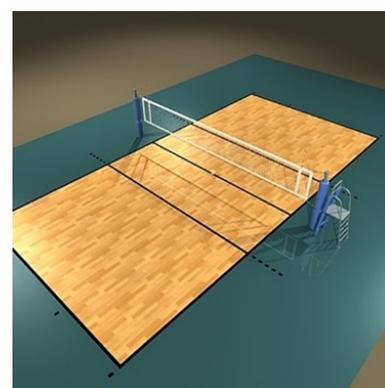
BELIEVER: Yes, of course I would have.

ATHEIST: So if God is all-Merciful and all-Powerful, like you claim, then why does He allow human beings to commit these evil deeds? Why doesn't He stop them?

BELIEVER: If you think about it, what you are really asking is for **God to intervene and take away the free will of human beings to choose to commit good or evil deeds**. This would reduce human beings to being mere robots. It would defeat the whole purpose of this life as a test for us.

ATHEIST: Can you please explain further.

BELIEVER: Imagine you are in a gymnasium playing volleyball. Notice how the volleyball court has a line marked out around its perimeter. This line can be regarded as the barrier between “good” and “evil”: When you play the game, as long as you keep the ball on the correct side of the line (i.e. inside the court), you're doing “good”. However, as soon as you hit the ball outside of the line, you lose the point - you've committed “evil”.



Why don't we just get rid of this line so that no one can lose a point and this “evil” cannot take place? And while we're at it, we should also remove the net in the middle of the court. This way, we can't go wrong!

ATHEIST: No way! If you remove the line and the net, you will destroy the game! Good volleyball players know how to keep the ball inside the line and they are good at it. That's the whole point!

CLASS ACTIVITY



Apart from the reasons already mentioned in this lesson, what are the other reasons why human beings face trials and difficulties in this world?

BELIEVER: Do you play golf?

ATHEIST: Yes...

BELIEVER: I like playing golf too, but I'm not good. I don't like the bunkers in the field. They are big distractions. My golf ball keeps going inside them and it is very difficult to get it out! I think we should get rid of bunkers! Or even better, why don't people put some sort of chip inside their golf balls, such that whenever they hit a ball, they can use a machine to control it and make sure it always lands straight inside the hole! I'll become as good as Tiger Woods!



ATHEIST: No, that's not how it works! Once again, you are making the whole game pointless! You need the bunkers to stay there for the game to be fun and for you to become a better player...

BELIEVER: But they're evil! They stop me from winning easily!

ATHEIST: That's the whole point! The more bunkers you have in the field and the more you can avoid them, the better you become!

BELIEVER: Exactly! Now you've hit the nail on the head! The same is true about the existence of evil in this life. The more choice there is between doing good and evil and the more you choose to do good and reject evil, the better a human being you become!

In the Qur'an, God says:

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ

Say, "I seek the protection of the Lord of the daybreak

مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ

from the *evil* of what He has created" [113:1-2]



MY NOTES



THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 2)

MY NOTES



In the above verses, the “evil” being referred to is the potential for human beings to use their free will to bring about evil. God does not say that there is no evil in this world. He acknowledges that because of the free will of human beings, evil will also be there.

This evil needs to be there. **It is a necessary component of the trial.** This is what allows human beings to achieve their potential as the greatest of God’s creation, by freely choosing to do good and rejecting evil. In this way, we become even better than angels. **The important point is that we must avoid evil!** That is what makes evil a “good thing” – when we avoid it! Just like the net in volleyball or the bunkers in golf, the more we can avoid them, the better we become.

Reflect on the following verse of the Qur’ān:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

You are the best of the nations raised up for (the benefit of) men; you enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong and believe in Allāh...[3:110]

Notice how God once again acknowledges that evil does exist in this world, but says that our objective as God’s representatives on earth is to rise up and pro-actively stop **evil** from being committed, by promoting good and forbidding evil in society.

God could easily have placed us straight into Paradise or Hell based upon His Knowledge of the choices we would make in this life. However, out of His Mercy, He has given us the opportunity to partake in the test of this world, so that we can **value Paradise** when we eventually go there. Likewise, those who are evil in this world will not have an excuse in the Hereafter when they enter Hell, because it is the result of their own actions in this world.

ATHEIST: Wow, that is quite profound... you have once again changed my whole perspective on life and the evil that we see happening around us. Thank you!

BELIEVER: You are most welcome!

THE TRIALS OF A BELIEVER

One of the main reasons why Allāh (SWT) subjects believers to trials in this world, is so that they can become even closer in station to Him after passing the trials. If a child is given a PhD certificate, he/she won’t understand its worth and it will not hold any value for him/her. However, if that same child, after years of struggle, goes through primary and secondary school, then completes his/her Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees and then finally completes his/her PhD, that same PhD

certificate will now hold enormous weight in his/her eyes. The same is true for a believer when he/she enters Paradise after years of trials and difficulties in this world.

Imām al-Bāqir (A):

“Paradise is surrounded by trials and patience. So whoever endures trials in this world will enter Paradise. Hell is surrounded by pleasures and desires. Thus, whoever allows himself its pleasures and desires (of the world) will enter the Fire.”

Imām al-Bāqir (A):

“Verily, the believer is tested according to the level of his faith.”

Imām al-Ṣādiq (A):

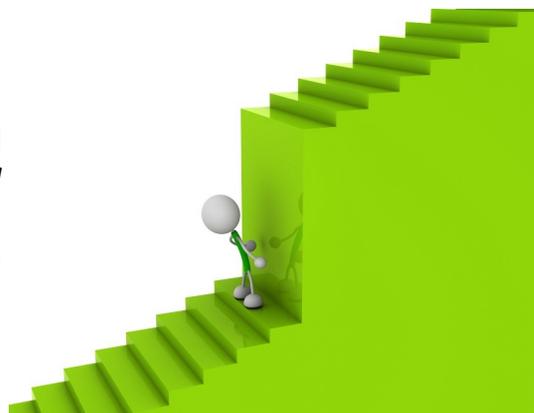
“Among what Allāh, the Exalted, revealed to Prophet Mūsā (A): ‘I have not created anything as dear to Me as My believing servant, so when I try him, I do so for his own good, and I make him prosper for his own good, and I shield him for his own good. And I know best what improves My servant, so let him endure My trial and be thankful for My favours, and be content with My decree, and I will record him among the righteous.’”

The life of Prophet Ibrāhīm (A) is a very good example. He went through many extremely difficult trials:

- * Everyone in his community was against him and he was thrown into a huge fire.
- * He didn't have any children until a very old age. When he was finally granted a child, he was commanded by Allāh (SWT) to abandon this baby and its mother in a faraway desert.
- * After many years, when he returned to the desert to once again meet his child, he was now commanded to slaughter this child as a sacrifice to Allāh (SWT).

Prophet Ibrāhīm (A) passed each one of these difficult trials and each time he passed a trial, his station in front of Allāh (SWT) also increased:

- * He was first made a **nabī**
- * Then he became a **rasūl**
- * Then he became the special Friend of Allāh (SWT) (**khalīl Allāh**)
- * Then finally, he became an **Imām**



MY NOTES



THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 2)

DID YOU KNOW?

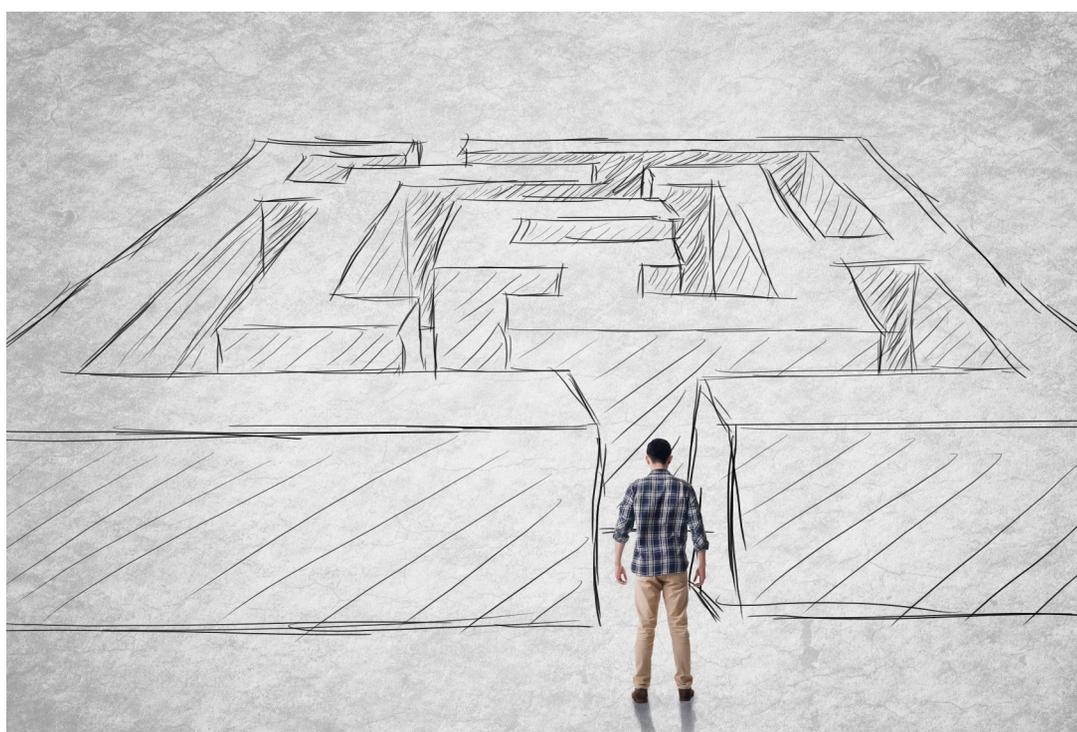


Before Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) departed from Maḍīnah, he saw the Holy Prophet (S) in a dream, who told him:

“Oh my beloved Ḥusayn, it is as if I see you covered in your blood...Allāh has a special status reserved for you which you cannot attain, except through martyrdom (shahādah).”

Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) went through great difficulties, but as a result, he attained a very special status with Allāh (SWT).

When Allāh (SWT) informed the angels that He was going to appoint a human being as His vicegerent on earth, the angels were surprised because they only saw the potential of human beings to commit evil through their free will. However, they did not realise that by using their free will to do good and reject evil, human beings can become even greater than them!



KEY POINTS



1. Evil is the outcome of human beings using their free will to reject good.
2. If Allāh (SWT) stops people from committing evil, it will mean that human beings no longer have free will.
3. Just as the line surrounding a volleyball court and the net are necessary to play volleyball, evil is also a necessary component to this world. The objective is to avoid it.
4. Going through trials allow human beings to grow and earn *Jannah*.
5. The greater a person in Allāh (SWT)'s eyes, the greater his/her trials.

IN SUMMARY



1. Why does Allāh (SWT) not stop human beings from doing evil?
2. Why is evil an essential component in the system of this world?
3. Why does Allāh (SWT) test believers with trials?
4. Why do trials become more difficult the closer we get to Allāh (SWT)?

ACTIVITY PAGE

GUESS THE PHRASE!

There is an alphabet bank under each table. Each letter in the bank can be used multiple times.

		C		O	E			O	O		-								
			B		C			E		B	T		R						

Alphabet bank [E, O, H, S, G, D, M]

			I			I			H				L	F					
			J			T			N			F		O					

Alphabet bank [I, S, V, D, T, W, G, U, L, R, C, O, E]

				O				O					E						
							A				E	A							

Alphabet bank [D, R, F, L, H, T, B, K, Y]

REVELATION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. What are the different forms of guidance from Allāh (SWT)?
2. What is the difference between *wahy* and *ilhām*?
3. How does Allāh (SWT) communicate with His prophets and messengers?

MY NOTES



WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF GUIDANCE FROM ALLĀH (SWT)?

In the Qur'ān, Allāh (SWT) tells us that He has provided guidance to every single thing in creation:

قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ



He said, 'Our Lord is He who gave everything its creation, then guided it.'

There are two different forms of guidance that are referred to in the Qur'ān. The first type is called "intuitive guidance" (*al-hidāyah al-takwiniyyah*). This type of guidance has been provided to the whole of creation and includes the laws of nature that govern non-living objects and also the natural instinct of living beings. Below are three examples of this in the Qur'ān:

1. Guidance to the Earth:

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا



On that day she shall relate all her news,

بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا

for your Lord will have inspired her (to do so). [99:4-5]

2. Guidance to the bee:

وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنْ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا



يَعْرَشُونَ

And your Lord revealed to the bee saying: Make hives in the mountains and in the trees and in what they build:

ثُمَّ كُلِي مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا ۗ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

Then eat of all the fruits and walk in the ways of your Lord submissively. There comes forth from within it a beverage of many colours, in which there is healing for men; most surely there is a sign in this for a people who reflect. [16:68-9]



3. Guidance to mankind:

فَاقِمِ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۗ

ACTIVITY



Can you name some of the personalities in the Qur'ān who received *ilhām*?

فَطَرَتِ اللَّهُ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ
 الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ



MY NOTES

Then set your face single-mindedly to the true faith and adhere to the true nature on which Allāh has created human beings. The mould fashioned by Allāh cannot be altered. That is the true, straight faith, although most people do not know.

