



ISLAMIC MASUMEEN SCHOOL

Of New England

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ISLAMIC STUDIES

LEVEL 11

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'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.

FORMAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. To understand how the Big Bang Theory compares to the Qur'ānic description of the creation of the universe.

2. To be introduced to two presentations of the Cosmological Argument for the existence of God

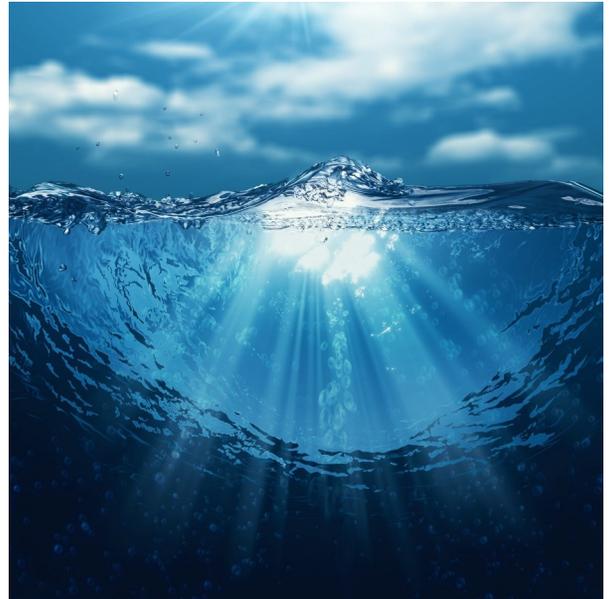
MY NOTES



THE ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE

Through the development of science and technology, scientists have been able to gather a lot of evidence and information about the beginning of the universe. They have used their findings to develop a theory known as the **Big Bang Theory**.

This theory explains that about 13.7 billions years ago, all the matter that makes up the universe today was concentrated into a single tiny point of unimaginable density. Following a huge explosion - or a 'big bang' - all the matter in this single entity began to expand into the huge universe we have today and it is still continuously expanding exponentially.



The Qur'ānic description of the start of the universe is in harmony with the Big Bang Theory. Allāh (SWT) says that everything in creation was once a single entity and was "torn apart" by Allāh (SWT):

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا ۗ
وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ ۗ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

Did the unbelievers not realise that the heavens and the earth used to be joined together and that We ripped them apart, and that We made every living thing from water? Will they not believe? [21:30]

THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

The Argument from an Uncaused Cause

The basic structure of the argument:

1. Everything has a cause
2. Every cause itself has a cause
3. **But** you cannot have an infinite number of causes
4. **Therefore**, there must be an uncaused cause which causes everything to happen without being itself caused by anything
5. Such an uncaused cause is what people understand as God

ACTIVITY



In pairs, create a script for a role play between an atheist and a Muslim about the existence of God. Try to present the cosmological argument.

FORMAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

KEY POINTS



1. The Qur'ānic description of the creation of the universe is in harmony with the Big Bang Theory.

2. There are many ways of presenting the Cosmological Argument for the existence of God. Two famous ways of presenting this argument are: a) from an uncaused cause, and b) from possibility and necessity.

3. The argument from an uncaused cause: a) everything has a cause; b) every cause itself has a cause; c) **but** you cannot have an infinite number of causes; d) **therefore**, there must be an uncaused cause which causes everything to happen without being itself caused by anything; e) such an uncaused cause is what people understand as God.

4. The argument from possibility and necessity: a) individual things come into existence and then cease to exist; b) therefore, at one time none of them were in existence; c) **But**, something comes into existence only as a result of something else that already exists; d) **Therefore**, there must be a being whose existence is necessary - that is God.

The same cannot be said of sugar. Sugar minus its sweetness is not sugar. This is because sweetness is a **necessary** attribute of sugar and hence the two cannot be separated, while sweetness is not a necessary attribute of tea. The sweetness of tea, is **dependent** upon sugar being added to the tea.



A similar example can be used to understand the relationship between different **beings** and **existence**. If the relationship between a particular being and existence is **necessary**, then that being must necessarily exist. We can call such a being a "**necessary being**". Just as the relation between sweetness and sugar is a necessary one, so too the relation between a *necessary being* and existence is a necessary relation. It is impossible for there to ever be a time when the *necessary being* does not exist.

In the same way, if the relationship between a particular being and existence is **not** necessary, we can call such a being a "**dependant being**". Just as the relation between tea and sweetness is dependant rather than necessary, so too the relation between a *dependant being* and existence: a *dependant being* may or may not exist.

Human beings and all other beings in this universe are examples of dependant beings. At one point in time we did not exist. Currently, we are living in this world and we exist. The fact that we currently exist proves that a Being external to us gave us existence. This Being must be a *necessary being*, from which all other causes and effects - the whole chain of *contingent beings* - comes from. **That necessary being is Allāh (SWT) upon Whom we are totally dependent for our existence at each moment in our lives.**

IN SUMMARY



1. Explain the Big Bang Theory for the creation of the universe. How does it compare with the Qur'ānic version for the creation of the universe?
2. Why is it impossible for science to explain as a fact what took place before the Big Bang?
3. If everything in existence requires a cause for its existence, why does God not have a cause?

ACTIVITY

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

WORD BANK:

Bigbang

Cause

Uncaused

Cosmological

Dependent

Effect

Necessary

Possibility

Existence

Time

Space

Creator

RELIGION & THE CHALLENGE OF ATHEISM

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. To understand why the universe could not have come about through chance

2. To be introduced to Islam's position in relation to the Theory of Evolution

MY NOTES



THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION

We know today that the Earth is roughly 4.54 billion years old. Scientists also estimate that living creatures existed on this planet at least 3.5 billion years ago. However, when life first started on Earth, human beings did not exist to record exactly how life began.

Charles Darwin was an English naturalist who studied variation in plants and animals during a five-year voyage around the world in the 19th century. He explained his findings in 1859 in a book called "*On the Origins of Species*", where he famously formulated **the theory of evolution**.

This theory states that all different species on earth originated from a common ancestry and over the course of more than 3 billion years, evolved from simple single cell life forms to the great variety of species that we have present in the world today, including human beings.

In other words, the theory proposes that fishes, lions, parrots, mosquitoes and all other living beings, including humans are all inter-related and share a common ancestor billions of years ago.

MICRO-EVOLUTION VS MACRO-EVOLUTION

The theory of evolution can be divided into two parts - **micro-evolution** and **macro-evolution**.

Micro-evolution is evolution on a small scale - **within** a single species. The theory of evolution states that evolution happens by **natural selection**:

- * individuals in a species show a wide range of variation
- * this variation is because of differences in their genes
- * individuals with characteristics most suited to the environment are most likely to survive and reproduce
- * the genes that allow these individuals to be successful are passed to their offspring
- * Individuals that are poorly adapted to their environment are less likely to survive and reproduce. Given enough time, a species will gradually evolve.

The results of natural selection **within** a particular species has been witnessed. Similarly, through artificial selection, human beings have also been able to produce new varieties of characteristics within a particular species.

ACTIVITY



In pairs, create a script for a dialogue between an atheist and a Muslim discussing the extent of the validity of the theory of evolution and Islam's position on it.

For example, the following different varieties of dogs have been produced through artificial selection:



Micro-evolution is a very natural process and is explainable and verifiable through science. There is no problem in accepting this idea. However, many atheists have tried to use micro-evolution as a way to "prove" **macro-evolution**. This is the idea that over millions of years, the combined effect of natural selection, environmental changes and mutations, can sometimes produce changes in organisms that are so great that **totally new species** are produced. Macro-evolution is thus proposed as the process by which all the different species have come into existence, from simple single cell beings to complex creatures like human beings.

The problem lies in the fact that macro-evolution is just a theory, which has **no** concrete evidence to prove it and it also contains numerous shortcomings. Most importantly, there is **no fossil evidence** for the theory of evolution. Darwin himself admitted that for his theory to be acceptable, there would need to have been countless creatures which were half-fish half-amphibian or half-amphibian half-bird and so on, whom he referred to as "**transitional forms**". This is why he dedicated a special chapter in his book to ask such problematic questions.

*"Why if species have descended from other species by fine gradations, do we **not** everywhere see **innumerable transitional forms**? But, as by this theory innumerable transitional forms must have existed, why do we not find them embedded in countless numbers in the crust of the earth?"*

(Charles Darwin, The Origins of Species, 1st ed. p. 172)

Darwin proposed that such transitional forms would be discovered when the fossil record is inspected more carefully. It has been now over 150 years since his book was published and despite a lot of effort to unearth evidence throughout the world, we are yet to see any evidence of any transitional forms! A famous British evolutionist, Derek Ager, thus admits:

RELIGION & THE CHALLENGE OF ATHEISM

MY NOTES



*"The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail, whether at the level of orders or of species, we find - over and over again - **not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another.**"*

(Derek Ager Proceedings of the British Geological Association, vol. 87, p. 133)

"If numerous species belonging to the same genera or families, have really started into life all at once, the fact would be fatal to the theory of descent with slow modification through natural selection."

(Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species, 1st ed. p. 302)



ISLAM'S POSITION ON EVOLUTION

The current scientific understanding of evolution is very minimal, especially macro-evolution, because such evolution is proposed to take place over millions of years and hence, it cannot be replicated in a laboratory, nor is there any evidence of any transitional creatures available. However, just as we cannot categorically accept this theory due to the lack of evidence available, we cannot categorically reject it either.

Evolution, as a theory, aims to describe the process through which life - **after it originated in this world** - evolved from its very basic forms, to the great variety that we have today. It does **not** explain to us how life itself began, it just provides us with a theory of how life, **after** it came on earth, diversified and evolved over time. **Evolution is not a substitute for God.**

To use an example, Isaac Newton's laws of motion may explain why and how a snooker ball moves across a snooker table. However, for the ball to actually start moving, a person is still required to hit the ball in the first place. The laws of motion are not substitutes for the player! In the same way, evolution, if proven

true, might explain the process through which life evolved in this world; however, God is still required to set this process into motion.