[30:30]

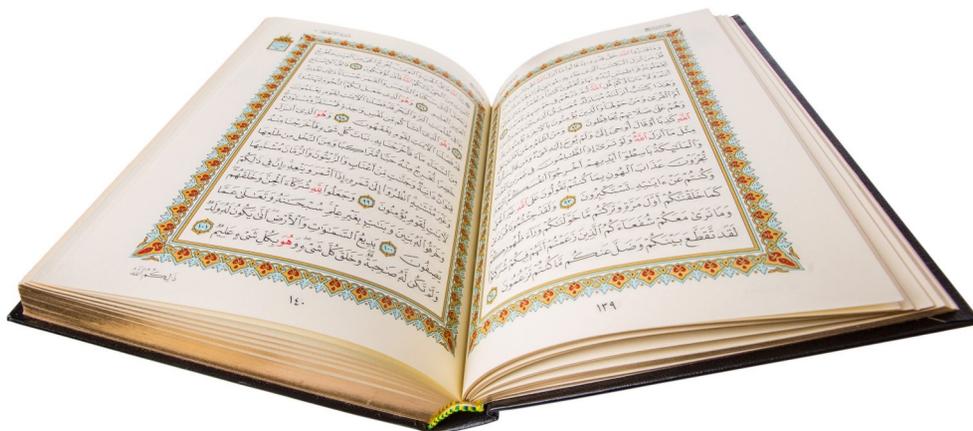
This last verse above refers to the natural disposition of all human beings, called the *fiṭrah*, through which we can intuitively know and understand certain basic truths, such as the existence of Allāh (SWT).

The second form of guidance from Allāh (SWT) is known as "legislative guidance" (*al-hidāyah al-tashri'iyyah*). This is a special form of guidance reserved for beings with a greater sense of understanding and intelligence, like human beings and the *Jinn*. Although humans have been guided to basic truths through the *fiṭrah*, we are still in need of more detailed guidance regarding the way to live our lives and what Allāh (SWT) expects from us.

This second form of guidance can be split into two types - revelation (*wahy*) and inspiration (*ilhām*).

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WAHY AND ILHĀM?

In the Qur'ān, when Divine guidance is referred to in general, both of these forms have been referred to in general as *wahy*. However, there are many important



differences between the two forms. Some of these are as follows:

1. *Wahy* is a form of Divine revelation that is exclusive to prophets. However, all human beings have the potential to receive *ilhām*. The Imāms (A) and *Sayyidah*

REVELATION

MY NOTES



Fāṭimah (A) frequently received Divine guidance in the form of *ilhām*.

2. When someone receives *ilhām*, the content of this inspiration is a private matter. It has no authority over anyone else, so it cannot be imposed upon others. However, when prophets receive *waḥy*, it is an authority over all human beings and it is part of Divine communication to all human beings via the respective prophet. This was the role of our Holy Prophet (S):

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا

O Prophet, We have sent you forth as a witness, a bearer of good news, and a warner,



وَدَاعِيًا إِلَى اللَّهِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَسِرَاجًا مُنِيرًا

as one who calls people to Allāh by His permission, and as a light-giving torch.

[33:35-6]

3. The source of the *waḥy* is clear to the prophet receiving the revelation. He is able to receive the revelations without any mistakes and confusion.

However, the exact source of inspiration, *ilhām*, is often not known to the person receiving it.



HOW DOES ALLĀH (SWT) COMMUNICATE WITH HIS PROPHETS & MESSENGERS?

The following verse highlights the various methods through which Allāh (SWT) communicates with His prophets and messengers:

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَكْلِمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا

فَيُوحِي بِإِذْنِهِ مَا يَشَاءُ ۗ إِنَّهُ عَلِيُّ حَكِيمٌ

It is not possible for any human being that God should speak to him unless it is by inspiration, or from behind a veil, or [that] He send a messenger to reveal what He wills by His permission. Verily, He is the Most High, Most Wise. [42:51]



According to the this verse, Allāh (SWT) communicates with prophets in three different ways:

1. **Direct revelation:** God reveals to the prophet without any intermediary. An

example of this type of revelation is mentioned in the following verse:

إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا

We will infuse you with a weighty Word. [73:5]



2. From behind a curtain: God reveals directly to the prophet, but the message is heard from an intermediary object. An example of this is the way Allāh (SWT) communicated with Prophet Mūsā (A) from the burning bush:



فَلَمَّا أَتَاهَا نُودِيَ مِنْ شَاطِئِ الْوَادِ الْأَيْمَنِ فِي
الْبُقْعَةِ الْمُبَارَكَةِ مِنَ الشَّجَرَةِ أَنْ يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنِّي أَنَا
اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ

And when he came to it, a voice was uttered from the right side of the valley in the blessed sport of the bush, saying: O Mūsā! Surely I am Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds. [28:30]

3. Through a messenger: God communicates to the prophet through an intermediary, like angel Jibrā'īl (A):

وَإِنَّهُ لَتَنْزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

And most surely this is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds.

نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ

The Faithful Spirit has descended with it,

عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ

Upon your heart that you may be of the warners [26-192-4]



IN SUMMARY



1. What are the different forms of guidance?
2. What are the key differences between *wahy* and *ilhām*?
3. Describe the ways in which Allāh (SWT) communicates with His prophets.

DID YOU KNOW?



Dreams of the prophets are also forms of communication from Allāh (SWT), like the dream instructing Prophet Ibrāhīm (A) to sacrifice his son, Prophet Ismā'īl (A).

KEY POINTS



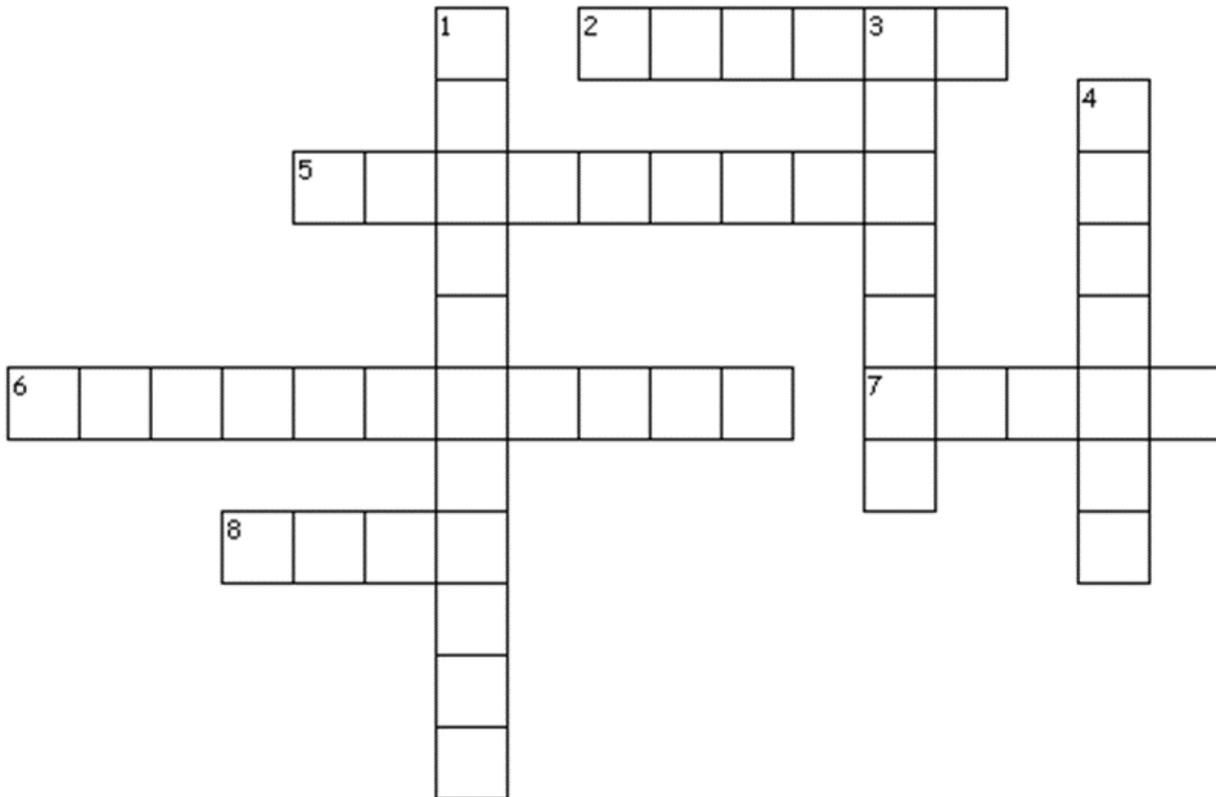
1. The "intuitive guidance" (*al-hidāyah al-takwiniyyah*) is a form of guidance that Allāh (SWT) provides to every creation in this world.

2/ The "legislative guidance" (*al-hidāyah al-tashri'iyyah*) is a form of guidance provided to intelligent beings like human beings and the *Jinn*. This form of guidance is further divided into two types: revelation (*wahy*) and inspiration (*ilhām*).

3. *Wahy* is a form of Divine revelation that is exclusive to prophets. It is a commandment from Allāh (SWT) and whichever prophet receives it should convey it to the people. On the other hand, *ilhām* can be received by anyone. Unlike *wahy*, it is a private matter and cannot be enforced upon others.

4. Allāh (SWT) communicates with His prophets in three different ways: direct revelation, from behind a curtain and through a messenger, such as angel Jibrā'īl (A).

ACTIVITY PAGE



Across

2. The form of revelation where no intermediary is used is called “_____ revelation”.
5. Revelations brought by angels is referred to as revelation through an _____.
6. A form of guidance that is provided to every creation on this earth is called *al-hidāyah al-*_____.
7. The type of revelation that is a private matter and cannot be enforced upon others is called _____.
8. The type of revelation that is exclusive to prophets is called _____.

Down

1. A form of guidance that is provided to intelligent beings like human beings and the *Jinn* is called *al-hidāyah al-*_____.
3. Allāh (SWT) sometimes communicates with His prophets through intermediary objects. This form of revelation is known as revelation from behind a _____.
4. The angel who brought revelation to the Holy Prophet (S) is _____.

IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE *GHAYBAH* (PART 1)

MY NOTES



true message of Islam and purify their followers. However, each of the Imāms were harassed by the oppressive rulers of their times and eventually killed.

The largest threat to the oppressors was the Divine promise of the coming of the Imām al-Mahdī (A), which they knew about. They were so fearful that they went to the extent of putting Imām Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (A) under constant surveillance, so as to monitor the potential birth of any sons and have him killed. The 11th Imām (A) was also killed while he was very young for this same reason, but the oppressors could not stop the Divine Will of the birth of the 12th Imām, Imām al-Mahdī (A).

When the 11th Holy Imām (A) was killed, our 12th Holy Imām (A) was only 5 years old. For his protection, his birth was kept a secret and only the very close companions of the 11th Imām (A) were allowed to see him.



After the passing away of the 11th Imām (A), Imām al-Mahdī (A) went into the Minor Occultation (*al-Ghaybah al-Ṣuġhrā*). He was hidden from the public eye and the general public did not know of his whereabouts. He communicated with his Shī‘ahs through four successive deputies (*nuwāb*). When the last of them died, the Major Occultation (*al-Ghaybah al-Kubrā*) of the 12th Holy Imām (A) started. Keeping the above context in mind, below are some of the reasons why our Imām (A) is in *ghaybah*:

1. For the protection of the 12th Imām (A): Each of our Imāms (A) were killed at the hands of the oppressors. Allāh (SWT) in His Wisdom willed that there would be 12 Imāms after the Holy Prophet (S). Imām al-Mahdī (A) is the last of them and until the appropriate time comes for him to establish the promised just government on earth, he needs to be protected from being unjustly killed like his forefathers.

2. Due to the lack of appreciation by the Muslims: The presence of an Imām is a grace from Allāh (SWT). However, ungratefulness towards this grace and the evil actions of the people can become the cause of the deprivation of this Divine grace. The *ghaybah* of the Imām (A) will continue until the time people realise the dire need for a Divinely appointed leader to rule over them and until he has enough sincere and worthy followers who will support him. In some *aḥādīth*, we have been told that the Imām (A) will reappear when he has 313 devoted followers. It is a very shameful truth, that despite the large number of Shī‘ahs in the world, the Imām is still waiting for as little as 313 true Shī‘ahs.

THE FAMOUS STORY OF SAHL B. AL-ḤASAN IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE NECESSARY LEVEL OF FAITH OF THE TRUE FOLLOWERS OF THE IMĀM (A):

Sahl b. al-Ḥasan al-Khurasānī, who was one of the Shī'ahs in Khurāsān (a province in Iran), once came to Madīnah to meet Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A). Sahl asked the Imām: "O son of the Messenger of Allāh, you are of the Imāms of the Ahl al-Bayt. What prevents you from claiming your right (to rule) while you have more than one hundred thousand Shī'ahs who are ready to fight for you?"

The Imām (A) asked him to sit down and requested someone to turn on the oven that was in the house. After the oven became very hot and turned red, the Imām (A) told Sahl to go and enter inside the oven. Sahl became scared and said: "My master, O son of the Messenger of Allāh! Do not punish me by fire and make it easy for me."

At this time, Hārūn al-Makkī, a close companion of the Imām, entered the room and after the greetings exchanged, without providing any explanation, the Imām (A) told him to enter inside the oven. Without asking any questions, he immediately did so. The Imam (A) turned back to Sahl and started talking to him about Khurāsān as if nothing had happened. Sahl became



very confused. After some time, the Imām (A) told Sahl to stand up and go and look inside the oven. Sahl looked inside the oven and to his surprise, saw Hārūn sitting cross-legged inside the fire. Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) asked Hārūn to come out of oven and he came out healthy with no burns or injury. At this time, the Imām (A) asked Sahl how many of the Shī'ahs he was speaking about believed in the Imām like Hārūn did. Sahl replied: "By Allāh, not even one."