Over time, atheists have been working hard to use Darwin's theory to "prove" that God does not exist and to show that we do not need to believe in God in order to explain how all living beings in the world came about. Those people, including countless scientists, who **do** believe in the existence of God, have been labelled as "**Creationists**" and are made to appear as choosing "religious beliefs" over "science". This has unfortunately been part of a widespread **propaganda mission** by staunch atheists to present religion as being incompatible with science. This cannot be any further from the truth. Unfortunately, such wrong ideas have now crept into the material being taught in our schools and universities.

Theoretically, Islam does not have any problems accepting that all animal life on this planet originated from a common ancestry through evolution, as this would simply be an explanation of the **process** through which God created the countless creatures we have today.

However, according to the mainstream interpretation of Qur'ānic verses discussing the creation of Prophet Ādam (A), Muslims generally reject the idea that **human beings** are also the products of evolution and that human beings evolved from apes. We believe that the first human being was a special creation of Allāh (SWT), who was individually created and placed on this planet, i.e. not through the process of evolution.



DID YOU KNOW?



Colin Patterson, a renowned palaeontologist and evolutionist, once remarked: *"No one has ever produced a species by mechanisms of natural selection. No one has ever got near it and most of the current argument in neo-Darwinism is about this question."*

KEY POINTS



1. The theory of evolution states that all life on earth originated from a common ancestry.
2. This theory can be divided into micro-evolution and macro-evolution.
3. There is no problem in accepting micro-evolution. However, there is no evidence available to prove macro-evolution. It is just a theory.
4. The theory of evolution does not challenge the existence of God. It just proposes an explanation for the process used by God to create diversity.
5. Muslims reject the idea that human beings evolved from apes.

IN SUMMARY



1. What is the theory of evolution?
2. What is the difference between micro-evolution and macro-evolution?
3. What is Islam's position on evolution?

ACTIVITY

PLACE THE TILES IN THE RIGHT ORDER TO REVEAL A MESSAGE

OOK , ULAT ES ' , OF S WIN Y OF
 DAR ' ON FORM HEOR IN H IS B
 PECI ORI THE ON . LUTI EVO
 CHA ES T HE T RLES GIN

THI NT S FERE RTH LE C S TH
 ALL LIFE RDIN PLE ACCO DIF
 OF SING MILL ELL N EA VER
 MS O EORY YEAR G TO FROM FOR
 S . ES O EVOL VED PECI IONS
 SIM

ENCE E TH E TH EVOL PROV THER
 TO UTIO SIL E NO E AR N .
 FOS EVID OF EORY

THE NATURE OF RECOMPENSE & RETRIBUTION

MY NOTES



Similarly, in another verse, He says:

يَوْمَ يَعْشَاهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ وَيَقُولُ ذُوقُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

On the Day when the punishment envelopes them, from above them and from under their feet, and He will say, "Taste what you used to do!" [29:55]

In other words, human beings do not get "paid" for their good deeds or sins in the next world - they actually create their own Paradise or Hell. This concept of our actions transforming into a physical form is called "**The Embodiment of Deeds**" (*Tajassum al-A'māl*). The good that we create for ourselves in the next world can be multiplied and strengthened through persistence in good work here and the evil realities that we have created for ourselves in the next world can be neutralised or dissolved through repentance (*istighfār* and *tawbah*).

In yet another verse, Allāh (SWT) says:

وَأَنْ لَيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى ، وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُ سَوْفَ يُرَى

And that nothing belongs to man except what he strives for, and as for what he strove for, soon shall he see it. [53:39-40]

The verse above does not say that mankind shall see the reward of what they strove for. Rather, it says that they will see their actions themselves.

In fact, the Qur'ān informs us that if we had reached the level of certainty (*yaqīn*) in our faith, we too could see Hell whilst in this world:

كَأَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ ، لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ

Nay! if you had known with a certain knowledge, You should most certainly have seen the Hell; [102:5-7]

Regarding the person that backbites someone else, the Qur'ān says that that person is in fact eating the flesh of his dead brother. This is not a metaphor, but the actual reality of backbiting. If we realised this, we would never backbite anyone else again, because of how disgusting its reality is!

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۖ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ أَيُّبُّ أَحَدِكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ

O you who believe! Avoid most of suspicion, for surely suspicion in some cases is a sin, and do not spy nor let some of you backbite others. Does one of you like to eat

the flesh of his dead brother? But you abhor it; and be careful of (your duty to) Allāh, surely Allāh is Oft-returning (to mercy), Merciful. [49:12]

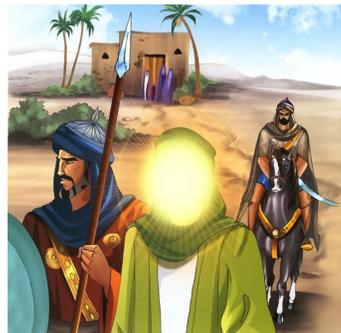
The following *ḥadīth* from the Holy Prophet (S) is also very useful in understand the reality of recompense and retribution:

When I ascended to the heavens (for Mi'raj), I entered Paradise and saw in it an open plain and I saw angels constructing (mansions with) bricks of gold and bricks of silver; and sometimes they would stop. I asked them, "Why have you stopped (constructing)?" They replied, "(We wait) until our payment comes to us." I asked, "And what is your payment?" They said, "The words of the faithful: glory be to Allāh (subhān Allāh), and praise be to Allāh (wa al-ḥamdu lillāh), and there is no god by Allāh (wa lā ilāha illallāh), and Allāh is the greatest (wa Allāhu Akbar). When he recites, we build. When he is quiet, we stop."



The following narration is another example of this reality and proof that one who is virtuous is actually in Paradise-like gardens this very moment, even if he appears to be suffering and in a pitiful condition and one who is evil is burning in a Hell-like fire, even if he appears to be living in a palace and enjoying the pleasures and comforts of this world:

When the 'Abbāsīd caliph al-Mutawakkil felt threatened by our 10th Holy Imām (A), he sent his commander to arrest the Imām and bring him to Sāmarrā by force. When the Imām (A) arrived in Sāmarrā, al-Mutawakkil first had him stay at a rundown place called the Inn of Sa'ālik.



Sāliḥ b. Sa'īd reports:

I visited Imām al-Hādi (A) on the day he arrived in Sāmarrā. I said to him, "May I be sacrificed for you! In every matter, they are only concerned to extinguish your light and to diminish you such that they have put you to stay in this hideous inn – the Inn of Sa'ālik."

"Here you are Ibn Sa'īd" said the Imām (A), and he indicated with his hand. Suddenly I was amid pleasant gardens and flowing rivers and gardens in which were perfumed plants and beautiful maidens like veiled pearls. My sight became confused and I was very amazed. The Imām (A) said to me, "This is where we are. This belongs to us, Ibn Sa'īd. We are not in the Inn of Sa'ālik!"

DID YOU KNOW?

The Holy Prophet (S) said: "Three things follow a dead person (as he/she is on his/her way to be buried): his family, his wealth and his actions. Two go back and one stays: his family and wealth go back and his actions stay (with him)."

KEY POINTS

1. It is not the case that Allāh (SWT) will reward us for our good deeds like our parents reward us for doing something good.
2. It is also not the case that Allāh (SWT) will punish us for our bad deeds like a judge punishes a criminal by passing a sentence on him in court.
3. Rather, the reward and punishment are the deeper realities of our actions in this world which will be manifested to us in the Hereafter.
4. We cannot see the deeper reality of our action because of the veils on our eyes. The Qur'an states that if we had reached the level of certainty, we would be able to see the Hellfire today.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the true relationship between our deeds and the reward and punishment in the Hereafter?
2. Can you explain two verses of the Qur'an which point to this reality?
3. Why is it the case that our Paradise and Hell are being created this very moment?

ACTIVITY

GUESS THE PHRASE!

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

		O		R				R			D			S					
			O			W			N			A			O		E		

Alphabet bank [O,E,U,R,Y,L,N,D,G,T]

		E			R				R			T			G				R
	O		N		H			V				R				L			
						I	G					O	!						

Alphabet bank [A,E,I,O,U,H,W,N,T,L,C,R]

		A		A				M		A		-		'	M				
M		A						E				B			I				T
						O						E							

Alphabet bank [L,Ā,E,O,N,F,D,M,T,J,S,U,A,L,H]

JAHANNAM: THE ABODE OF THE WRETCHED

MY NOTES



صُمُّ بَكْمٌ عُمِّي فَهَمَّ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ



Deaf, dumb (and) blind, so they will not turn back. [2:18]

Their hearts are sealed by Allāh (SWT) once and for all:

حَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ ۖ وَعَلَى أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةٌ ۖ وَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

Allāh has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing and there is a covering over their eyes, and there is a great punishment for them. [2:7]

Such evil people will be made to live in Hell for eternity:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَنَ الْكَافِرِينَ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ سَعِيرًا ، خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۖ لَا
يَجِدُونَ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا

Surely Allāh has cursed the unbelievers and has prepared for them a burning fire, in which they will remain forever and they shall not find any protector or helper. [33:64-5]

4) When we speak about the different events of the Hereafter, including Paradise and Hell, it is important to keep in mind that it is impossible for us to truly understand what will happen there and how life will be. This is because the Hereafter is a much grander world governed by totally different laws. Just like it is impossible to explain to a baby in the womb of its mother the nature of this world, it is impossible for us to truly grasp the reality of life in the Hereafter. In fact, the jump between this world and the Hereafter is much greater than the jump for the baby from the womb to this world. Having said that, Allāh (SWT) has described Hell in many verses for us so that we can have some basic sort of understanding of that dreaded reality.