3. As a test for the believers: The Holy Prophet (S) used to tell his some of his companions that the believers who would live at the end of the times will have a greater status than them. This is because they would believe in Allāh (SWT), His messenger (S) and the Imāms (A) without even seeing them. The *ghaybah* of our Imām (A) is a great test for us. Many people have failed in this test. However, for those of us who work ourselves and prepare for the coming of the Imām (A) by becoming God-conscious servants of Allāh (SWT), we have been given this great opportunity to pass this test and raise our status in the eyes of Allāh (SWT).

MY NOTES



IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 1)

DID YOU KNOW?



When Imām al-Mahdī (A) reappears, the true followers of the Imām who passed away during his *ghaybah* will be brought back to life to be with the 12th Holy Imām (A) and help him in his mission. This belief is known as the *Raj'a*, meaning "The Return".



KEY POINTS



1. The 12th Holy Imām (A) has many titles. One of them is *al-Mahdī*, meaning "The Guided One".
2. Many reasons have been given for his *ghaybah*. Among them include his safety, the lack of appreciation for Allāh (SWT)'s chosen guides and as a test for the believers.
3. However, we cannot fully understand all the reasons for the *ghaybah* because it is from among the Divine mysteries. It is only when the Imām (A) will reappear that we will truly understand the Wisdom behind his *ghaybah*.

Allāh (SWT) questions us in the Qur'ān:

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ، وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۗ فَلْيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلْيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ

Do people think that they will be let go merely by saying: "We believe," and that they will not be tested? And certainly We tried those before them, so Allāh will certainly know those who are true and He will certainly know the liars. [29:2-3]

4. To prove that the Imām (A) is the only solution: Imām al-Mahdī (A) will reappear once all types of ideologies will have been tested and failed. At that time people will understand that they do not have any more solutions and they will be more willing to accept the solution presented by the Imām (A).

5. Divine Wisdom: Although many explanations have been put forward for the *ghaybah* of our Imām (A), Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) has informed us that we will only truly understand the Divine Wisdom behind it after the Imām (A) reappears and we see it for ourselves. He compared the *ghaybah* to the story of Prophet Mūsā (A) and Khiḍr (A) in the Qur'ān.

In the story, Khiḍr (A) told Prophet Mūsā (A) that he can stay with him and learn from him as long as he does not ask him any questions regarding his actions until he himself informs Mūsā (A) regarding them. However, when he performed those actions, Prophet Mūsā (A) could not understand them and found them very questionable. He kept losing patience with Khiḍr (A) until he was finally told the Divine Wisdom behind those actions and then it all made complete sense for Prophet Mūsā (A).

In other words, the Imām (A) is telling us that we must be patient and not arrogantly assume that we are able to understand all of the Divine mysteries. We must not lose faith in the existence of our Imām (A) and use this time to prepare ourselves for his coming. When he reappears, he will inform us of the reasons for his *ghaybah* and it will make perfect sense at that time, just like it eventually made perfect sense to Mūsā (A).

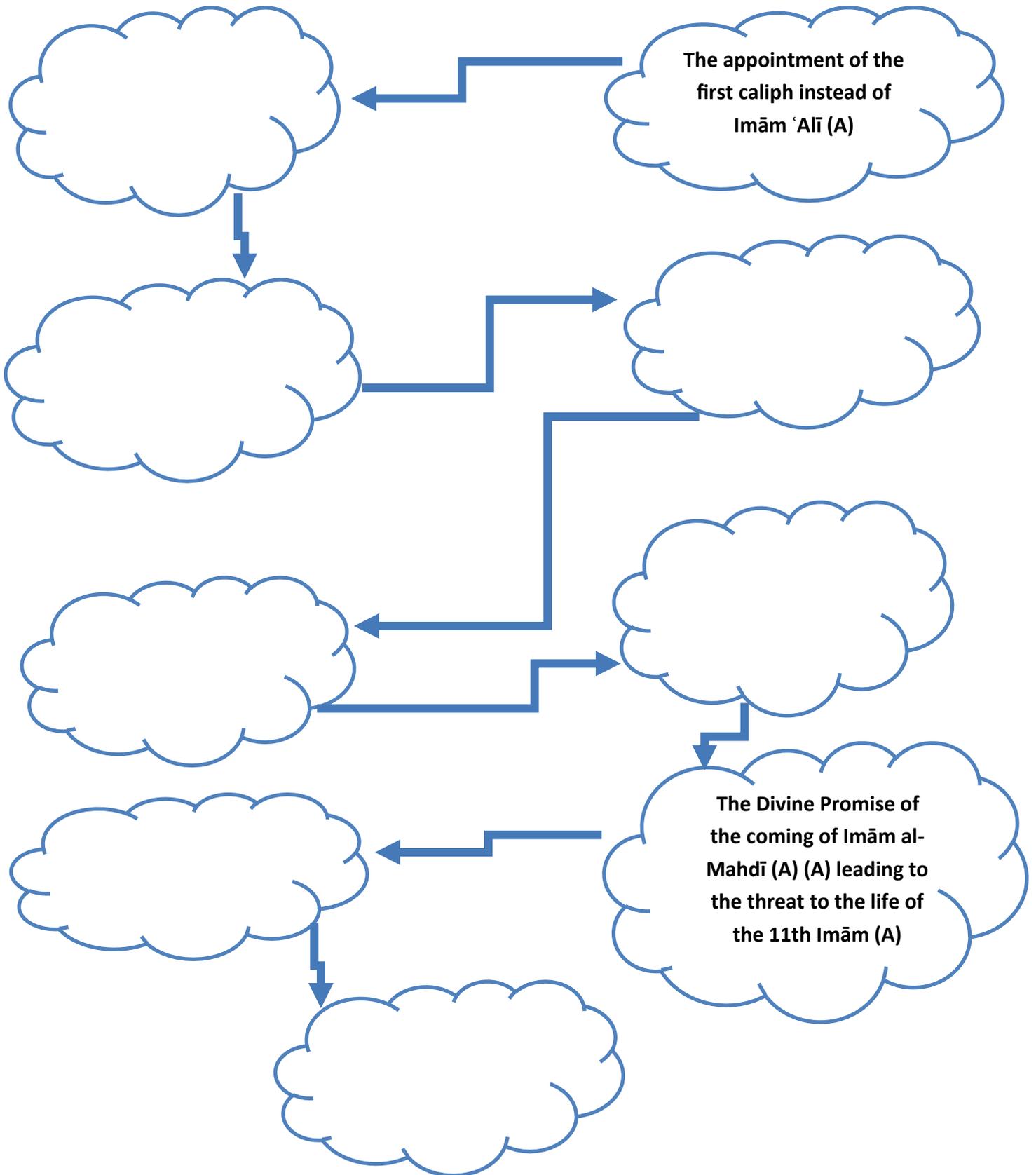
IN SUMMARY



1. List three titles of the 12th Holy Imām (A) along with their meanings.
2. How did the Muslims treat all of the Imāms prior to the 12th Holy Imām (A)?
3. List three reasons why the Imām (A) is in *ghaybah* and provide an explanation for each.
4. Why can we not fully understand all the reasons for the *ghaybah*? Which example did Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) use to explain this?

ACTIVITY PAGE

SUMMARISE THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT THAT LEAD TO THE GHAYBAH OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A)



IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. To understand the major difference between the Sunnī and Shī'ah belief regarding Imām al-Mahdī (A)
2. To understand whether it is possible for the 12th Imām (A) to live such a long life
3. To understand how we benefit from the 12th Imām (A) while he is in *ghaybah*

MY NOTES



SHĪ'AH AND SUNNĪ BELIEF IN IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A)

Both Sunnī and Shī'ah Muslims believe in the coming of Imām al-Mahdī (A) to establish a universal government. Both sect also believe that he will be a descendant of Imām 'Alī (A) and *Sayyidah* Fāṭimah (A) and that his name will be the same as the name of the Holy Prophet (S). The major difference between the two sects is that Shī'ahs believe that the Imām (A) is already born and will reappear one day, while the Sunnīs believe that he is yet to be born.

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A) TO LIVE SUCH A LONG LIFE?

Imām al-Mahdi (A) is now over 1180 years old. Some people question how it is possible for a human being to live this long. It is true that every human being is a mortal and has to die one day, including Imām al-Mahdī (A). However, there is no maximum time that a human being can live for. That is down to the will of Allāh (SWT). There are many examples in the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* about people who have lived for a very long time, so it should not be a surprise for us that the Imām (A) is also able to be alive for so long.

According to the Qur'ān, Prophet Nūḥ (A) preached to his people for 950 years and according to some *aḥādīth* of the Ma'sūmīn (A), he lived for 2500 years!

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ إِلَّا خَمْسِينَ عَامًا
فَأَخَذَهُمُ الطُّوفَانُ وَهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ

We did indeed send Noah to his people and he lived among them a thousand years save fifty. Eventually the Flood overtook them while they were engaged in wrongdoing. [29:14]

In fact, all Muslims believe that some prophet are still alive even today. For example, we all believe that Prophet 'Isā (A) was not crucified. He ascended to the heavens and one day, he will return to the earth and pray behind Imām al-Mahdī (A).

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَىٰ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ
وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ
عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا

And they said, 'We have killed the Messiah, 'Isā, son of Maryam, the Messenger of God.' They did not kill him, nor did they crucify him, though it was made to appear like that to them; those that disagreed about him are full of doubt, with no knowledge to follow, only supposition they certainly did not kill him. [4:157]

ACTIVITY



Think of three things you can do to prepare yourself for the reappearance of the 12 Imām (A). Discuss these with the rest of your class.

Other prophets that are still alive include Prophet Idrīs (A), Prophet Khidr (A) and Prophet ʿĪlyās (A). Each of them are much older than our 12th Holy Imām (A)! In the beautiful words of a poet:

*Almighty God who does with ease
the whole wide world sustain,
Can with His Might, should He so please,
His proof on earth maintain.*



HOW CAN WE BENEFIT FROM THE IMĀM (A) IF HE IS IN GHAYBAH?

Many people often ask this question because they believe that the Imām (A)'s only purpose is to answer the questions of the people and guide them in their daily lives. However, in reality, the Imām (A)'s role is much greater than that. The Imām is Allāh (SWT)'s chosen representative and His proof (*ḥujjah*) in the world. It is through the Imām that Allāh (SWT) sends down His blessings to His creation and it is because of the physical existence of the Imām (A) on earth that life as we know it continues.

The Holy Prophet (S) said:

"My Ahl al-Bayt are security for the inhabitants of the earth. If my Ahl al-Bayt are not there, the inhabitants of the earth would be destroyed."

He also said:

"This religion shall always be upright till there are 12 chiefs from Quraysh. When they pass away, the earth will swallow all its inhabitants."

MY NOTES



IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE *GHAYBAH* (PART 2)

DID YOU KNOW?



We are told in *aḥādīth* that despite his old age, when Imām al-Mahdī (A) reappears, he will look like a handsome 40 years old man.

Imām ‘Alī (A) said:

"I swear by Allāh that from the day Ādam (A) died, He has not left the earth without an Imām who guided people to Allāh, being His proof over His creation. The earth will never remain without an Imām as the proof of Allāh over His servants."

Our 12th Holy Imām himself has explained to us how we derive benefit from him while he is in *ghaybah*. He said:

"The way that people benefit from me during my occultation is as they benefit from the sun when the clouds cover it from the sights. I am indeed a (source) of security for the dwellers of the earth."



KEY POINTS



1. It is not a surprise for the Imām al-Mahdī (A) to live such a long life. Many prophets have also lived long lives in the past. Some prophets are still alive today.

2. We benefit from the 12th Imām (A) while he is *ghaybah* like we benefit from the sun while it is hidden behind the clouds.

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

This is a very profound example from which we can learn a lot:

- * Denying the existence of the Imām while he is in *ghaybah* is like denying the existence of the sun while it is hidden behind the clouds.
- * Despite being hidden behind the clouds, we still benefit from the light and heat of the sun.
- * If the sun was not there, we would not be able to survive. In the same way, if our Imām, as the proof of Allāh (SWT) on earth, was to no longer be there, the world would cease to exist.