A GLIMPSE OF JAHANNAM

MY NOTES



- 1) The Qur'an describes Hell as a living creature that shows emotions such as rage. It seeks out sinners and envelops them:

إِذَا أُلْقُوا فِيهَا سَمِعُوا لَهَا شَهِيقًا وَهِيَ تَفُورُ ، تَكَادُ تَمَيَّزُ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ ۗ
كُلَّمَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَذِيرٌ

When they will be cast into it, they will hear it roar as it boils, as though it will burst with rage. Every time a multitude is cast into it, its keepers will ask them: "Did no warner come to you?" [67:7-8]

يَوْمَ نَقُولُ لِجَهَنَّمَ هَلِ امْتَلَأَتْ وَتَقُولُ هَلْ مِنْ مَزِيدٍ

On that Day We shall ask Hell: "Are you full?" And it will reply: "Are there any more?" [50:30]

- 2) In a *hadīth*, Imām 'Alī (A) mentions that Hell has seven different gates leading to different areas of Hell. The punishment in each of these areas will be different in terms of harshness and pain. One of these is called The Crusher (*al-Ḥuṭamah*). It will crush everyone who is thrown inside it and grind them to powder. Then they will be made whole again, just to be crushed again and again. Unlike fire in this world, which can only burn our bodies, the Hellfire also penetrates into our souls and burns it:

كَلَّا ۗ لَيُنْبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ ، وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ ، نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمَوْقَدَةُ
الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْأَفْنِدَةِ

No indeed! He will be thrust into the Crusher! What will explain to you what the Crusher is? It is kindled fire of Allāh, which reaches to the hearts. [104:4-7]

- 3) Allāh (SWT) has created angels specifically to torture the inmates of Hell and to stop them from being able to escape from the pits of Hell. These angels are referred to as the *Zabāniyah*:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ
عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

O you who believe! save yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is men and stones; over it are angels stern and strong, they do not disobey Allāh in what He commands them, and do as they are commanded. [66:6]

JAHANNAM: THE ABODE OF THE WRETCHED

MY NOTES



كَلَّا لئن لم ينته لنسفعا بالناصية ، ناصية كاذبة خاطئة ، فليدع ناديه
، سددع الزبانية ،

No! If he does not stop, We shall drag him by his forehead - his lying, sinful forehead. Let him summon his comrades, We shall summon the guards of Hell!
[96:15-8]

4) The people of Hell always continuously suffer from the pangs of hunger and thirst. They will be given boiling hot water, which will make them even more thirsty. As food, they will only have bitter fruits from the tree of Zaqqūm. This tree grows in the bottom of Hell and its fruits will look like the heads of devils. After drinking and eating, they will be taken back to face their punishments.

ثم انكم ايها الضالون المكذبون ، لا كلون من شجر من زقوم ،
فمائلون منها البطون ، فشاربون عليه من الحميم ، فشاربون شرب الهيم

And you who have gone astray and denied the truth, will eat from the bitter tree of Zaqqūm, filling your bellies with it, and drink scalding water, lapping it like thirsty camels.[56: 51-6]

...أذلك خير نزلًا أم شجرة الزقوم ، إنا جعلناها فتنة للظالمين ،
إنها شجرة تخرج في أصل الجحيم ، طلعتها كأنه رؤوس الشياطين ، فإنهم
لا كلون منها فمائلون منها البطون ، ثم إن هم عليها لشوبًا من حميم ، ثم
إن مرجعهم إلى الجحيم

... Is this the better welcome, or the tree of Zaqqūm, which we have made a test for the evildoers? This tree grows in the heart of the blazing Fire, and its fruits are like devils' heads. They will fill their bellies eating from it, then drink scalding water on top of it; then return to the blazing Fire. [37:62-8]

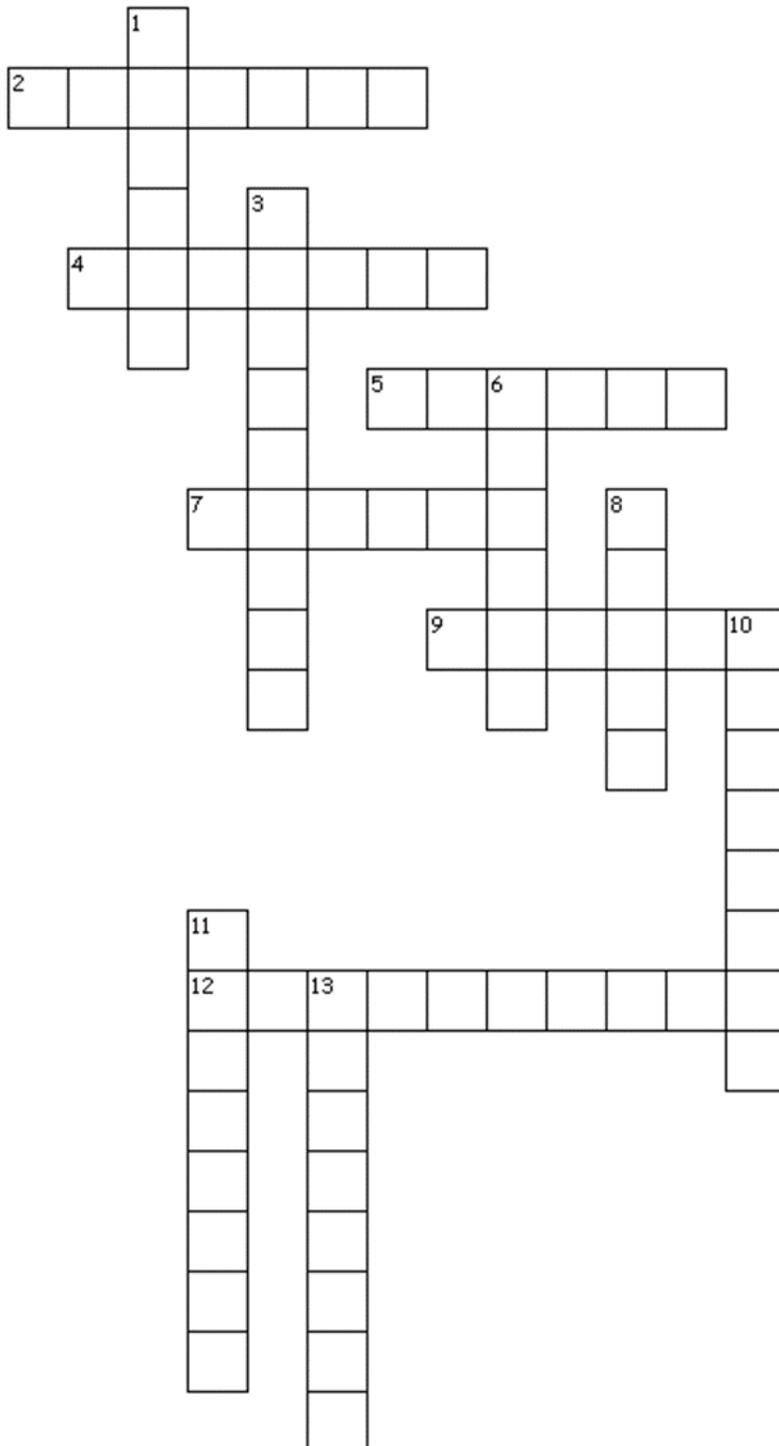
5) Despite all these terrible punishments of Hell and others which haven't been mentioned in this lesson, the worst punishment the inmates of Hell will face will be the feeling of being extremely far from the presence and Mercy of Allāh (SWT).

كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَمَحْجُوبُونَ

No indeed! On that Day they will be screened off from their Lord [83:15]



ACTIVITY



ACROSS

2. The punishment faced in Hell is due to the _____ of our evil deeds that we committed in this world.
4. One of the gates of Hell is called al-_____.
5. The purpose of Hell is to _____ human beings of their evil deeds.
7. Hell in the Qur'ān is described as a _____ creature that shows emotions such as rage
9. The _____ of the evil-doers are sealed.
12. It is _____ for us to truly understand what will take place in the Hereafter.

DOWN

1. The food of Hell will be the bitter fruits from the tree of _____.
3. Angels created specifically to torture the inmates of Hell are called _____.
6. The inmates of Hell will be constantly overcome with tremendous _____.
8. The worst punishment the inmates of Hell is the feeling of being extremely far from Allāh (SWT)'s _____.
10. The manifestation of the Divine Names of Allāh (SWT) are much _____ in the Hereafter.
11. Hell is a place of ultimate _____ and punishment.
13. _____ is a place where only goodness exists.

1) The Holy Qur'an refers to the final dwelling place of the righteous people in the Hereafter as *Jannah*. This Arabic word originates from the root word *Ja-na-na*, which refers to something that is hidden from sight. Paradise is referred to as *Jannah*, because of its description as a garden hidden from sight due to being covered with trees. Another possible reason for its name is because this promised garden is hidden from our sights in this world.



Apart from human beings and angels, the third type of intelligent beings described by Allāh (SWT) in the Qur'an are the *Jinn*. The name *Jinn* originates from the same root as *Jannah*. They are known as such because they too hidden from human sight.

2) The Qur'an provides us with multiple detailed accounts of the nature of Paradise and the type of life its inhabitants will enjoy. It is the abode of everlasting peace and bliss. There is no pain nor suffering in *Jannah*. No worries, no old age and its inhabitants will never feel any sort of tiredness or boredom. In fact, the Qur'an is clear that no matter how much we try, we can never even get close to understanding what is awaiting the believers in Paradise:

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ



No one knows what delights of the eyes are kept hidden for them as a reward for their deeds. [32:17]

3) As discussed in the last two lessons, the reward and punishment of Paradise and Hell are the manifestations of the reality of our deeds in this world. When we perform good deeds or sin in this world, we only see the apparent forms of our deeds. However, the true beauty or ugliness of our deeds will be shown to us in the Hereafter. Paradise and Hell exist today. We are creating our Paradise or Hell with every action that we perform!

4) Human beings were created to eventually live in *Jannah*. Anything other than *Jannah* is below the worth of the human being, the best of Allāh (SWT)'s creation. He granted human beings the special gift of free will, so that they can perform good deed in this world and create their *Jannah*.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. To understand the nature of Paradise
2. To become familiar with the Qur'anic verses dealing with the description of Paradise

MY NOTES



CLASS ACTIVITY



Reflect upon the following *ḥadīth*. What do you understand from it? How is the *ḥadīth* relevant to you in your daily life?
 Imām al-Bāqir (A): "**Paradise is surrounded by trials and patience. So whoever endures trials in the world will enter Paradise. Hell is surrounded by pleasures and desires. Thus, whoever allows himself its pleasures and desires [of the world] will enter the Fire.**"

JANNAH: THE ULTIMATE SUCCESS

MY NOTES



Imām 'Alī (A): "*Verily there is no price for your soul except for Paradise, so do not sell it for anything else.*"



However, just like when raw material is used in a factory to manufacture precious items and in the end we are also left with some waste product, the same too goes for human beings who choose to use their free will to perform evil deeds. The only fitting place for this waste product is *Jahannam*.

Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) said: "*The people of the Fire will be kept permanently in the Fire because their intentions in the world were such that if they were to live forever therein, they would disobey Allāh forever. And verily the people of Paradise will be made to remain in Paradise permanently because their intentions in this world were such that if they were to live forever therein, they would obey Allāh forever. So it is due to these intentions that these and those have their permanent residence.*"



Then the Imām recited the word of Allāh, the Exalted: "*Say, 'Everyone acts according to his character'*" and said that it means according to their intention.

5) The path to Paradise is through Hell. All of us will pass through Hell:

وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا



There is not one of you but shall pass by Hell. This is a decree which your Lord will fulfill. [19:71]

The most righteous people described in *sūrat al-Wāqī'ah* as "The Foremost of the Foremost" (*al-sābiqūn al-sābiqūn*), will be kept far from the Hellfire and will quickly pass through to Paradise.

As for the rest, they will need to become cleansed from all traces of evil in them before being fit to enter Paradise. This will either take place through direct Divine Forgiveness and Mercy or through purification via temporary punishment in Hell.

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِّنْ غِلٍّ...



And we shall strip all rancour from within their hearts... [7:43]

Imām al-Bāqir (A): "*Some people will burn in the Fire, until they are burned to ashes [and become pure] - then they will be taken out through intercession.*"



Only the most evil of people, who cannot be purified from their evil no matter how much they are punished, will remain in Hell for eternity.

THE DESCRIPTION OF JANNAH

MY NOTES



1) *Jannah* is described in the Qur'ān as a beautiful garden where rivers will flow:

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وَعَدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۖ أُكُلُهَا
دَائِمٌ وَظِلُّهَا ۚ تِلْكَ عُقْبَى الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا ۖ وَعُقْبَى الْكَافِرِينَ النَّارُ



And such will be the Paradise promised to the God-fearing: rivers will flow beneath it, its fruits will be eternal, and so will be its blissful shade. That is the ultimate destiny of the God-fearing while Fire is the destiny of the unbelievers.

[13:35]

2) The inhabitants of *Jannah* will live in huge palaces made of gold, silver, pearls and rubies, where they will be reclining on their thrones and socialising with other people in *Jannah*:

عَلَى سُرُرٍ مَوْضُونَةٍ ، مُتَّكِنِينَ عَلَيْهَا مُتَقَابِلِينَ

On thrones decorated, Reclining on them, facing one another. [56:15-6]



مُتَّكِنِينَ عَلَى فُرُشٍ بَطَائِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ ۚ وَجَنَى الْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٍ

Reclining on beds, the inner coverings of which are of silk brocade; and the fruits of the two gardens shall be within reach [55:54]



3) In Paradise, people will be reunited with their righteous family members and will be married to the most beautiful heavenly spouses created especially for them, called the *Hūr al-Īn*. Angels will be there to serve and greet the believers:

جَنَّاتٌ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ ۚ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ ، سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ ۚ
فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ



The gardens of perpetual abode which they will enter along with those who do good from among their parents and their spouses and their offspring; and the angels will enter in upon them from every gate: "Peace be upon you. You merit this reward for your steadfastness. How excellent is the ultimate abode!"

[13:23-4]



JANNAH: THE ULTIMATE SUCCESS

DID YOU KNOW?



Imām ‘Alī (A) has said:
"Paradise has eight doors: a door through which the prophets and the truthful ones will enter, a door through which the martyrs and the righteous will enter, five doors through which our Shī'ah and our lovers will enter...a door through which the rest of the Muslims will enter, those that bear witness to 'There is no god but Allāh and who do not bear an atom's weight of enmity towards us, the Ahl al -Bayt."

4) There will be various different types of rivers flowing in Paradise. The food and drink will resemble those in this world, but the taste will be far greater than what is available in this world. Eating and drinking from these will also carry immense spiritual pleasure and benefit:

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وَعَدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ حَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِّلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى ۖ وَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ

A parable of the garden which those guarding (against evil) are promised: Therein are rivers of water that does not alter, and rivers of milk the taste whereof does not change, and rivers of drink delicious to those who drink, and rivers of honey clarified and for them therein are all fruits and protection from their Lord. (Are these) like those who abide in the fire and who are made to drink boiling water so it rends their bowels asunder. [47:15]

KEY POINTS



1. *Jannah* is the Arabic word used in the Qur'an for Paradise. It is the eventual destination of the good-doers.

2. Paradise is a pure place and no evil can enter it. Therefore, all its inhabitants will be purified from their evil before they can enter it. This will either be by direct Divine Forgiveness and Mercy or through temporary punishment in Hell.

3. People will live physical lives in Paradise and the beauty and pleasure of Paradise is beyond our wildest imagination.

4. The greatest joy for the people of Paradise is attaining the Pleasure of Allāh (SWT).

5) Anything and everything the people of Paradise desire would be made instantly available for them:

هُم فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَهُمْ مَا يَدَّعُونَ

They shall have fruits therein, and they shall have whatever they desire. [36:57]

6) Each day the people of Paradise will be shown new manifestations of the Beauty and Majesty of Allāh (SWT) and each day they will continue to get closer to Him. Despite all of the physical pleasures that they will enjoy in Paradise, the greatest happiness for them will come from attaining the Pleasure of Allāh (SWT) (*riḍwān Allāh*), knowing that their efforts in this life paid off and that He is happy with them:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسَاكِينَ طَيِّبَةً فِي جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ ۖ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

Allāh has promised to the believing men and the believing women gardens, beneath which rivers flow, to abide in them, and goodly dwellings in gardens of perpetual abode; and best of all is the pleasure of Allāh; that is the grand achievement. [9:72]

IN SUMMARY



1. Why is the path to Paradise through Hell?
2. How are we creating our Paradise or Hell today with each action we perform?
3. Describe three different features of Paradise.

ACTIVITY

UNSCRAMBLE EACH OF THE CLUE WORDS

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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.

MUSTAḤAB PRAYERS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. The importance of *mustaḥab* prayers
2. The *nawāfil* prayers
3. *Ṣalāt al-layl*

MY NOTES



THE IMPORTANCE OF PERFORMING MUSTAḤAB PRAYERS

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān that He created us so that we may worship Him. Prayer is the most important form of worship and helps us get closer to Allāh (SWT). *Rasūl Allāh* (S) has said that *ṣalāh* is the *mi'rāj* of a *mu'min*. Therefore, if we want to get closer to Allāh (SWT), we must perform *ṣalāh* - not because we *have* to - but because we *want* to out of love for Him.

When we do something *wājib*, we don't have a choice. We have to do it because we are afraid of punishment in the Hereafter. On the other hand, when we do something *mustaḥab*, it is out of choice. Allāh (SWT) loves us even more for that act of sincerity, which is why the reward for *mustaḥab* acts is greater than the reward for *wājib* actions.

Every Muslim must pray 5 times a day. These *wājib* prayers include *fajr*, *ẓuhr*, *ʿaṣr*, *maghrib* and *ishā'*, making a total of 17 *raka'āt* every day.

In addition to these, there are 34 more *raka'āt* that are not *wājib* but highly recommended to pray every day. These are called the *nawāfil* prayers (singular is *nāfilah* prayer).

Imām al-Ḥasan al-'Askarī (A) has said that the signs of a *mu'min* are five:

1. praying 51 *raka'āt* a day (17 *wājib* and 34 *nawāfil*)
2. going for *ziyārah* of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) on the day of *Arba'in*
3. wearing a ring on the right hand (e.g. *ʿaqīq* ring)
4. a mark of *sajdah* on the forehead
5. reciting *Bismillāh* loudly in *ṣalāh* (for the two *sūrahs* during *qiyām*).'

The 34 *raka'āt* of *nawāfil* prayers should be performed as follows:

- * 2 *raka'āt nāfilah* before praying *fajr ṣalāh*
- * 8 *raka'āt nāfilah* before praying *ẓuhr ṣalāh*
- * 8 *raka'āt nāfilah* before praying *ʿaṣr ṣalāh*
- * 4 *raka'āt nāfilah* after praying *maghrib ṣalāh*
- * 1 *rak'ah nāfilah* prayed as 2 *raka'āt* sitting down after *ishā' ṣalāh*, and
- * 11 *raka'āt nāfilah* anytime between midnight and *fajr ṣalāh*. This set of prayers is also known as *ṣalāt al-layl*.

Note that the *nāfilah* of *maghrib* and *ishā'* is prayed after the *wājib ṣalāh* and not before.

ACTIVITY



Create a list of people you would like to pray for in *ṣalāt al-layl*. You may start your list with the name of Imam al-Mahdī (A)

A *mustaḥab ṣalāh* cannot be more than 2 *raka'āt*, so when we have to pray 8 *raka'āt* or 4 *raka'āt nāfilah*, we have to pray it in units of two (just like *ṣalāt al-fajr*).

If we are unable to perform all the 34 *raka'āt* of *nawāfil* prayers, we should try to perform as many as we can.

SALĀT AL-LAYL

The 11 *raka'āt* midnight *nāfilah ṣalāh* is called *ṣalāt al-layl* or *ṣalāt al-taḥajjud*. It is the most important *nāfilah ṣalāh* and is not attached to any *wājib ṣalāh*. It can be prayed any time between midnight and *fajr*, but it is recommended to pray it just before *fajr* time. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا

And during a part of the night, pray *taḥajjud*, as a *nāfilah* (extra) for yourself. It may be that your Lord will raise you to a position of great glory.

[17:79]

Q: How do we perform *ṣalāt al-layl*?