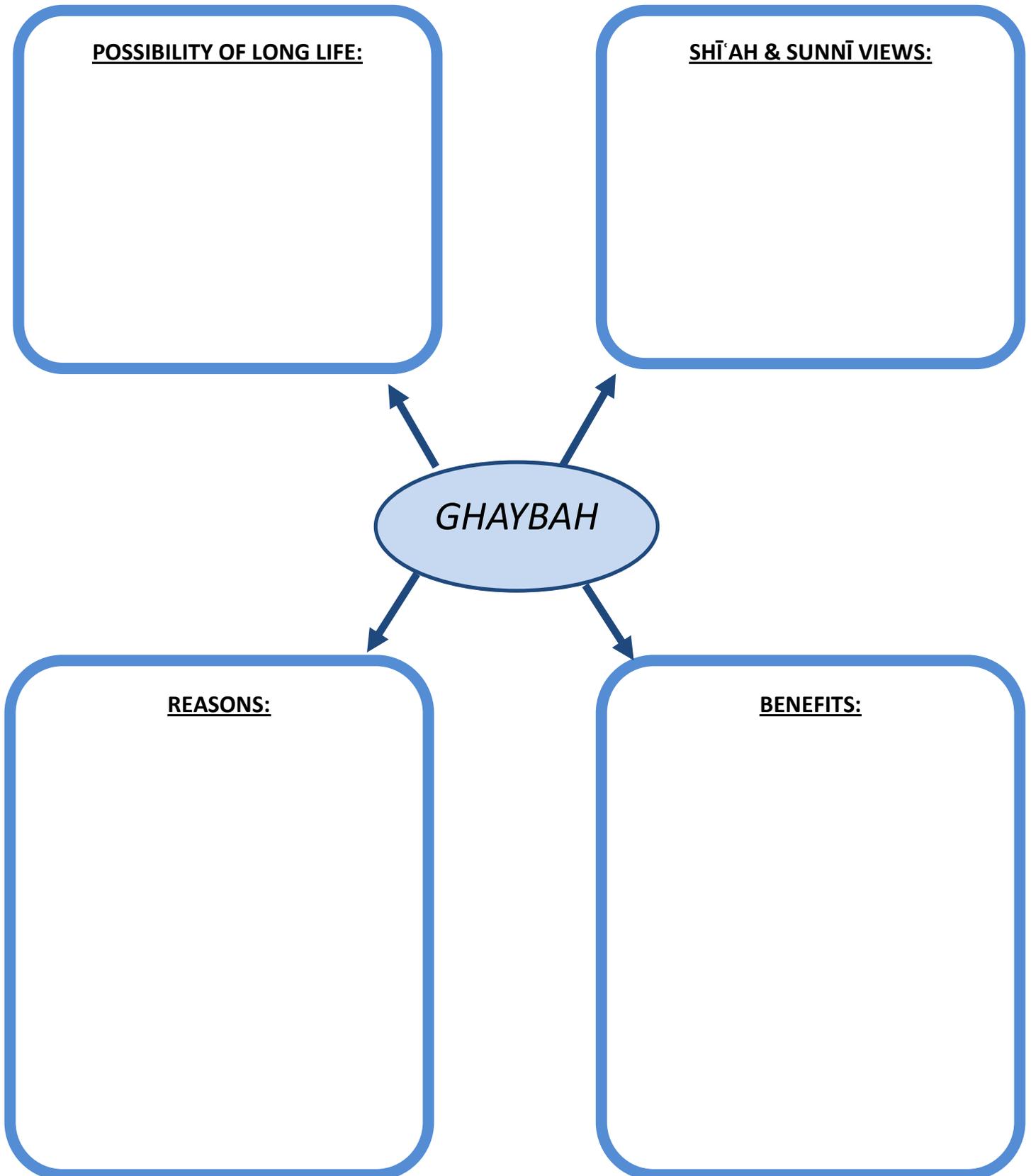
IN SUMMARY



1. What is the exact age of Imām al-Mahdī (A) today?
2. Which other prophets lived long lives?
3. How do we benefit from the Imām (A) while he is in *ghaybah*?
4. What important example does the 12 Holy Imām (A) give to explain how we benefit from his *ghaybah*?
5. What are three lessons we can learn from this example?

ACTIVITY PAGE

SUMMARISE THE IMPORTANT POINTS THAT HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED IN THE LAST TWO LESSONS.



FIQH

What is *Fiqh*?

Fiqh (Jurisprudence) is a study of the Branches of Religion (*Furū' al-Dīn*), unlike 'Aqā'id (Theology), which is a study of the Roots of Religion (*Uṣūl al-Dīn*). It is an expansion of the *Sharī'ah* based on the Holy Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet (S). *Fiqh* deals with the rulings pertaining to the observance of each of the 10 *Furū' al-Dīn*.

A person trained in *Fiqh* is known as a *faqīh* (pl. *fuqahā'*).

This Chapter Consists Of:

Ṭahārah and Najāsah

This part explains the meanings of the words *ṭāhir* and *najis*, and explains the concept of *ṭahārah* and *najāsah* in Islam.

Furū' al-Dīn

This part introduces the 10 Branches of Religion, and gives an insight into some of these branches (most relevant to this age group).

Ṣalāh

In this part, we look at the first of the 10 *Furū' al-Dīn* in depth. *Ṣalāh* is the most important act of daily worship, and the pillar of faith. It is a pre-requisite to all our other actions being accepted. For this reason, a large part of the *Fiqh* section is dedicated to learning *ṣalāh* and the rulings pertaining to it.

Taqīd

This section looks at the concept of *taqīd* and *ijtihād*. *Ijtihād* is the science of deriving Islamic law from its sources, most commonly the Holy Qur'ān and the *aḥādīth* of *Rasūl Allāh* (S) and the *A'imma* (A). *Taqīd* refers to following a *mujtahid* in Islamic Law.

Bulūgh

This part looks at the period in our lives when we become *bāligh(ah)*. It explains the changes we experience in our bodies as well as our religious obligations upon reaching *bulūgh*.

Why Study *Fiqh*?

The study of *Fiqh* is essential because it deals with the rulings pertaining to our daily acts of worship. Without knowing these rulings, we cannot perform our *'ibādāt* (worship) correctly.

Dear Lord,

Guide us in understanding the laws and rulings you have placed within the fold of Islam, so that we may perfect our worship and reach nearer to You, with understanding.

ŞALĀT AL-JUMU‘AH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. What are the different types of *wājib* actions?
2. What is the importance of reciting *şalāt al-jumu‘ah*?
3. How is *şalāt al-jumu‘ah* performed?

MY NOTES



TYPES OF WĀJIB ACTIONS

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

1. Wājib ‘aynī

A *wājib* act that every *bāligh* and sane Muslim must perform. For example, the 10 *Furū‘ al-Dīn* (*şalāh* five times a day, *şawm* in the month of *Ramaḍān*, *Ḥajj* and so on). These are all *wājib ‘aynī*.

2. Wājib kifā‘ī

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

3. Wājib fawrī

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

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

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

4. Wājib takhyīrī

This is a *wājib* duty where you have a choice. An example of *wājib takhyīrī* is the choice to pray *şalāt al-jumu‘ah* or *şalāt al-zuhr* on Fridays. If a person prays *şalat al-jumu‘ah*, then he/she doesn’t have to pray *şalat al-zuhr* and vice versa.

Another example is the choice to either recite *taşbihāt al-arba‘ah* or *sūrat al-Fātiḥah* in the 3rd and 4th *rak‘ah* in *şalāh*. We have to choose one, but cannot leave out both.



ACTIVITY



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

SALĀT AL-JUMU'AH (THE FRIDAY PRAYER)

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

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

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

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

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

After the two sermons, a two *raka'āt ṣalāh* is performed in *jamā'ah*. There should be at least 5 people present, including the Imām, for *ṣalāt al-jumu'ah* to be performed. It cannot be performed individually, and there should not be another *ṣalāt al-jumu'ah* within a 3 mile radius.



IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



There are two *qunūts* in *ṣalāt al-jumu'ah*. In the first *raka'āt*, the *qunūt* is done before *rukū'*, and in the second *rak'ah*, it is done after *rukū'* and before going to *sajdah*.

It is *mustaḥab* to recite *sūrat al-jumu'ah* after *sūrat al-Fātiḥah* in the first *rak'ah*, and *sūrat al-Munāfiqūn* after *sūrat al-Fātiḥah* in the second *rak'ah*.

KEY POINTS



1. There are four main types of *wājib* acts: **wājib 'aynī**, **wājib kifā'ī**, **wājib fawrī** and **wājib takhyīrī**.
2. **Ṣalāt al-Jumu'ah** (the Friday prayer) is *wājib takhyīrī*. It consists of two *khutbahs* (sermons) and a two *rak'ah ṣalāh*. It is *iḥṭiyāt wājib* to listen to both sermons.
3. There should be at least 5 people present for *ṣalāt al-jumu'ah*. It must be prayed in *jamā'ah*, and cannot be prayed individually.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



SALĀT AL-'ĪD

Ṣalāt al-'Īd is performed on two occasions:

- * 'Īd al-Fiṭr - on 1st Shawwāl
- * 'Īd al-Aḏḥā - on 10th Dhū'l-Hijjah

Ṣalāt al-'Īd is *mustaḥab* during the *ghaybah* of the Imām (A). It can be prayed either in *jamā'ah* (congregation) or *furādah* (individually).

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

1st rak'ah	Sūrat al-Fātiḥah followed by sūrat al-A'īlā, then <i>qunūt</i> 5 times. Then go into <i>rukū'</i> and <i>sajdah</i> as usual and stand up for the 2 nd <i>rak'ah</i>
2nd rak'ah	Sūrat al-Fātiḥah followed by sūrat al-Shams, then recite <i>qunūt</i> 4 times. Then go into <i>rukū'</i> and <i>sajdah</i> , and complete the ṣalāh as usual with <i>tashahhud</i> and <i>salām</i> .

Ṣalāt al-'Īd consists of 2 *raka'āt* and 9 *qunūt*. It is *mustaḥab* to recite the following *du'ā'* in *qunūt*:

اللَّهُمَّ أَهْلَ الْكِبْرِيَاءِ وَالْعِزَّةِ وَالْجُودِ وَالْجَبْرُوتِ وَأَهْلَ الْعَفْوِ وَالرَّحْمَةِ وَأَهْلَ
التَّقْوَى وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ أَسْأَلُكَ بِحَقِّ هَذَا الْيَوْمِ الَّذِي جَعَلْتَهُ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ عِيدًا وَلِمُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ ذُخْرًا وَشَرَفًا وَكِرَامَةً وَمَزِيدًا أَنْ تُصَلِّيَ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَأَنْ تُدْخِلَنِي
فِي كُلِّ خَيْرٍ أَدْخَلْتَ فِيهِ مُحَمَّدًا وَآلَ مُحَمَّدٍ وَأَنْ تُخْرِجَنِي مِنْ كُلِّ سُوءٍ أَخْرَجْتَ مِنْهُ مُحَمَّدًا
وَآلَ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَوَاتِكَ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَيْهِمْ. اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ خَيْرَ مَا سَأَلَكَ بِهِ عِبَادُكَ
الصَّالِحُونَ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِمَّا اسْتَعَاذَ مِنْهُ عِبَادُكَ مُخْلِصُونَ

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

ACTIVITY



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

After the *ṣalāh* is over, the Imām of *jamā'ah* should deliver two *khutbahs* (sermons), just as in *ṣalāt al-jumu'ah*.

It is *ḥarām* to fast on either one of these two *'īds*.

ZAKĀT AL-FITR

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

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



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

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

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

IN SUMMARY



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

DID YOU KNOW?



It is *mustaḥab* to do *ghusl* and wear new clothes on the day of *'Īd*.

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

KEY POINTS



1. It is *mustaḥab* to recite *ṣalāt al-'Īd* on *'Īd al-Fiṭr* and *'Īd al-aḍḥā*. It consists of 2 *raka'āt* with 5 *qunūt* in the 1st *raka'āt* and 4 *qunūt* in the 2nd, followed by 2 sermons.
2. *Ṣalāt al-'Īd* can be recited in *jamā'ah* even though it is a *mustaḥab ṣalāt*.
3. It is *wājib* to give **zakāt al-fiṭr** (*fiṭrah*) on the day of *'Īd al-fiṭr*. We should give 3 kgs of our staple food (or its equivalent in money) per person before noon on the day of *'Īd*.

TAYAMMUM

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



WHAT IS TAYAMMUM?

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

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ...
فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا
فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ



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

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

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

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

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

Qaḍā' prayers cannot be performed with *tayammum* if there is a possibility you will find water later on and will be able to perform the *qaḍā'* prayers with *wuḍū'*.



ACTIVITY



Practical demonstration of *tayammum*

NIYYĀH QURBATAN ILALLĀH



STRIKE THE EARTH WITH BOTH HANDS



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



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

HOW TO PERFORM TAYAMMUM

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

WHEN DO WE PERFORM TAYAMMUM?

Tayammum must be performed instead of *wuḍū'* or *ghusl* when:

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

IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

MY NOTES



KEY POINTS



1. ***Tayammum*** is a method of purifying oneself. It is performed instead of *wuḍū'* or *ghusl* when water is not available, or can't be used.
2. *Tayammum* is done on dry ground.
3. *Tayammum* must be done step by step (*tartīb*) without delay between the steps (*muwālāt*). Care must be taken to ensure that every part of *tayammum* has been rubbed fully.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. What are the Islamic laws concerning food and drink?
2. What foods are *ḥarām* to consume?

MY NOTES



HALĀL AND HARĀM FOODS

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

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

Examples of *ḥarām* foods are:

- χ **Pork** and anything that has an ingredient from pigs in it. For example, lard or pig gelatine.
- χ **Alcohol** and anything that has alcohol (e.g. wine or beer) in it. It is *wājib* for a Muslim to leave a gathering where alcohol is being served and it is *ḥarām* to sit at the same table where alcohol is consumed.
- χ **Meat of an animal that is *ḥarām* to eat**, such as the meat of rabbits, cats, dogs, donkeys and all reptiles.
- χ **Meat of an animal that is *ḥalāl* but the animal is not slaughtered according to Islamic Law** (called *dhabīḥah*). For example, a Muslim can eat chicken, cow (beef), camel, lamb, sheep or goat meat but only if the animal was slaughtered according to the *sharī'ah*.
- χ **Meat of an animal that died before slaughter**. For example, if a chicken, cow or sheep dies in an accident or due to disease or old age, we cannot eat their meat. The animal has to be alive during *dhabīḥah*.
- χ **Fish without visible scales**. It is also *ḥarām* to eat lobster, crab, squid, octopus, molluscs etc. Prawns and shrimp are *ḥalāl* to eat.
- χ **Birds that do not flap their wings** when flying (like eagles and hawks) as well as birds that are **scavengers** (like vultures). We are allowed to eat chicken and turkey as long as they are slaughtered according to *sharī'ah*.



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

ACTIVITY



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

LAWS OF SLAUGHTERING ANIMALS

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

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

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

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

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

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



IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

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

KEY POINTS



- 1) Muslims must only eat *ḥalāl* food. When you don't know whether something is *ṭāhir* or not, you can assume it is *ṭāhir*, except in the case of meat and meat products. In these cases, you must be sure it is *ḥalāl* before you can eat it.
- 2) The Islamic slaughter method is called ***dhabīḥah***. The animal must be placed facing *qiblah*, and the person slaughtering must face *qiblah* and recite *bismillāh* before slaughtering.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. What is *radd al-mazālim*?
2. What is *Luqāṭah*?