STEP 1	4 prayers of 2 <i>raka'āt</i> each, making a total of 8 <i>raka'āt</i> . The <i>niyyah</i> for each 2 <i>raka'āt ṣalāh</i> is: 'I am praying 2 <i>raka'āt</i> for <i>ṣalāt al-layl qurbatan ilallāh</i> '
STEP 2	Perform a 2 <i>raka'āt ṣalāh</i> with the <i>niyyah</i> : 'I am praying 2 <i>raka'āt ṣalāt al-shaf'</i> <i>qurbatan ilallāh</i> '. Do not recite <i>qunūt</i> in this <i>ṣalāh</i> .
STEP 3	Pray 1 <i>rak'ah</i> standing with the <i>niyyah</i> : 'I am praying 1 <i>rak'ah ṣalāt al-witr qurbatan ilallāh</i> '. This is the most important part of <i>ṣalāt al-layl</i> . After reciting <i>sūrat al-Fātiḥah</i> and another <i>sūrah</i> , raise your hands for <i>qunūt</i> and recite the following <i>du'ā</i> : <p style="text-align: center;">بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْحَلِيمُ الْكَرِيمُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبِّ الْأَرْضِينَ السَّبْعِ وَمَا فِيهِنَّ وَمَا بَيْنَهُنَّ وَمَا فَوْقَهُنَّ وَمَا تَحْتَهُنَّ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَ آله الطَّاهِرِينَ</p> <p>هَذَا مَقَامُ الْعَائِدِ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ</p> <p>أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَ أَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ</p> <p>Then recite seven times: هَذَا مَقَامُ الْعَائِدِ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ</p> <p>Then recite seventy times: أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَ أَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ</p> <p>Then say <i>اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي</i> and mention the names of 40 Muslims, either living or dead, asking Allāh to forgive them. Don't forget your parents, siblings and relatives who have passed away. If you do not have any names to mention, you can recite: اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ</p> <p>Then say 300 times: أَلْعَفُو</p> <p>Then do the <i>takbīr</i>, go to <i>rukū'</i> and complete the <i>ṣalāh</i> as normal.</p>

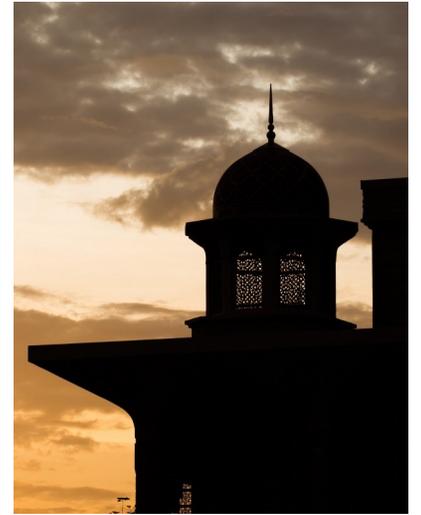
IN SUMMARY

1. According to the *ḥadīth* of Imām al-'Askarī (A), what are the 5 signs of a *mu'min*?
2. Why is it more rewarding to perform a *mustaḥab* action compared to a *wājib* act?
3. What are the *nawāfil* prayers? When do we perform them?
4. What is *ṣalāt al-layl*? When is it performed?

DID YOU KNOW?



Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) loved *ṣalāt al-layl* so much that in his parting advice to his sister *Sayyidah Zaynab* he told her to remember him in her *ṣalāt al-layl*.



KEY POINTS



1. Performing *mustaḥab ṣalāh* is highly rewarding because we perform them out of love for Allāh (SWT) rather than out of compulsion.
2. In addition to the 17 *raka'āt* which are *wājib*, there are a total of 34 *nawāfil* prayers which are highly recommended.
3. The most important of these *nawāfil* prayers is *ṣalāt al-layl*.

KHUMS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Introduction and basic rulings regarding *khums*
2. How to calculate *khums* on savings
3. How to purify wealth that has been mixed with *ḥarām* earnings
4. The recipients of *khums*

MY NOTES



WHAT IS KHUMS?

Just like *ṣalāh* and *ṣawm*, *khums* and *zakāt* are also acts of worship (*‘ibādah*) that are *wājib* on all Muslims. They are not merely taxes on one’s wealth. We cannot hope to gain spiritual perfection and the pleasure of Allāh (SWT) unless we spend our wealth for others. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur’ān:

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

You will never become truly righteous until you spend from what you love most. And whatever you spend of anything, indeed Allāh knows it. [3:92]

By paying *zakāt* and *khums*, we show our concern for the poor and needy. These taxes also keep us away from selfishness and greed, and purify our wealth.

The main differences between *khums* and *zakāt* include the items on which they are applicable and their recipients. *Khums* is the right of *Rasūl Allāh* (S) and his family. It plays a very important role in maintaining the Islamic society, in *tablīgh* work (the propagation of Islam) and the independence of the *‘ulamā’* from the influence of governments. It has been mentioned in many *aḥādīth* that one who does not pay it has stolen a share belonging to *Rasūl Allāh* (S)’s family. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur’ān:

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ

Know that whatever thing you may come by, a fifth (khums) of it is for Allāh and the Messenger, for the relatives and the orphans, for the needy and the traveller... [8:41]

The *khums* we pay is divided into two equal parts. One part is the share of our living Imām and is called **Sahm al-Imām**. The other is the share of the poor *Sādāt* (the descendants of *Rasūl Allāh* (S)) and is called **Sahm al-Sādāt**.

During the *ghaybah* of the Imām, we give the *Sahm al-Imām* to our *Marja’*, who uses it for religious and humanitarian causes. If we know of a worthy cause such as the building of an Islamic centre, helping an orphanage, *tablīgh* work or a humanitarian cause, we can ask our *Marja’* for permission to give our share of *Sahm al-Imām* to that project.

Sometimes charitable organizations and Islamic institutions ask the *Marja’* for permission to collect *khums* for their projects. The *Marja’* will give them a written permission, called an *ijāzah*, to collect *khums*. You can then choose to give them your annual *khums* directly.

ACTIVITY



A person earns £24,000 and has a total expense of £20,500. How much *khums* is she required to pay?

The *Sahm al-Sādāt* can also be given to the *Marja'* who distributes it to the poor *Sādāt*. A poor *Sayyid* is one who lacks the means for one year's respectable living (in accordance to his/her social status). *Khums* is given to *Sādāt* who are Shī'ah Ithnā 'Asharī and who pray and don't sin openly.

HOW IS KHUMS CALCULATED?

Khums is a one-fifth (20%) tax that all *bāligh* Muslims are required to pay. It is applicable on several items but the most common ones are one's annual savings and when *ḥalāl* wealth or property has become mixed up with *ḥarām* wealth.

Khums applies to all earnings including profit from business, salaries and wages. Calculating *khums* can be very confusing if we don't have a fixed *khums* date. The first step is to select a fixed date of our choice when we will calculate our *khums* every year.

We should then calculate our total income and subtract from this total income all our expenses for that year. Whatever remains is our savings as we did not use it during the year. We should then pay 20% of our savings as *khums*. The remaining 80% is ours to keep and no further *khums* will be applicable on it in subsequent years.

Even if a person has an ongoing debt like a mortgage, they still need to pay *khums* on their savings. They can however reduce how much *khums* they pay by paying more towards their mortgage and settling any other ongoing loans and debts before the *khums* becomes due.

If a person has earned wealth unlawfully (e.g. by gambling) and it is mixed with his lawful wealth and he/she has no idea how much is lawful and how much is unlawful, this wealth can be purified by paying *khums* once on the whole amount. Thereafter it can be assumed that the remaining 80% is *ḥalāl*. Of course this doesn't change the fact that the person has committed a sin by acquiring the wealth unlawfully and is obligated to repent and undo the *ḥarām* act if possible e.g. return wealth to the rightful owner if stolen or taken unlawfully.

DID YOU KNOW?



There is no *khums* on the following items among others:

- *Mahr* (dowry), that is *wājib* for a husband to give to his wife at the time of marriage
- The earning or property of a child who is not *bāligh*
- Inheritance



KEY POINTS



1. *Khums* is one of the *Furū' al-Dīn* and an act of *'ibādah*.
2. *Khums* has two parts: *sahm al-Imām* (share of the Imām of our time) and *sahm al-Sādāt* (share of the poor and needy descendants of *Rasūl Allāh* (S)).
3. We should give our *khums* to our *marja'* who will then utilise it in the right way for Islamic and humanitarian causes.
4. We can also give our *khums* to those who have an *ijāzah*, to collect *khums*.

IN SUMMARY



1. What is *khums*? Why should we pay *khums*?
2. How is *khums* calculated?
3. What are the two parts of *khums*? Who are the recipients of each of these parts?
4. What is an *ijāzah* for *khums*?

ZAKĀT

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Introduction and basic rulings regarding *zakāt*
2. How to calculate *zakāt*
3. The recipients of *zakāt*

MY NOTES



WHAT IS ZAKĀT?

Zakāt and *khums* are not merely Islamic taxes. They are acts of *'ibādah* and are part of *Furū' al-Dīn* (the Branches of Religion) that are *wājib* on all Muslims. The literal meaning of the word *zakāt* is 'something which purifies'. *Zakāt* purifies our wealth by making those less fortunate share in a portion of it. Through *zakāt* and *khums*, we can achieve a relatively just and fair distribution of wealth in society. In an Islamic society all must live together as one family and share their wealth. Every member of society should have the means to live decently. If one group lacks it, it is the duty of the others to support them.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ
مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ



And maintain the prayer (*ṣalāh*) and give the *zakāt*. The good that you send ahead for your souls, you shall find it (waiting for you) with Allāh. Indeed Allāh sees best what you do. [2:110]

In this verse, Allāh (SWT) is telling us that we should not think even for a moment that we are losing the wealth that we give away in the form of *khums* and *zakāt*. In fact, it is an investment we are making for our *ākhirah* (life in the Hereafter) because when we die and go to the next life, we will see our good deeds there and enjoy their rewards. *Zakāt al-Māl* is an annual tax that must be paid on certain items such as specific agricultural produce and livestock, and on gold and silver currency. It is *wājib* on nine items. If a person has any of these items beyond a certain quantity for over a year, then they must give *zakāt* on those items.

The nine items on which *zakāt* is *wājib* are:



WHEAT



BARLEY



GRAPES/RAISINS



DATES



GOLD COINS



SILVER COINS



CAMELS



CATTLE



SHEEP & GOATS

ACTIVITY



Read verse 9:60 and list the eight groups of people who can receive *zakāt al-māl*

The amount of *zakāt* to be paid varies depending on the item, quantity and type of crop or livestock. The amount of *zakāt* to be paid on gold and silver coins is 2.5%. If *zakāt* has been paid once on a quantity, it does not have to be paid again every year.

WHO ARE THE RECIPIENTS OF ZAKĀT?

The following āyah of Qur'ān tells us whom to give zakāt:



إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

Sadaqāt (zakāt) are only for the poor and needy, those employed to collect zakāt, those whose hearts are to be reconciled, for the freeing of slaves, those in debt, in the way of Allāh, and for the traveller. This is an obligation from Allāh, and Allāh is All-knowing, All-wise. [9:60]

Zakāt can therefore be distributed to any of the following eight groups:

1. **Fuqarā'**: The needy - those who are unable to meet their annual expenditure.
2. **Masākīn**: The poor - Those who live even below the level of the needy.
3. **'Amilīn**: The salary of those who are employed to collect zakāt.
4. **Mu'allafat al-Qulub**: Those non-Muslims whom Rasūl Allāh (S) or the Imām or his representative think advisable to help from zakāt so as to gain their sympathy and support for Islam and Muslims.
5. **Riqāb**: To free the slaves. Islam greatly emphasises the freeing of slaves so that slavery can be abolished.
6. **Ghārimīn**: Those in debt to help pay off their debts if they are having difficulty repaying them.
7. **Fī Sabīl Allāh**: To help in religious matters and anything that is done in the way of Allāh e.g. building a masjid, school, improving roads etc.
8. **Ibn al-Sabīl**: A traveller who has run out of money and does not have the means to return home.

In all the cases above, the recipient of zakāt must be a *Shī'ah Ithnā 'Āsharī* Muslim who is not a reputed sinner and who is not a dependant of the person paying the zakāt. The zakāt of a non-sayyid should not be given to a sayyid unless he/she is in dire need and the khums (*sahm al-sādāt*) given to him/her is not sufficient. The zakāt of a sayyid can be given to help a non-sayyid. When the Imām is present, zakāt should be given to him. During the *ghaybah* of the Imām, if a person cannot find anyone deserving to receive the zakāt, it may be given to the *Marja'* or his agents (*wukalā'*) who will then give it to those who deserve it.

IN SUMMARY



1. What is the literal meaning of zakāt?
2. When we pay zakāt, we don't lose that money. How is this possible?
3. What are the nine things on which zakāt is wājib?
4. Who are the 8 groups of people who are eligible to receive zakāt?
5. How much zakāt should be paid on gold and silver currency?

DID YOU KNOW?



Besides *Zakāt al-Māl*, there is also a specific *Zakāt* that is paid every year on the day of *Īd al-Fiṭr*. It is given at the end of the month of *Ramaḍān* to help the poor. This *zakāt* is also *wājib* on every *bāligh*, sane Muslim and is called *zakāt al-fiṭr* or simply *fiṭrah*.

KEY POINTS



1. *Zakāt* is an Islamic tax which is *wājib* on certain items. The literal meaning of *Zakāt* is to purify. *Zakāt* purifies our wealth and ensures a more equal distribution of wealth in society.
2. *Zakāt al-māl* is *wājib* on 9 items including wheat, barley, dates, grapes or raisins, cattle, sheep or goats, camels, gold and silver coins.
3. The recipients of *Zakāt* have been mentioned in the Qur'ān.

AḤKĀM AL-MAYYIT (PART 1)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. What should we do at the time of death?
2. What is *sakarāt al-mawt*?
3. An introduction to Islamic funeral rites.

MY NOTES



ISLAMIC FUNERAL RITES

Death is a certainty that no one can escape from. We have known right from a young age that we are here on this earth only for a short period of time. One day we will die so that we can go to the next world, which is our eternal home. Therefore, one who has prepared for the Hereafter will not fear death but in fact look forward to it.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْنَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنْ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ

Every soul shall taste death, and you will indeed be paid your full reward on the day of resurrection. Whoever is delivered from the Fire and admitted to paradise has certainly succeeded. The life of this world is nothing but a delusion. [3:185]

Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A) has said that the soul of a deceased *mu'min* is asked during *ghusl al-mayyit*, "Would it please you to be returned to the body?" Its reply will be, "What am I to do with more suffering, loss and grief?!"

This means the next world is far more beautiful and comforting for a *mu'min* compared to the life of this world. The time when a person is about to die is called the time of *iḥtiḍār* in Arabic, and the pangs and anguish they may feel are referred to as *sakarāt al-mawt* (the pangs of death).

Before death, Muslims should:

- *Ensure they have prepared a will. They should inform their heirs where to find the will and it should be read before the funeral rites and burial as it may have specific instructions that need to be taken into account.
- *Ask for forgiveness from all around and especially from those who they know may be upset with them. They should also ask Allāh (SWT) for forgiveness of sins and for the intercession of *Rasūl Allāh* (S) and his *Ahl al-Bayt*. Recite the *kalimah*, *istighfār*, *ṣalawāt* and any *āyāt* of the *Qur'ān* they know, as much as possible.
- *If they have their own *kafan*, they should inform those around where to find it.
- *A dying man should inform his eldest son or nearest of kin about any missed *ṣalāh* and fasts and if *ḥajj* was *wājib* but not done as well as any outstanding *khums* and *zakāt*. He should ask for all this to be settled as soon as possible and before inheritance is distributed. A woman can also ask her next of kin to fulfil any missed *wājibāt* and in particular if she has any debts that need to be settled.

ACTIVITY



Perform a role play in class to show what you would do and how you would behave in the presence of someone who was about to die.

It is *wājib* to place a dying person such that his/her feet are facing towards *qiblah*. The *mayyit* should also be kept with its feet facing *qiblah* until *ghusl al-mayyit* has been performed. After the *ghusl*, the body should be placed in such a way that the right shoulder of the deceased is pointing towards *qiblah*.

WHAT SHOULD THOSE AROUND A DYING PERSON DO?

If a person is struggling and facing difficulties and pain in the moment of death, it is recommended to place his/her body where he/she used to perform *ṣalāh* and to recite for them *Du'ā' al-'Adīlah*. Help the dying person to recite the *shahādatayn* and if they cannot, then it is recommended to pronounce the *shahādatayn* over the dying person as follows:

نَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ نَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَ رَسُولُهُ

We bear witness that there is no god but Allāh. And we bear witness that Muḥammad is his servant and His Messenger.

There are several recommended *ad'iyā'* that a dying person can recite or those near him/her can recite. It is also recommended that as much Qur'ān as possible should be recited for the dying person's comfort, especially *sūrat Yāsīn*, *sūrat al-Ṣāffāt*, *sūrat al-Aḥzāb*, *āyah 254 of sūrah al-Baqarah* and *āyah 54 of sūrat al-A'rāf*. If possible, these should be recited near the head of the person.

It is *makrūh* to:

- * leave a dying person all alone
- * sit near the dying person in the state of *janābah* or *ḥayḍ* (for women)
- * place hands or any object (especially heavy objects) on the stomach or body of the dying person
- * talk too much or cry too much in the presence of the dying person

As soon as a person passes away:

- * Close their eyes and lips and straighten their arms and legs
- * Remove any jewellery on the body that may be difficult to remove later when the body becomes cold
- * Cover the whole body with a cloth
- * If it is during the night, do not leave the body in darkness
- * Inform people of the demise, especially the immediate relatives and local residents who can attend the funeral

It is strongly recommended that the last funeral rites including *ghusl*, *takfīn* and burial should not be delayed unless there is an unavoidable reason causing the delay.

IN SUMMARY

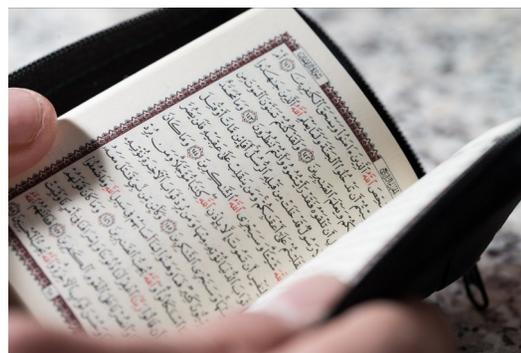
1. What does the Qur'ān say about death?
2. What are the things that a dying person should do?
3. What is *iḥtiḍār* and *sakarāt al-mawt*?
4. What should those around a dying person do? What *makrūh* actions should they keep away from?

DID YOU KNOW?



Rasūl Allāh (S) has said, "The world is a paradise for the faithless and a prison for the faithful (*mu'min*)."

The opposite is true for the life after death.



KEY POINTS



1. Death is a certainty. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān that every soul shall taste death. We should therefore prepare for death so that we are ready for it when it comes.

2. A dying person should ensure they have written a will and make known to their heirs any outstanding debts or *wājibāt* that they have missed so that these can be fulfilled on their behalf.

3. It is *wājib* to place a dying person in such a way that the feet are facing *qiblah*.

AḤKĀM AL-MAYYIT (PART 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. An introduction to Islamic funeral rites
2. How to perform *ghusl* for a *mayyit*
3. An explanation on *takfīn* and *ḥunūṭ*.

MY NOTES



ISLAMIC FUNERAL RITES

The *ghusl*, *kafan* (*takfīn*), and burial (*tadfīn*) of a Muslim is an obligation on every *bāligh* sane Muslim. However, it is a communal duty (*wājib al-kifā'ī*). This means that if it is carried out by one or a group of people in the community, the rest are free of its obligation, but if it is carried out by none, all are held responsible.

All of the above mentioned rites should, as a matter of precaution, be performed with the permission of the guardian (*walī*) of the deceased. The *walī* of a wife is her husband, and of the father is the eldest son. In all cases the *walī* is the nearest adult male relative who inherits the most according to Islamic law. If the dead person has appointed someone to arrange his/her last rites, that person is to be considered the *walī* in these matters.

Q: How is *ghusl al-mayyit* performed?

The person who gives *ghusl* to a *mayyit* must be a *Shī'ah Ithnā-'Asharī* Muslim, aware of the rules regarding *ghusl al-mayyit*, *'āqil* (of sound mind), *bāligh* and of the same gender as the dead person (or a spouse).

Ghusl al-mayyit must be done with the *niyyah* of *qurbatan ilallāh*. It is *ḥarām* to charge a fee for performing the *ghusl* for a corpse. If someone undertakes it for the sake of money, it will be *bāṭil*. However one can charge for providing the facilities or materials necessary for performing the *ghusl* (i.e. the place, water, *kafan* etc.)