MY NOTES



WHAT IS RADD AL-MAZĀLIM?

Radd = to return

Mazālim = to acquire something unlawfully

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

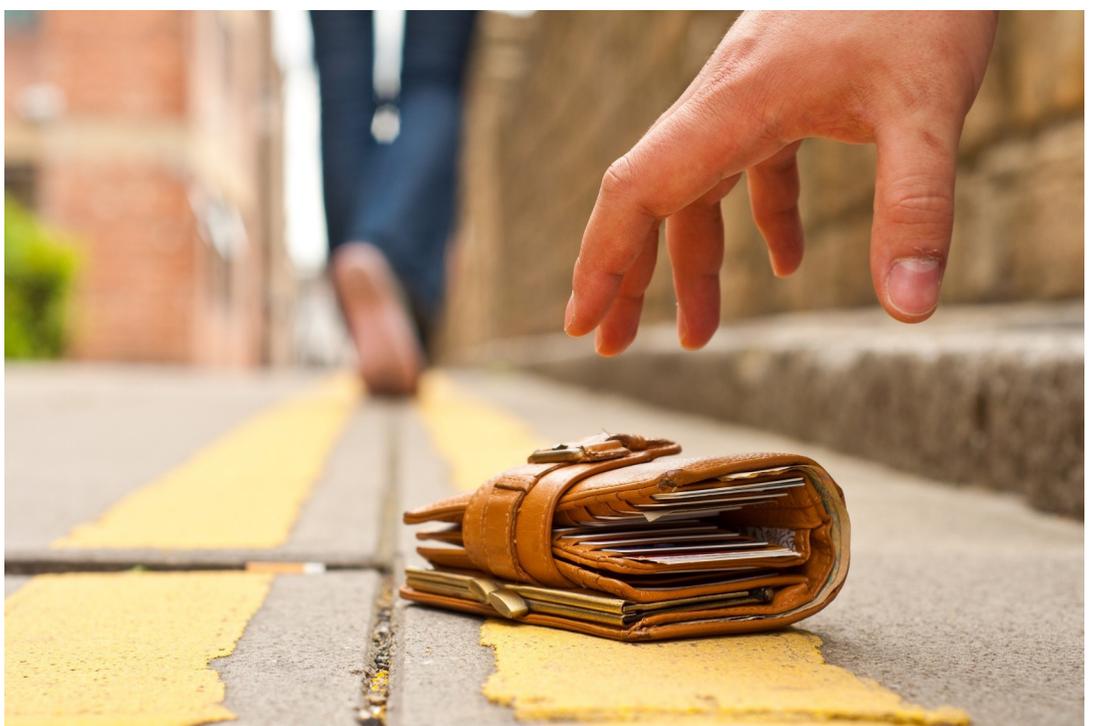
Property may be acquired unlawfully if:

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

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

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

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



GROUP ACTIVITY



Does Islam agree with the notion “finders keepers”?

LOST AND FOUND PROPERTY

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

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

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

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



IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

KEY POINTS



1. **Radd al-mazālim** means returning property which is acquired unlawfully to its rightful owner.
2. Property can be acquired unlawfully by stealing, not returning borrowed items, taking more than one's fair share, taking something without the owner's permission and so on.
3. **Luqatah** refers to lost and found property.

AKHLĀQ

What is *Akhlāq*?

Akhlāq is the plural of the Arabic word *khulq*, which means “**disposition**” (i.e. characteristics of a person and how one behaves with others). It can also be referred to as a person’s nature or personality. Islam places a lot of emphasis on refining one’s *akhlāq* by purifying the soul. We can do this by always performing all *wājib* actions and keeping away from everything that is *ḥarām*.

This Chapter Consists Of:

Adab (etiquette)

This part deals with Islamic etiquette (manners). In this section, we will look at the importance of cleanliness, bathroom manners, the adab (etiquette) of dressing, talking, eating and drinking, sleeping and travelling.

Relationships

In this section, we look at Islamic teachings on how to behave with others. We will learn respect for teachers and the elderly, and the importance of being helpful to others. Islam teaches us that we are social beings. We have to live peacefully with others within our communities. This is why Islam places a lot of importance on maintaining good relationships with others

Life of a Muslim

In this part, we look at how Muslims should behave. Islam is a peaceful and wonderful religion, but people will only understand what Islam truly means if Muslims portray themselves as good ambassadors of their faith. We will learn about a Muslim’s home and place of worship, and how to build good character through practicing good manners and keeping away from vices such as lying.

Why Study *Akhlāq*?

The study of *Akhlāq* teaches us good manners, morality and virtue. It shows us how to purify our soul so that we can become perfect human beings. The Holy Prophet (S) had the most perfect *Akhlāq* and was sent as a role model for us. In the study of *Akhlāq* (A), we look at the teachings of the Qur’ān and the *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet (S) and the *Ahl al-Bayt* (A) on refining one’s character.

Dear Lord,

Guide us in understanding of how our character and manners, morality, and virtue should reflect true Islam. Allow us to be purified through our character so we can become perfect human beings and You can be happy with us.

HUMILITY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



WHAT IS HUMILITY?

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

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



HUMILITY AT WORK

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



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

HUMILITY IN WORSHIP

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

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

ACTIVITY



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

HUMILITY COMES THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

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

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

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

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



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

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

Imām 'Alī (A) has said:

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



IN SUMMARY



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

DID YOU KNOW?



Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A) said:



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

KEY POINTS



1. Humility is the opposite of being proud and boastful. It is a quality that comes as a result of knowledge and a deeper understanding of Allāh (SWT).
2. We must be humble only for the sake of Allāh (SWT), and not humiliate ourselves in front of others for the sake of worldly gain.
3. A humble person does not see any job to be beneath him/her, and is always happy to help others.
4. Humility also makes our worship more meaningful.

CHEATING & STEALING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Cheating and stealing are *ḥarām* in Islam.
2. Stealing in any form and from any one is not permitted in Islam

MY NOTES



WHAT IS CHEATING AND STEALING?

Stealing is defined as taking someone else's property without permission, and with no intention of returning it. It is considered a major sin in Islam.

Cheating can be broadly defined as an immoral way of achieving a goal by dishonest means. It involves breaking rules to gain unfair advantage over others.

Cheating and stealing can also include:

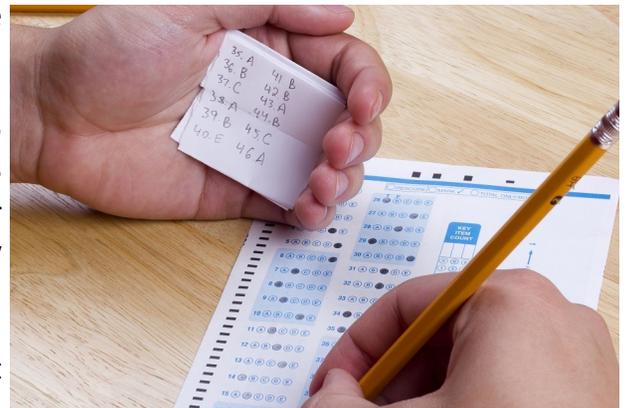
- χ hiding the defects of an object when selling it to another person
- χ cheating during an exam
- χ cheating during a game or match
- χ borrowing money from a person and not paying it back
- χ collecting money for a charitable cause and then personally benefitting from it or spending it on oneself
- χ not purchasing the correct ticket for a bus or train journey
- χ not returning money when a cashier accidentally gives you more change or under-charges you

Some people may argue that "*the end justifies the means*", meaning that as long as the end result is good, how we go about getting to the end goal does not matter. However, in Islam it does matter. For example, cheating people to raise money for building a mosque is *ḥarām*. The end is noble but the means does not justify it.

Some Muslims believe that it is okay to cheat others if they are not Muslims. This is wrong. Cheating is always *ḥarām*, because we gain something at someone else's expense, and without working hard for it and deserving it. Most importantly, when we cheat, we don't hurt the person we cheat as much as we hurt our own souls.

When an object is stolen, it becomes *ghaṣbī* (taken without permission) and any acts of worship performed using a stolen item are not accepted. For example, if a person takes a shirt from a shop and does not pay for it, it becomes *ghaṣbī*. Any prayers performed in that shirt are therefore not accepted.

Cheating in business is also *ḥarām* and a major sin. Examples include not using an accurate scale or measure, mixing poor quality goods or impurities with good quality goods and selling at a higher price, not paying the correct amount, etc.



GROUP ACTIVITY



What measures can a community or society take to keep the level of crime low?

WHY IS CHEATING AND STEALING HARĀM?

Cheating and stealing are forbidden in Islam because through these acts, a person gains something dishonestly at someone else's expense. A person works hard to acquire his/her property through lawful means and taking his/her property dishonestly is unfair.



Imām 'Alī al-Riḍā (A) has said: *"Allāh (SWT) has prohibited stealing because of the financial corruption and murder that would ensue were it to be permissible; and because of all other aggressive crimes that would result such as murder, fighting, and jealous hostilities, and because it would lead to the abandonment of fair trade and industry for earning a living, in exchange for extortion of property where nobody would have rightful ownership of anything."*



Q: Why do people steal?

There are various reasons why people steal:

- χ Some people feel they have to steal to feed themselves and their families. They feel that because they are stealing things in order to provide for their families, they are justified in their actions.
- χ Stealing gives some people a thrill. Just as addicts get their thrill from drugs, some people steal to get a thrill. The higher the value of the object, the greater the thrill.
- χ Some people steal out of greed. They want to accumulate a lot of wealth without working hard for it, so they resort to stealing.

IN SUMMARY



1. What is the definition of stealing and cheating?
2. What are the different ways in which cheating can occur?
3. Why are cheating and stealing *ḥarām* in Islam?
4. What are some of the reasons why people steal?
5. What is the meaning of *ghaṣbī*?
6. How would you feel if you worked really hard to get something and then it was stolen from you?

DID YOU KNOW?



One day, Imām 'Alī's brother 'Aqīl visited him and asked him for a favour. He said he was in debt and wanted Imām 'Alī (A) to give him money from the public treasury to pay off his debt. Imām 'Alī (A) refused to give him money from the public treasury, saying that it was not his personal property but the property of all the Muslims. Taking money from it unlawfully would be the same as stealing from the people.

KEY POINTS



1. Stealing is taking someone else's property without their permission, with no intention of returning it.
2. Cheating is using dishonest means to achieve a goal. It involves breaking rules to gain unfair advantage over others.
3. A stolen object is *ghaṣbī*. Acts of worship such as *ṣalāh* are not acceptable if the clothes, water, place etc. used for worship are *ghaṣbī*.

MODESTY & CHASTITY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



HAYĀ' (MODESTY AND CHASTITY) IN ISLAM

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

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

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

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

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



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



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



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



These *aḥādīth* of the *Ma'sūmīn* (A) demonstrate the importance Islam places on *ḥayā'* (modesty and chastity).



ACTIVITY



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

PRESERVING OUR MODESTY AND CHASTITY AT ALL TIMES

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

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



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



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



IN SUMMARY



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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

Nabī Yūsuf (A) prayed to Allāh (SWT):

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



KEY POINTS



1. *Ḥayā'* (modesty & chastity) are very important qualities of a Muslim. Imām 'Alī (A) has said that it is a proof of faith (*īmān*).
2. Islam has laid strict guidelines for *ḥayā'* in Muslims because these qualities help us protect our own bodies and souls.
3. We should observe *ḥayā'* at all times, even when we think no one is watching us because Allāh (SWT) sees everything we do.

HUSN AND SŪ' AL-ZANN

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. What is *husn al-zann*?
2. What is *sū' al-zann*?
3. Why is it important to think positive of others at all times?

MY NOTES



WHAT IS HUSN AL-ZANN AND SŪ' AL-ZANN?

Islam teaches us to think positively of others and give them the benefit of doubt. This is called *husn al-zann* in Arabic. *Sū' al-zann* is the opposite of *husn al-zann*. It means thinking negatively of others.

Husn al-zann = thinking positively and well of others
Sū' al-zann = thinking negatively of others



Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

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

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

Q: How can we practice *husn al-zann* in the following scenarios?

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

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

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

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

GROUP ACTIVITY



In small groups, discuss the two scenarios on this page. How can you apply *husn al-zann* and keep away from *sū' al-zann* in each situation?

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

THE EFFECTS OF SŪ' AL-ZANN

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

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

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

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

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



IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

MY NOTES



KEY POINTS



1. Islam teaches us to think positively of others and give them the benefit of doubt. This is called *ḥusn al-zann* in Arabic.
2. *Sū' al-zann* is the opposite of *ḥusn al-zann*. It means thinking negatively of others.
3. We should not be quick to judge others because *sū' al-zann* can have very bad consequences.

SPYING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



THE ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON SPYING

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۖ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ



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

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

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

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

ACTIVITY



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



WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL DANGERS OF SPYING ON OTHERS?

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

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

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



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



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

IN SUMMARY



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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

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

KEY POINTS



1. Allāh (SWT) tells the believers not to spy on one another.
2. Spying is closely related to suspicion (suspecting others of wrongdoing) and backbiting. A person who engages in one of these is likely to engage in all three.
3. Spying has many negative consequences on people as well as society, such as ruining people's reputation, taking away their freedom, privacy, dignity and honour.

ALCOHOL & DRUGS (PART 1)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



WHY IS ALCOHOL *HARĀM* IN ISLAM?