It is *wājib* to wash the *mayyit* three times in the following sequence:

1. With water mixed with *sidr* leaves (the leaves of a berry or lotus tree).
2. With water mixed with camphor.
3. With pure (*muṭlaq*) water.

The manner of *ghusl al-mayyit* is exactly as any *ghusl* (like *ghusl* for *janābah*) using the sequential method (*al-ghusl al-tartībī*). If a person dies in the state of *janābah* or *ḥayḍ*, it is not necessary to give them *ghusl* for that. The *ghusl al-mayyit* will suffice.

It is *mustaḥab* that:

- * At least two persons should be engaged for giving *ghusl*. One should pour water on the dead body, while the other should change its sides.
- * The soles of the feet of the dead body should face *Qiblah*.
- * *Ghusl* should be given in a covered place and not under the open sky.
- * The main person giving *ghusl* should be on the right side of the body, and before each of the three *ghusls*, they should wash their own arms up to the elbows.
- * All involved in washing the body should recite supplications and ask for the forgiveness of the dead person throughout the *ghusls*.
- * When the *ghusls* are over, the dead body should be dried with a towel before starting the *takfīn* (putting on the *kafan*).

ACTIVITY



Watch a video demonstration of *ghusl*, *takfīn* and *tadfīn*

HUNŪT AND TAKFĪN

Hunūt means rubbing camphor on the seven parts of body that touch the ground during *sajdah*. *Hunūt* is *wājib* and should be performed after *ghusl al-mayyit*.

It is also *mustahab* to place two pieces of fresh, green twigs in the grave with the dead body. These two twigs are called the *jaridatayn* and are usually placed on either side of the arms of the deceased or on either side of the grave or coffin.

Takfīn is done after the *ghusl* is over, the body is dried and *hunūt* has been done. It is *mustahab* that the *kafan* should be white cotton cloth. The *wājib* parts of the *kafan* are 3 pieces of cloth which should all be large enough to enable them to wrap generously around the body:

1. A cloth for the waist covering the body from the navel (just below waist line) down to the knees.
2. A shirt cloth covering the *mayyit* from the shoulders to the thighs.
3. A cloth wide enough to wrap around the whole body, and long enough to be tied at the head and the feet of the *mayyit*.

These three pieces of the *kafan* are *wājib*, although there are some other recommended pieces. Those who are involved in giving *ghusl*, *takfīn* and *tadfīn* should learn all the detailed rules regarding these processes.

It is recommended that a person should purchase his or her own shroud while alive, or should mention in his or her will the source of his or her shroud. Otherwise it may be provided out of the original wealth of the deceased.



IN SUMMARY

1. Islamic funeral rites are *wājib al-kifā'ī*. What does this mean?
2. What are the three types of water required for *ghusl al-mayyit*?
3. What are the *mustahab* acts whilst performing *ghusl al-mayyit*?
4. What is *hunūt*?
5. What are the three *wājib* pieces of cloth for *kafan*?

DID YOU KNOW?



A dead body is *najis* before *ghusl al-mayyit* is performed. Therefore, a person who touches a *mayyit* before or during *ghusl* should perform *ghusl mass al-mayyit* (*ghusl* for touching a *najis* dead body).

KEY POINTS



1. The *ghusl*, *takfīn*, and *tadfīn* of a Muslim is *wājib al-kifā'ī* on every *bāligh* sane Muslim.
2. Islamic funeral rites should be performed with the permission of the *walī* of the deceased.
3. *Ghusl al-mayyit* involves washing the *mayyit* three times: first with water mixed with berry leaves, then with water mixed with camphor and lastly pure water.
4. After *ghusl*, *hunūt* should be performed, followed by *takfīn*.

AḤKĀM AL-MAYYIT (PART 3)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. How to perform *ṣalāt al-mayyit*
2. An explanation on *tadfīn*.

MY NOTES



SALĀT AL-MAYYIT

Ṣalāt al-mayyit is *wājib* for all adult deceased Muslims and for children who are six years of age or older as long as at least one of their parents is Muslim. If the deceased child was not six years old but knew what *ṣalāh* was, then, as *iḥtiyāt wājib*, *ṣalāt al-mayyit* should also be performed.

The *ṣalāh* for the dead person should be performed after *ghuṣl al-mayyit*, the *ḥunūṭ*, and the shrouding (*takfīn*). Even though this *ṣalāh* is *wājib al-kifā'i*, it is highly recommended and there is great spiritual reward for as many Muslims as possible to join in the *ṣalāh*.

Ṣalāt al-mayyit is different from other prayers. It is not necessary to perform *wuḍū'* before this *ṣalāh*, or for the clothes or body to be clean (*tāhir*), though it is recommended that those who perform this *ṣalāh* should be in a state of ritual purity (*ṭahārah*) and should have done *wuḍū'*. A woman in the state of *ḥayḍ* (menses) can pray *ṣalāt al-mayyit* but she should stand alone and not join the lines in the congregation.

It is *wājib* that the *mayyit* should be placed on its back in front of the people performing *ṣalāt al-mayyit*, with its right shoulder facing *qiblah*. It is recommended that those performing *ṣalāt al-mayyit* should stand barefoot. Before the *ṣalāh*, it is recommended that instead of the *adhān*, the people should be called to the prayer by calling out '*al-Ṣalāh*' al-three times.

After making the *niyyah* of offering *ṣalāt al-mayyit* for the deceased, *qurbatan ilallāh*, five *takbīrs* should be done, each followed by a certain *du'ā'*. It is recommended to raise one's hands up to the ears during each *takbīr*. The Imām of the congregation should read the supplications aloud, and those in the congregation should repeat them quietly.

After 1st takbīr:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

I bear witness there is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is Allāh's Messenger

After 2nd takbīr:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad (S) and the progeny of Muḥammad (S)

After 3rd takbīr:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

O Allāh, forgive all the faithful – men and women

ACTIVITY



List down the differences between *ṣalāt al-mayyit* and other ritual prayers.

After 4th takbīr:

if it is a man:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِهَذَا الْمَيِّتِ

O Allāh, forgive this dead body

if it is a woman:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِهَذِهِ الْمَيِّتَةِ

O Allāh, forgive this dead body

The 5th takbīr marks the end of the *ṣalāt al-mayyit*. The *mayyit* is now ready to be taken away for burial.

AN ISLAMIC BURIAL

There are many *aḥādīth* stressing the importance of attending funerals. It gives honour to the Muslim who has passed away, comforts the family and loved ones, reminds us of the next world, reminds us of our own mortality and how we too will one day be washed, shrouded, prayed over and buried by others. There is great *thawāb* in attending a funeral.

It is *mustaḥab* that when the coffin is taken to the grave, it should be placed on the ground several metres away from the grave, then brought a few metres nearer to the grave, and for a second time placed on the ground, then brought nearer and placed by the side of the grave.

The *mayyit* should be lowered into the grave gently whilst reciting this *mustaḥab du‘ā’*: “O Allāh, hollow out the earth on his/her two sides, raise up his/her actions, and cause him/her to encounter the pleasures of Paradise from You.”



MY NOTES



AḤKĀM AL-MAYYIT (PART 3)

DID YOU KNOW?



Imām Ali (A) once accompanying a funeral when he heard someone laughing. He got angry and said, “Is it that death is only for others? Is it that we will never die? Is it that those whom we see departing on their journey of death will come back to us? We lay them down in their graves and then enjoy their estate!”

The *mayyit* should be laid into the grave on its right side so that the face is towards the *qiblah* and its back is not on ground, but on the side wall of the grave. The right cheek should be on the ground and the head placed on a pillow made of earth.

The person placing the *mayyit* in the grave should place his hands on the shoulders of the *mayyit* and then recite the *talqīn*. The shoulders of the *mayyit* should be firmly shaken each time the name of the deceased is mentioned in the *talqīn*. The person reciting it should try and recite it close to the ear of the *mayyit*. The *talqīn* is recited in Arabic and can be found in the *risālah* of the *marja'*.

After the recital of the *talqīn*, the people present, except the near relatives of the deceased, should push soil into the grave. They should push the soil in with the back of their hands (palm facing down), and say:

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

We are from Allāh, and to Him we shall return [2:156]

KEY POINTS



1. *Ṣalāt al-mayyit* is different from other *ṣalawāt*. It consists of five *takbīrs*, with a *du'ā'* between every two *takbīrs*.
2. *Wuḍū'* or *ṭahārah* is not required for *ṣalāt al-mayyit* although it is preferable.
3. Instead of reciting the *adhān*, people should be called to perform the *ṣalāh* by calling out *al-ṣalāh* three times.
4. A *mayyit* should be placed on its right side in the grave, with its face facing *qiblah* and its head on a pillow of sand.
5. The *talqīn* should then be recited in Arabic whilst holding the shoulders of the *mayyit*.
6. After the grave is covered with soil, those present should put their fingers into the soil and recite the *tanzīl*.

Then some water should be poured on the grave and those present should thrust their fingers in the soil (such that it leaves finger marks) and recite *sūrat al-Fātiḥah* and *sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ* once, followed by *sūrat al-Qadr* seven times. This is called *tanzīl*. They should seek Allāh (SWT)'s forgiveness for the deceased.



IN SUMMARY



1. How is *ṣalāt al-mayyit* different from other ritual prayers?
2. What are the benefits of attending a funeral?
3. How should a *mayyit* be placed in the grave?
4. What is *talqīn*?
5. What is *tanzīl*?

INTOXICANTS

MY NOTES



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

Imām 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 (SWT), does not fear committing any sin, does not respect anyone's rights and does not stop from committing evil openly. The spirit of piety and faith departs from him and only the impure and vicious spirit, which is far off from the mercy of Allāh (SWT) remains in his body. Allāh, His angels, His prophets and the true believers curse such a man, and his daily prayers are not accepted for forty days.”* 

The use of recreational drugs is also *ḥarām* in Islam, because they too are intoxicants and have similar effects to alcohol.

BASIC RULINGS REGARDING INTOXICANTS

Alcohol is *najis al-‘ayn* and makes other things *najis*. Anything that comes into contact with alcohol (that is for drinking and not for industrial use) becomes *najis* and must be made *ṭāhir* using water. Industrial alcohol that is used to make things like perfume is not considered *najis*.