Islam forbids us from using any substance that causes us to lose control of our minds, become irrational and behave like animals. This is not only humiliating and degrading but also detrimental to society as it leads to domestic violence, family break-ups, depression, addiction, crime, accidents and fatality, among other things.

Allāh (SWT) forbids alcohol in the Qur'ān:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ
وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِمَا ...



They ask you concerning wine and gambling. Say, "There is a great sin in both of them, and some profit for people, but their sinfulness outweighs their profit..." [2:219]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ
مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ



O you who have faith! Indeed wine, gambling, idols and the divining arrows (a form of gambling) are uncleanness from Shayṭān's work, so avoid them, so that you may be successful. [5:90]

Although the word *khamr* in these verses is commonly translated as wine, it refers to all forms of alcoholic drinks such as beer, spirits, wines and so on regardless of their quantity, purity or whether their effect is strong or weak, immediate or delayed.

Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A) was once asked if it was permissible to take alcohol in small quantities that wouldn't cause intoxication. He said, "**Absolutely not. Anything that intoxicates in large quantities is *ḥarām* even in small quantities.**"



The effects of intoxicants are far-reaching. They not only harm the consumer but also those around him. For example, drink driving can cause the death of innocent people. Similarly, children whose mothers take alcohol in pregnancy are born with its harmful effects.

ACTIVITY



What are the negative effects of alcohol on society?

Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A) explained why alcohol is condemned in Islam. He said, "**Alcohol is the root of all evil and sin. A person who drinks alcohol loses his sanity. At the time he is drunk, he does not know Allāh, does not fear committing any sin, respects the rights of no one and does not stop from**



committing evil openly. The spirit of piety and faith departs from him and only the impure and vicious spirit, which is far off from the Mercy of Allāh remains in his body. Allāh, His angels, His prophets and the true believers curse such a man, and his daily prayers are not accepted for forty days."

WE SHOULD NOT EAT AT A TABLE WHERE ALCOHOL IS SERVED

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



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



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

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



IN SUMMARY



1. What does the Qur'ān say about alcohol consumption?
2. Is it permissible to use alcoholic drinks in small quantities which do not cause addiction?
3. According to the *ḥadīth* of Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A), why is alcohol *ḥarām* in Islam?
4. What are the ten groups of people that *Rasūl Allāh (S)* has cursed due to their involvement in alcohol?
5. What are the harmful effects of alcohol abuse on a person?

DID YOU KNOW?



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

- Those who cultivate a crop with the intention of producing alcohol from it
- Those who crush the fruit to make wine
- Those who transport it
- Those who take delivery of it from the supplier
- Those who sell it
- Those who buy it
- Those who serve it
- Those who drink it
- Those who sit at a table where alcohol is drunk
- Those who use the income earned from alcohol

KEY POINTS



1. Consuming alcohol as well as dealing in any stage of its production, distribution, sale and consumption is *ḥarām* in Islam.
2. Alcohol is the root of many evils and leads a person to sin.
3. Alcohol abuse destroys lives and leads to family breakdown. The habit is also addictive and difficult to give up.
4. We should not sit at a table where alcohol is served.

ALCOHOL & DRUGS (PART 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

WHY ARE DRUGS *HARĀM* IN ISLAM?

Islam forbids all types of intoxicants, including drugs. By ‘drugs’ we do not mean medicines, but recreational drugs that are taken to alter a person’s state of mind. They are usually addictive and alter mood and behaviour (just like alcohol). Examples of such drugs include opium, heroin, cocaine, marijuana, etc. Sometimes pain-killers are taken in larger quantities or stronger doses to give the same effect as narcotics. Such usage is also considered *ḥarām*.

MY NOTES



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

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

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

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

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



ACTIVITY



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

WHAT ARE THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF DRUGS?

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

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

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

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

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

IN SUMMARY



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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

KEY POINTS



1. Recreational drugs taken to alter a person's state of mind are *ḥarām* in Islam.
2. Drugs destroy a person's life as well as their Hereafter.
3. People who become addicted to drugs often end up committing crimes to feed their addiction. They lose their friends, and their families also give up on them eventually, so they may end up on the streets.
4. Dealing in drugs is also *ḥarām* in Islam.

VOLUNTEERING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON VOLUNTEERING

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

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۗ

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

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

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

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ

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

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

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

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

WHY SHOULD MUSLIMS GET INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY SERVICE?

Allāh (SWT) has created us as social beings, meaning that we need each other for

GROUP ACTIVITY



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

JUSTICE

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Why is justice of utmost importance in Islam?
2. How can we uphold justice at all times?

MY NOTES



وَمَنْ خَلَقْنَا أُمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ



And of those whom We have created are a people who guide with the truth and thereby they do justice. [7:181]

Most humans are not cruel or evil by nature and they do not want to be unjust to others. However, many people end up helping or supporting the few that are truly unjust or evil. This happens because of a lack of courage, a lack of intelligence and knowledge or out of greed for the world.



As Muslims we must be careful not to be 'used' by others for their own unjust goals otherwise we will become part of their evil. Even a tyrant cannot commit injustices unless he finds people to support him. For example, Yazīd was not in Karbalā' himself. Yet he was able to kill Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) by bribing people, promising them wealth and positions of authority, and threatening and intimidating them.

If we learn to be courageous, knowledgeable and content with little in life so that we are not constantly greedy for more, then others cannot 'buy' our support in any manner.

Q: What can I do to uphold justice and stand up against injustice?

GROUP ACTIVITY



In small groups, think of one act of injustice that is happening today, and think of ways in which you can help stop it.

One way to check if we truly love Allāh (SWT) more than the world and if we have the courage and faith to stand up against injustice is to study examples in history and ask ourselves: *what would I have done if I was there?* For example, what would I have done when everyone was afraid to oppose the tyrant Namrūd who wanted to burn Nabī Ibrāhīm (A)? What would I have done when Fir'awn wanted to kill Nabī Mūsā (A)? What would I have done when Rasūl Allāh (S) passed away and Imām 'Alī (A) was denied his right? What would I have done if I was in Karbalā'? What am I doing today when I see all the injustice around me?

JUSTICE DURING THE TIME OF IMĀM 'ALĪ (A)

During the time of his caliphate, Imām 'Alī (A) happened to lose his armour in Kūfah. After a few days, he saw it in the possession of a Christian. He confronted him and told him the coat of mail was his. The Christian denied it, so Imām 'Alī (A) took him to court and filed a suit against him, saying it was stolen as he had not sold it, nor gifted it.

The judge addressed the Christian saying: *"The Caliph has filed a suit against you concerning this armour. Have you anything to say in your defence?"*



The Christian said: *"This coat of mail is my personal property. I do not mean to say that the Caliph is lying. I feel he is mistaken in identifying it."*

The judge then said to Imām 'Alī (A): *"You are the complainant and this man denies your charge. It therefore rests on you to produce a witness to testify on your behalf."*

Imām 'Alī (A) smiled and said: *"You are right. I need evidence to prove my right. Unfortunately, I do not have a witness to testify on my behalf."*

The judge gave his verdict in favour of the Christian due to the absence of any witness. Hearing the verdict, the Christian walked away with the armour. He knew it belonged to the Imām 'Alī (A), and was impressed by the justice under the caliphate of the Imām, to the extent that the court ruled based on justice even if the case was against the Caliph. After a few days, he converted to Islam.

DID YOU KNOW?



Being 'ādil is one of the qualities required for a *mujtahid* or person leading *ṣalāt al-jamā'ah*. In this context, being 'ādil means not sinning openly in public.

MY NOTES



KEY POINTS



1. Justice is one of the most important aspects of Islam. It is also one of the Attributes of Allāh (SWT).

2. Islam teaches us to always uphold truth and justice. We should never be unjust, but at the same time we should not support the unjust through our actions or by remaining silent when an injustice is taking place.

IN SUMMARY



1. What does 'adālah mean?
2. Why does Islam place so much emphasis on justice?
3. What are the different ways in which we can support the unjust even if we don't carry out the injustice ourselves?
4. What should we do when we see an injustice being carried out?
5. Why did the Christian who had taken Imām 'Alī (A)'s armour converted to Islam?

OPPRESSION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



WE MUST NOT SUPPORT THE OPPRESSORS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



ACTIVITY

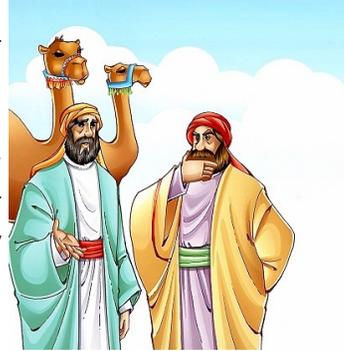


Read the story of Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A)'s companion Şafwān. What lessons can we learn from his story?

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

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

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



MY NOTES



WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT WAYS IN WHICH OPPRESSION OCCURS?

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

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



Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

وَلَا تَرْكَبُوا إِلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ



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

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

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

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

OPPRESSION

DID YOU KNOW?



Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A) has said:



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

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

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



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



KEY POINTS



1. Islam teaches us that oppressing others, helping oppressors and not helping the oppressed are all major sins.
2. There are many different ways in which oppression takes place. Oppression against one's own soul occurs when a person disobeys Allāh (SWT) and sins.
3. Insulting, abusing, bullying, backbiting, falsely accusing others, physically hurting people and taking away their property are all examples of oppression against others.

IN SUMMARY



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

PERSONAL INTEGRITY

MY NOTES



Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۚ فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

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

In this verse, Allāh (SWT) tells us that He has created us with a *fiṭrah* (nature). If we stay true to this *fiṭrah*, we will be able to remain upright. It is therefore necessary that we adhere to Islamic teachings as our moral guide and compass.



HOW DO WE DEVELOP PERSONAL INTEGRITY?

Developing personal integrity requires examining our beliefs and value system, and taking conscious steps to behave in ways that are consistent with our religious moral code. To help develop personal integrity, consider the following steps:

1. Identify aspects of your behaviour that require change. Reflect on your interactions with friends, at home and in social situations to determine specific areas in need of improvement. For example, if you don't do your homework and feel guilty about creating excuses for this behaviour, this may be an area to work on.

2. Determine your reasons for not behaving with greater personal integrity. For example, you may be lying to your parents about something because you are afraid of their reaction.

3. Face the obstacles that cause you to lie or violate your moral code. This might involve facing your fears or seeking help and advice from others on how to deal with situations that compromise your integrity.

4. Practice truthfulness. Be direct and honest with everyone.

5. Make a list of tasks in which you will become more trustworthy.

6. Listen to and respect the opinions and decisions of others. Part of possessing personal integrity is acknowledging the rights of others.

7. Help others in need. If you are in a position to contribute to the development of others or help them to do something they cannot accomplish on their own, make an effort to help them.

8. Assess your progress. Developing personal integrity requires persistent effort. Ask yourself on a daily basis if you are making progress.

9. Pray to Allāh (SWT) to help you become a better person. You can do this through reciting *du'ā'* such as *makārim al-akhlāq* and others available in *al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah* in which the *A'immaḥ* (A) have taught us how to behave with integrity.

DID YOU KNOW?



Rasūl Allāh (S) is the best role model for us because he had the best *akhlāq* and was sent by Allāh (SWT) to perfect the *akhlāq* of the community.

MY NOTES



IN SUMMARY



1. What is personal integrity?
2. Why should we use the teachings of the Qur'ān and the *Ma'sūmīn* (A) to define our moral and ethical values?
3. How does a person who has no integrity behave?
4. What steps can we take to develop our personal integrity?

KEY POINTS



1. Personal integrity is possessing and strongly adhering to high moral principles and standards.
2. As Muslims, our moral standards and principles should be derived from the teachings of the Qur'ān and the *Ma'sūmīn* (A).
3. Many people lose their personal integrity because they do not believe in any established set of morals and values, and do not have good role models in life.

SINCERITY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Understand that honesty and sincerity are very important qualities in a *mu'min*.

2. How do we maintain sincerity at all times?

MY NOTES



THE IMPORTANCE OF SINCERITY IN OUR ACTIONS

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

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ



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

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



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



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

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

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

ACTIVITY



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

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

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

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

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

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

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

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

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

IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



Rasūl Allāh (S) has said:



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

MY NOTES



KEY POINTS



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

TAWBAH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



WHAT IS TAWBAH AND ISTIGHFĀR?

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

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

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

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

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

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

ACTIVITY



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



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

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



ALLĀH (SWT) FORGIVES THOSE WHO REPENT SINCERELY

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

إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّى إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْآنَ وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ أُولَئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

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

MY NOTES



TAWBAH

DID YOU KNOW?



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

MY NOTES



KEY POINTS



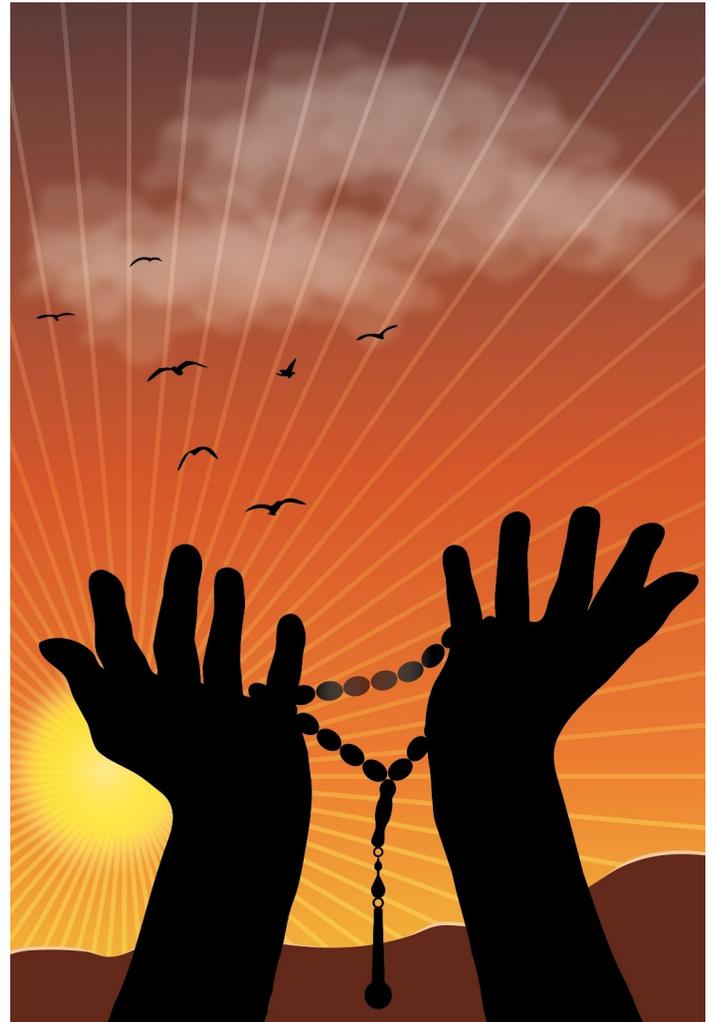
1. *Istighfār* is asking Allāh (SWT) to forgive us. Making a firm resolution not to sin again and turning back to Allāh (SWT) is called *tawbah*.
2. *Tawbah naṣūḥa* is sincere and complete repentance.
3. The steps towards sincere repentance include regret and remorse for committing the sin, undoing any harm done, and a sincere intention not to sin again.
4. If we repent sincerely, Allāh (SWT) will change our bad acts into good acts.

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

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

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

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



IN SUMMARY



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

PORNOGRAPHY

MY NOTES



MASTURBATION IS HARĀM IN ISLAM

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



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

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

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

- * Seek inspiration from worship: ask Allāh (SWT) for help, recite the Qur'ān, adopt a habit for *ṣalāt al-layl*, reciting *du'ā'*, and acquiring *taqwā*.
- * Never stay alone especially when you are free. Stay in the company of friends and family. If you are alone and are tempted to sin, distract yourself by doing something positive such as going out for a walk. Reflect on the punishment of the sin and the reward of one who remains chaste.
- * Avoid being idle. Have hobbies and take up physical sports that will require you to channel your energy in healthy activities.
- * Eat healthy foods and avoid eating excessively, especially junk and processed foods. Our thoughts and behaviour are influenced by the foods we eat, hence the saying, "*You are what you eat!*"
- * Make a habit of fasting often. *Rasūl Allāh (S)* used to encourage those who were not married to fast in order to keep away from sinful desires.
- * Avoid excessive sleep and lying in bed when you are not sleepy.
- * Avoid watching TV programmes, reading books/magazines or visiting websites that will tempt you to sin.
- * Avoid the influence of bad friends.

DID YOU KNOW?



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

IN SUMMARY



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

KEY POINTS



1. Watching pornography is considered *ḥarām* in Islam. It destroys our sense of chastity and modesty, and leads us away from Allāh (SWT)'s remembrance. It also leads to more serious sins such as adultery.
2. Masturbation is also *ḥarām* in Islam.
3. We can refrain from both pornography and masturbation by keeping away from places and people that may tempt us to sin.

MATERIALISM

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



THE HEREAFTER IS BETTER THAN THIS MATERIAL WORLD

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

وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَعِبٌ وَهَوًى ۖ وَلِلْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ ۗ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ۗ

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

بَلْ تُؤْتِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا. وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ

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

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

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

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

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

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



GROUP ACTIVITY



What are the qualities of a materialistic person?

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

ISLAM TEACHES MODERATION IN EVERYTHING

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

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

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

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



IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



Imām 'Alī (A) said to his companion Kumayl:



"O Kumayl, those who amass wealth are dead even though they may be living, while those endowed with knowledge will remain as long as the world remains."

KEY POINTS



1. Islam encourages us to appreciate and use the blessings given to us by Allāh (SWT) in this world.
2. However, we must not get overly obsessed with this temporary world to an extent that we don't give enough attention to the Hereafter, which is permanent.
3. Materialism is being overly concerned with gathering wealth and possessions in the world. People with such a quality are said to have *ḥubb al-dunyā* (love of the world). This is not a good quality as it makes us forget Allāh (SWT) and the true purpose of our existence.

TĀRĪKH

What is *Tārīkh*?

Tārīkh is an Arabic word meaning history. In this chapter, we will specifically look at the history of Islam. This dates back to the very beginning of creation. Our journey into Islamic history will take us through the creation of the universe, the creation of *Nabī Ādam* (A) (the first man), the *anbiyā'* of Allāh (SWT), the *sīrah* of the Holy Prophet (S), the lives of the *Ma'şūmīn* (A), and Islam today.

This Chapter Consists Of:

Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā'

This part looks at the stories of the Prophets before *Rasūl Allāh* (S). *Qiṣaṣ* is an Arabic word. It means stories. *Anbiyā'* is the plural of *Nabī*, meaning *prophets*.

***Rasūl Allāh* (S)**

This part looks at the *sīrah* of *Rasūl Allāh*, meaning “the life of Prophet Muhammad (S)”.

The *Ma'şūmīn* (A)

In this part, we study the lives of *Sayyidah Fāṭimah* (A) and the *A'immah* (A). *Ma'şūmīn* is the plural of *Ma'şūm*, which means “one who does not sin” (infallible). *A'immah* is the plural of *Imām*.

Places of interest

This part takes us through the history of various places that shaped the history of Islam.

People in focus

This section is dedicated to the lives of people who made a significant impact (positive or negative) on Islam.

***Tārīkh* in Qur'ān**

The Qur'ān is full of historical anecdotes from which we can learn lessons. This part looks at some of these Qur'ānic stories.

Paving the way

This part tells us how we can take lessons from history to prepare for the coming of the 12th *Imām* (A).

Why Study *Tārīkh*?

In numerous places in the Qur'ān, Allāh (SWT) narrates the stories of the past people, and asks us to ponder over them so that we may learn lessons from them. Our history tells us who we are, where we come from, and where we are headed.

Dear Lord,

Guide us in understanding the history of Islam so that we may learn lessons from the stories of the Prophets, and other parables in history. May this also give us a clearer direction for our future.

QIŞAŞ AL-ANBIYĀ': NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) (PART 1)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Who were the Banū Isrā'īl? How did they come to Egypt?
2. Who was Fir'awn?
3. The birth of Nabī Mūsā (A)
4. Nabī Mūsā (A) meets Nabī Shu'ayb (A)

THE BIRTH OF NABĪ MŪSĀ (A)

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

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

The Banū Isrā'īl believed that one day a boy would be born who would save them and destroy Fir'awn. Fir'awn therefore ordered his soldiers to kill any baby boy born amongst the Banū Isrā'īl.

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

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

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



DO YOU REMEMBER?

Nabī Ya'qūb (A) was also known as Isrā'īl, and his descendants were called *Banū Isrā'īl* (The children of Isrā'īl).

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

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

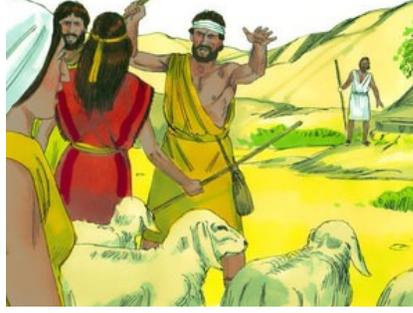
ACTIVITY



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

NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) MEETS NABĪ SHU'AYB (A)

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



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

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

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

يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ فَاخْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ ۖ إِنَّكَ بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى
وَأَنَا اخْتَرْتُكَ فَاسْتَمِعْ لِمَا يُوحَىٰ

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

[20:11-13]

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

IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



Lady Āsiyah, the wife of Fir'awn, together with *Sayyidah Maryam* (mother of *Nabī 'Īsā*), *Sayyidah Khadijah* (wife of *Rasūl Allāh*) and *Sayyidah Fāṭimah al-Zahrā'* (A) are the four foremost women of Paradise.

KEY POINTS



1. The Banū Isrā'īl were the descendants of *Nabī Ya'qūb* (A). They were from Palestine and had settled in Egypt after *Nabī Yūsuf* (A) became governor.
2. Fir'awn and the Egyptians treated the Banū Isrā'īl very harshly, and killed their baby boys.
3. When *Nabī Mūsā* (A) was born, his mother placed him in a basket and put him in the river Nile to save him from being killed by Fir'awn.
4. *Nabī Mūsā* (A) grew up in Fir'awn's palace but did not like the way the Banū Isrā'īl were treated. One day he tried to defend a man who was being beaten. The cruel Egyptian was killed in the scuffle, and *Nabī Mūsā* (A) had to leave Egypt for Madyan to save his life.

QIŞAŞ AL-ANBIYĀ': NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) (PART 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

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

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

اَذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ



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



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

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يَا فِرْعَوْنَ إِنِّي رَسُولٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

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



قَالَ إِن كُنتَ جِئْتَ بِآيَةٍ فَأْتِ بِهَا إِن كُنتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ

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



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

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

قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ رَبِّ مُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ

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



DU'Ā'



When Nabī Mūsā (A) spoke to Allāh (SWT) through the burning bush, he asked this du'ā':

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي
وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي
وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِّن لِّسَانِي
يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي

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

ACTIVITY



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

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

NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) SAVES THE BANŪ ISRĀ'ĪL FROM FIR'AWN

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

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



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

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

When Fir'awn and his army reached the middle of the sea, *Nabī Mūsā (A)*, *Nabī Hārūn (A)* and the Banū Isrā'īl had finished crossing it. The parted waters of the sea came together again, drowning Fir'awn and his men.

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

IN SUMMARY



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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

KEY POINTS



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

QIŞAŞ AL-ANBIYĀ': NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) (PART 3)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



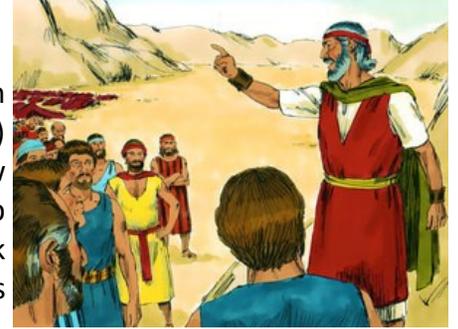
1. *Tawrāh* is revealed to *Nabī Mūsā (A)*
2. *Banū Isrā'īl* continue to disobey Allāh (SWT) and His prophets
3. Allāh (SWT) sends numerous prophets and divine books to guide the *Banū Isrā'īl*.

MY NOTES



NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) RECEIVES THE TAWRĀH

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



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

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

وَإِذْ وَاَعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

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

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

يَا قَوْمِ ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

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

قَالُوا يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ وَإِنَّا لَنَنْدَحُلُهَا حَتَّىٰ يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا ﴿٥٢﴾ فَإِن يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِنَّا دَاخِلُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

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

GROUP ACTIVITY



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

BANŪ ISRĀ'ĪL CONTINUE TO DISOBEY ALLĀH (SWT)

قَالُوا يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنَّا لَن نَدْخُلَهَا أَبَدًا مَا دَامُوا فِيهَا ۖ فَادْهَبْ أَنْتَ وَرَبُّكَ
فَقَاتِلَا إِنَّا هَاهُنَا قَاعِدُونَ

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

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

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

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

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

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

IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

KEY POINTS



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

QIṢAṢ AL-ANBIYĀ': NABĪ ZAKARIYYAH (A) AND NABĪ YAḤYĀ (A)

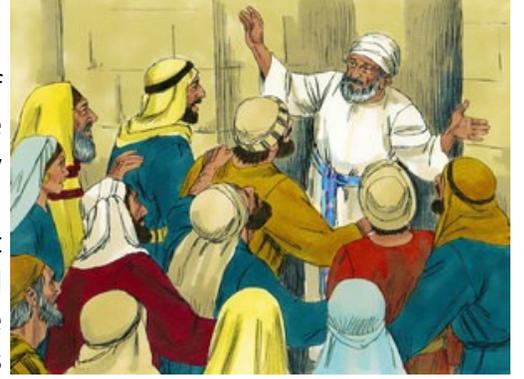
LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

NABĪ ZAKARIYYAH (A)

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



MY NOTES



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

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

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

Nabī Zakariyyah (A) was surprised to hear this:

قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِيَ الْكِبَرُ وَامْرَأَتِي عَاقِرٌ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ
اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ

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

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

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

GROUP ACTIVITY



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

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



NABĪ YAḤYĀ (A)

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

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

وَأْتَيْنَاهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا وَحَنَانًا مِّن لَّدُنَّا وَزَكَاةً وَكَانَ تَقِيًّا. وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَيْهِ وَلَمْ يَكُن جَبَّارًا عَصِيًّا وَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَيَوْمَ يَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ يُبْعَثُ حَيًّا

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

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

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

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

IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

KEY POINTS



1. *Nabī Zakariyyah* (A) was a descendent of *Nabī Ibrāhīm* (A). He was sent to guide the *Banū Isrā'īl*.
2. Allāh (SWT) blessed him with a son in old age. His son was *Yaḥyā*.
3. *Nabī Yaḥyā* (A) was very wise, knowledgeable, kind to his parents and God-conscious.
4. He was killed by king Herod because he spoke out against the king marrying his own niece, which was against the laws of the *Tawrah*.

WAFĀT OF RASŪL ALLĀH (S)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



WAFĀT OF RASŪL ALLĀH (S)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ACTIVITY



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

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

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

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

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

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

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



DID YOU KNOW?



Allāh (SWT) has referred to *Rasūl Allāh* (S) in the Qur’ān as the Bearer of Good News (*Bashīr*), the Warner (*Nadhīr*), a Brilliant Lamp of Guidance (*Sirāj al-Munīr*) and a Mercy for the Worlds (*Rahmatun lil ‘Ālamīn*).

KEY POINTS



1. *Rasūl Allāh* (S) fell ill in *Ṣafar* 11 AH and passed away in the same month.
2. He received news of a potential attack on Madīnah by the Romans, and appointed **Usāmah ibn Zayd** to lead an army to go and defend the Islamic state. He commanded all the ***muhājirūn*** to join Usāmah’s army, but some prominent companions refused to leave Madīnah.
3. *Rasūl Allāh* (S) asked for pen and paper to write some advice for Muslims, but some of his companions argued over whether he should be allowed to do this. *Rasūl Allāh* (S) was angered by their behaviour. This event is known as the **Calamity of Thursday**.
4. *Rasūl Allāh* (S) passed away on **28th Ṣafar 11 AH**. Imām ‘Alī (A) performed his funeral rites, and he was buried in the same place where he

IN SUMMARY



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

THE EVENT OF SAQĪFAH BANŪ SA'ĪDAH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



THE EVENT OF SAQĪFAH BANŪ SA'ĪDAH

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

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

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

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

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

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

GROUP ACTIVITY



Do a role play in class to depict the events at Saqīfah Banū Sā'īdah.

ABŪ BAKR IS CHOSEN AS THE FIRST CALIPH AT SAQĪFAH

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

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

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

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



IN SUMMARY

1. Why did Abū Bakr and ‘Umar leave *Rasūl Allāh* (S)’s funeral to go to Saqīfah Banū Sā‘idah?
2. Who did the Anṣār want as their leader?
3. Why were Imām ‘Alī (A) and the Banū Hāshim not present at Saqīfah Banū Sā‘idah?
4. Who was selected as the first caliph at Saqīfah?

DID YOU KNOW?



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

KEY POINTS



1. As soon as *Rasūl Allāh* (S) passed away, some people gathered at Saqīfah Banū Sā‘idah to select a new leader. They ignored Imām ‘Alī’s appointment as *Rasūl Allāh*’s successor.
2. When ‘Umar and Abū Bakr heard about the gathering at Saqīfah they left *Rasūl Allāh*’s funeral to join the gathering.
3. Abū Bakr was selected at Saqīfah to become the first caliph, and everyone was forced to pledge allegiance to him.
4. Imām ‘Alī (A) refused to accept Abū Bakr as caliph.

THE THREE CALIPHS (PART 1)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



ABŪ BAKR - THE FIRST CALIPH

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

ACTIVITY



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

'UMAR IBN AL-KHATTĀB - THE SECOND CALIPH

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

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

'Umar introduced new religious laws during his caliphate:

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

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

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



IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

KEY POINTS



1. After *Rasūl Allāh*'s *wafāt*, some Muslims gathered at Saqifah to choose a their new leader. They selected Abū Bakr as the first caliph.
2. Abū Bakr took away Fadak from *Sayyidah Fāṭimah* (A) and waged the *Riddah* wars.
3. Abū Bakr's caliphate lasted 2 years. He appointed 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to be his successor.
4. 'Umar introduced new religious laws and vastly expanded the Muslim empire during his caliphate.
5. He made many wrong judgments and Imām 'Alī (A) often advised and guided him.
6. His caliphate lasted about 10 years. He was killed by Abū Lu'lu'ah.

THE THREE CALIPHS (PART 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. The *shūrāh* appointed by 'Umar to select his successor
2. The caliphate of Uthmān

MY NOTES



'UMAR APPOINTS A *SHŪRĀH* TO SELECT HIS SUCCESSOR

When 'Umar realised he would not survive after being stabbed by Abū Lu'lu'ah, he appointed a *shūrāh* (council) of six people. This council included: Imām 'Alī (A), 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān, Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām, 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf, Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās and Talḥah ibn Ubayd Allāh.

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

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

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

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

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



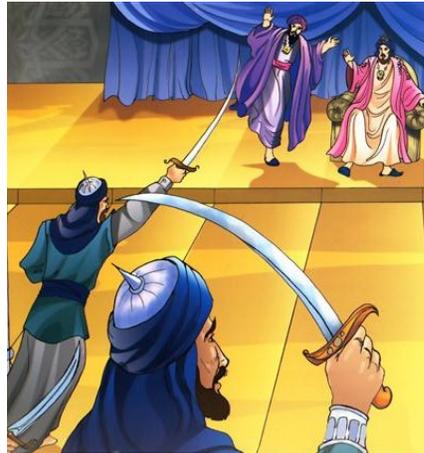
ACTIVITY



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

'UTHMĀN IBN 'AFFĀN - THE THIRD CALIPH

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



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

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

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

IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



'Uthmān was the first caliph to refer to himself as *khalīfat Allāh* (The caliph of Allāh (SWT)). Abū Bakr had called himself as "the caliph of *Rasūl Allāh*". 'Umar also used this title initially, but then used the title of "*Amīr al-Mu'minīn*", a title that had been given to Imām 'Alī (A) by *Rasūl Allāh* (S).

KEY POINTS



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

THE A'IMMAH - IMĀM 'ALĪ AL-NAQĪ (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



IMĀM 'ALĪ AL-NAQĪ (A)

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

Key Facts

Birth date: 15th *Dhū'l-Hijjah* 212 AH in Madīnah.

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

Mother: *Sayyidah Samānah* (from Morocco)

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

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

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

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

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

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



ACTIVITY



List the names, titles and *Quniyyah* of each of the 14 *Ma'sūmīn* (A).

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

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

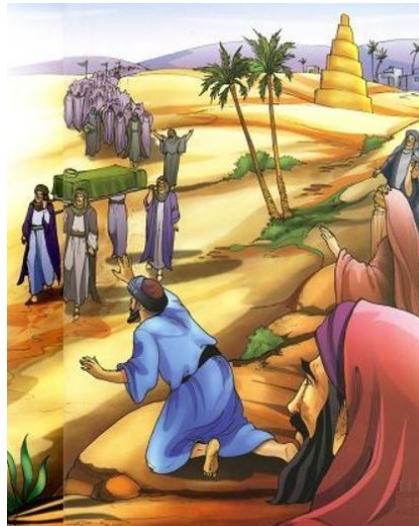
Imām ‘Alī al-Hādī (A) lived to see the rule of six different caliphs. One of them was Mutawakkil. He was a cruel man who was well known for his hatred of the *Ahl al-Bayt*. He knew that the Shī‘ah loved and followed Imām al-Hādī (A), and felt threatened by the presence of the Imām in Madīnah. He sent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

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

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

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

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



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

IN SUMMARY

1. Who are the parents of Imām ‘Alī al-Naqī (A)?
2. What do the titles *al-Naqī* and *al-Hādī* mean?
3. How did Imām ‘Alī al-Naqī (A) prove his knowledge to al-Jundī?
4. Why did Mutawakkil summon the Imām to Sāmarrā’?
5. How did the caliph Mutawakkil treat the Shī‘ah of the Imām?
6. Where is Imām ‘Alī al-Naqī (A) buried?

DID YOU KNOW?



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

MY NOTES



KEY POINTS



1. Imām ‘Alī al-Hādī al-Naqī (A) is our tenth Holy Imām. He was born in Madīnah.
2. He was summoned to Sāmarrā’ by the ‘Abbasid caliph Mutawakkil, who hated the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the Shī‘ah.
3. Imām was outstanding in his knowledge, prayers, piety and patience.
4. He was poisoned by the caliph Mu‘tamid and died in Samarrā’, where he is buried.

THE A'IMMAH - IMĀM ḤASAN AL-'ASKARĪ (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. An introduction into the life of Imām Ḥasan al-'Askarī (A).
2. The difficult circumstances in which the Imām lived his life.

MY NOTES



IMĀM ḤASAN AL-'ASKARĪ (A)

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

Key Facts

Birth date: 8th *Rabī' al-Thānī* 232 AH in Madīnah

Father: Imām 'Alī al-Naqī al-Hādī (A)

Mother: *Sayyidah Sawṣan*

Wafāt: 8th *Rabī' al-Awwal* 260 AH. He is buried in Sāmarrā'

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

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



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

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

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

ACTIVITY



How did Imām Ḥasan al-'Askarī prepare the Shī'ah for the *ghaybah* of his son Imām al-Mahdī (A)?

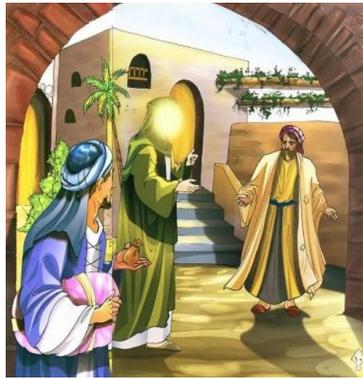
IMĀM HASAN AL-‘ASKARĪ’S KNOWLEDGE AND GENEROSITY

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

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

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

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



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

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

IN SUMMARY



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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

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

KEY POINTS



1. Imām Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (A) is our eleventh Imām. He was born in Madīnah and then moved to Sāmarrā’ with his father Imām al-Hādī (A).
2. Imām’s excellent character changed even the most cruel prison guards into good people.
3. Imām prepared the Shī‘ah for the *ghaybah* of his son Imām al-Mahdī (A), when they would not have direct access to their Imām.

PEOPLE IN FOCUS - IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN (A) AND THE DAY OF 'ĀSHŪRĀ'

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

GROUP ACTIVITY



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

REMEMBERING IMĀM AL-HUSAYN (A) AND HIS SACRIFICE

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

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

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

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

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

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



DID YOU KNOW?



For the rest of their lives, *Sayyidah* Zaynab (A) and Imām 'Alī Zayn al-'Abidīn (A) told others the story of Karbala so that no one would forget what happened on the day of 'Āshūrā'. They encouraged the Shī'ah to hold gatherings to remember the tragedy of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A).

KEY POINTS



1. After Mu'āwiyah's death, his son Yazīd came to power. He loved alcohol and had no respect for *Rasūl Allāh* (S) and Islam.
2. Yazīd forced Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) to accept him as caliph, but Imām al-Ḥusayn refused to do so. Imām did not want Yazīd to destroy all Islamic teachings.
3. Yazīd therefore ordered the killing of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A). Imām was killed in Karbalā' on the day of 'Āshūrā', and the women and children from his camp were taken prisoners.

IN SUMMARY



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

PEOPLE IN FOCUS - SAYYIDAH ZAYNAB (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



SAYYIDAH ZAYNAB (A) AND THE AFTERMATH OF KARBALĀ'

Sayyidah Zaynab was the eldest daughter of Imām 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (A) and *Sayyidah* Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (A) and therefore the granddaughter of *Rasūl Allāh* (S). She was also the sister of Imām al-Ḥasan (A) and Imām al-Ḥusayn (A). She was married to her cousin 'Abd Allāh ibn Ja'far al-Ṭayyār. Ja'far was the brother of Imām 'Alī (A).

She was very knowledgeable, chaste and patient. During the days in Madīnah, before the tragedy of Karbalā', she used to hold classes for women and teach them *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān and *aḥādīth* of *Rasūl Allāh* (S). Imām Zayn al-'Abidīn (A) called her '*ālimah ghayr mu'allimah* (A scholar without a tutor).

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

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

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



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

ACTIVITY



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

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

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

SAYYIDAH ZAYNAB IN THE COURT OF YAZĪD IN DAMASCUS

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

Sayyidah Zaynab addressed the gathering in Yazīd's court saying:

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

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

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



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

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

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



IN SUMMARY



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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

KEY POINTS



1. Sayyidah Zaynab (A) was the daughter of Imām 'Alī (A) and Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A). She was the sister of Imāms al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn (A).
2. She was very close to her brother Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) and accompanied him to Karbalā'.
3. She was taken prisoner after the battle on the day of 'Āshūrā'. She gave powerful sermons in the court of Ibn Ziyād and Yazīd, reminding people of Imām al-Ḥusayn's stand for justice and truth.
4. She passed away in Shām (Damascus) and is buried there.

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

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

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

Imām al-Mahdī (A) is our living Imām. His name is Muḥammad, but he is never referred to by his own name. Instead, we refer to him using his titles, some of which are:

- * **Al-Mahdī** (the one guided by Allāh (SWT))
- * **Al-Qā'im** (the one who will rise to establish justice)
- * **Al-Ḥujjah** (the proof of Allāh (SWT))
- * **Sāhib al-'Asr wa al-Zamān** (Master of the present age and time)
- * **Al-Muntaẓar** (the Awaited Imām)
- * **Baqiyyat Allāh** (Allāh (SWT)'s remaining representative on earth)

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

Imām al-Mahdī (A) is currently in *ghaybah*. The *Shī'ah* believe that he lives amongst people but they do not recognise him when they see him. He always helps and guides people without their knowing. The 'return' of the Imām from *ghaybah* is therefore the revealing of his true identity to people.

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

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



MY NOTES



ACTIVITY



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

THE DEFINITE SIGNS INDICATING DHUHOOR OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ

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

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

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



IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

KEY POINTS



1. Imām al-Mahdī (A) is our living Imām. His name is Muḥammad, but we refer to him using his titles.
2. When we mention his name, we say *'ajjalāhu ta'āla farajahu sharif* which means "may Allāh hasten his return".
3. The *A'immah* (A) have told us the general and definite signs indicating the return of Imām al-Mahdī (A).