Food containing even small amounts of alcohol is *najis* and cannot be consumed, even if the alcohol has “evaporated” in the cooking process. This is because even though the effects of alcohol may no longer be there in the food, it has become *najis* and cannot be eaten. It is also not permissible to consume alcohol for medicinal purposes.

If we buy anything with alcohol or someone gives us a gift with alcohol (e.g. chocolates or cake with rum), we cannot even give it to a non-Muslim and must throw it away.

Sitting at a table where alcohol is served is not permissible. When we go out with non-Muslim friends from college or work, it is important that we do



not sit with them if they are drinking alcohol. We should avoid any restaurant that has a bar, sells alcohol or even permits people to bring their own alcohol.

It is not permissible to grow crops for alcohol production, produce it, buy or sell it. In fact, all aspects of alcohol trade from the time crops, such as grapes and barley, are grown on the farm to the consumption of the alcoholic drink by the end user is forbidden in Islam. This includes distributing, advertising and profiting from companies that deal in alcohol production.

Islam forbids all types of intoxicants, including drugs. By 'drugs' we do not mean medicines, but recreational drugs that are taken to alter a person's state of mind. They are usually addictive and alter mood and behaviour (just like alcohol). Examples of such drugs include opium, heroin, cocaine and marijuana.

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



DID YOU KNOW?



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

1. Those who cultivate a crop with intention of producing alcohol from it
2. Those who crush the fruit to make wine
3. Those who transport it
4. Those who take delivery of it from the supplier
5. Those who sell it
6. Those who buy it
7. Those who serve it
8. Those who drink it
9. Those who sit at a table where alcohol is drunk
10. Those who use the income earned from alcohol

KEY POINTS



1. Consuming alcohol as well as dealing in any stage of its production, distribution, sale and consumption. is *ḥarām* 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.

IN SUMMARY



1. What does the Qur'an say about alcohol consumption?
2. Is it permissible to use alcoholic drinks in small quantities which do not cause addiction?
3. What are the ten groups of people that *Rasūl Allāh* (S) has cursed due to their involvement in alcohol?

ḤAJJ

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. What is *Ḥijjat al-Islām*?
2. What are the conditions for *Ḥajj* to become *wājib*?
3. What are the main acts of '*Umrah al-Tamattu'* and *Ḥajj al-Tamattu'*?

MY NOTES



HIJJAT AL-ISLĀM

Ḥajj is one of the *wājib* acts of worship (*'ibādāt*) in Islam. It refers to the annual pilgrimage to Makkah that is performed every year in the month of *Dhū'l-Ḥijjah*, the last month in the Islamic calendar. Participation in *Ḥajj* is *wājib* on all Muslims at least once in their lifetimes, as long as they fulfil the following conditions:

- * ***bulūgh*** (puberty)
- * ***'aql*** (sanity)
- * ***istitā'ah*** (affordability)

The conditions of *istitā'ah* are wealth (one should be able to afford it), health (one should be physically healthy to make the journey to Makkah and participate in *ḥajj*) and transport (including availability of visas).

Those who wish to go for *ḥajj* should:

- * ensure they have no debts to pay. If they owe money to anyone they should pay it back first or ask their permission to pay it later.
- * ensure the money for *Ḥajj* is clean and from *ḥalāl* earnings. This is by ensuring that any *wājib* taxes like *khums* and *zakāt* have been paid.
- * prepare a will just in case they die before returning home; and ensure the executor(S) of their will who is not travelling with them knows where to find the will if they need to.
- * it is recommended to give *ṣadaqah* before setting out on the journey.

The annual *ḥajj* (*ḥijjat al-Islam*) is made up of two parts:

1. '*Umrah al-Tamattu'* (that can be done anytime between 1st *Shawwāl* and 8th *Dhū'l-Ḥijjah*), and
2. *Ḥajj al-Tamattu'* (that must be done from the 9th to 13th *Dhū'l-Ḥijjah* of the same year as the '*Umrah al-Tamattu'*).

Pilgrims have to start their *ḥajj* at any one of five specific locations away from Makkah. These five places are called ***mīqāt***. At the *mīqāt*, a pilgrim puts on a special dress called the ***iḥrām***, makes the *niyyah* for *ḥajj* and recites the ***talbiyyah*** as follows:

Labbayk, Allāhumma labbayk. Lā sharika laka labbayk

At Your service (here I am) O Allāh, at Your service. There is no partner for You. At Your service.

The *iḥrām* for men is two pieces of unstitched cloth: One piece to cover from the waist to the knees and the other for the upper body. Men cannot cover their head or feet. For women, *iḥrām* is a simple long dress with *ḥijāb*. It is recommended for the *iḥrām* to be white, both for men and women. From the *mīqāt*, pilgrims head to Makkah to perform '*Umrah al-Tamattu'* which consists of ***tawāf*** (going round the Ka'bah seven times), a two *raka'āt* ***ṣalāh after tawāf, sa'ī*** (running between the hills of Ṣafā' and Marwah) and ***taqṣīr*** (clipping hair or finger nails).

ACTIVITY



Can you recall any similarities between the acts of *Ḥajj* and the lives of *Nabī Ibrāhīm* (A) and his son *Nabī Ismā'īl* (A)?

HAJJ AL-TAMATTU'

The *wājib* acts in *Hajj al-Tamattu'* (the 2nd part of the annual *Hajj*) are:

1. Making the *niyyah* for *Hajj al-Tamattu'* and wearing the *iḥrām* in Makkah before heading out to 'Arafah.
2. *Wuqūf* (stopping) at '**Arafah**, an open plain outside Makkah, and staying there on the 9th of *Dhū'l-Hijjah* from *ẓuhr* until *maghrib*.
3. Spend the night at **Mash'ar**, a place between 'Arafah and Makkah (also called Muzdalifah).
4. Going to **Minā** after sunrise on the 10th of *Dhū'l-Hijjah* (*Īd al-Adḥā*). At Minā, a pilgrim has to do **Ramī al-Jamarāt** by throwing pebbles at the last *Jamarah* (The *Jamarāt* are three stone pillars or walls that symbolise *shayṭān*), perform the **sacrifice** of an animal and shave the head (**ḥalaq**) or clip some hair from the head (**taqṣīr**). Women are not allowed to shave their head, but for men it is highly recommended to do so.
5. Staying at Minā for the next two nights and throwing pebbles at all three *Jamarāt*.
6. Return to Makkah to perform *tawāf* of the *Ka'bah* seven times. This is called **Tawāf al-Hajj**.
7. Offering a **two rak'ah ṣalāh** after *tawāf* near *Maqām Ibrāhīm*.
8. Performing **Saī** between the hills **Ṣafā'** and **Marwah**.
9. Performing **Tawāf al-Nisā** (another *tawāf* around the *Ka'bah*).
10. Offering two *rak'āt ṣalāh* for *tawāf al-Nisā*' near *Maqām Ibrāhīm*.



This marks the end of *Hajj al-Tamattu'* and a pilgrim can then remove his or her *iḥrām*. It is important to note that in the state of *iḥrām*, there is a list of about 25 things which are *ḥarām* for the pilgrim. One should become familiarised with this list before going for *Hajj* or '*Umrah*. Before leaving Makkah, it is *mustaḥab* to do a final *tawāf* called **Tawāf al-Widā'** followed by 2 *rak'āt* near *Maqām Ibrāhīm*. Whenever a person goes for '*Umrah* or *Hajj*, it is also highly recommended to go to Madīnah and visit *Rasūl Allāh* (S) and members of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (A) buried in *Jannat al-Baqī* near the *Masjid al-Nabawī*.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is *Hijjat al-Islām*? What are the conditions for it to become *wājib*?
2. What are the *miqāt*? What three things must a pilgrim do at one of the *miqāt*?
3. What acts does '*Umrah al-Tamattu'* consist of?
4. What is *Ramī al-Jamarāt*?
5. What are the three places outside Makkah where the pilgrim has to go during *Hajj al-Tamattu'*?

DID YOU KNOW?



It is highly recommended to go to Makkah for '*Umrah* in other months besides *Hajj* in *Dhū'l-Hijjah*. When performing '*Umrah*, it is *wājib* to enter Makkah in *Iḥrām* and perform '*Umrah al-Tamattu'* which consists of *tawāf*, a two *rak'āt ṣalāh* after *tawāf*, *saī* and *taqṣīr*. *Hajj al-Tamattu'* is only done in *Dhū'l-Hijjah*, so for '*Umrah* pilgrims do not go to 'Arafah, Muzdalifah (Mash'ar) or Minā.

KEY POINTS



1. The annual pilgrimage to Makkah in the month of *Dhū'l-Hijjah* is called ***Hijjat al-Islām***.
2. It is *wājib* on all sane and *bāligh* Muslims to perform *Hajj* at least once in their lifetime if they have the *istitā'ah* (affordability, health and possibility of travelling to Makkah).
3. *Hijjat al-Islām* consist of two parts: '*Umrah al-Tamattu'* and *Hajj al-Tamattu'*.
4. Pilgrims must first go to one of the *miqāt* to put on the *iḥrām*, make *niyyah* for *Hajj* and recite the *talbiyyah*.

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.

SINNING AND ITS EFFECTS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Sins are divided into 2 categories: major and minor

2. Sinning causes hard heartedness

3. A person who sins openly is called a *fāsiq*

MY NOTES



MAJOR AND MINOR SINS

The '*ulamā*' (Islamic scholars) have divided sins into two categories: major and minor. Major sins (*dhunūb al-kabīrah*) are those sins for which punishment is explicitly promised in the Qur'ān, whereas minor sins (*dhunūb al-ṣaghīrah*) are those whose punishment is mentioned in *aḥādīth* only.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:



إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نَكْفِرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ مُدْخَلَ كَرِيمًا

If you avoid the major sins that you are forbidden, We will absolve you of your misdeeds, and admit you to a noble abode. [4:31]

Persistence in a minor sin is a major sin. We must not think of how 'small' our sin is but rather think of how great the Lord is against whom we are sinning.



وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا

لذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَغْفِرِ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

And those who, when they commit an indecency or wrong themselves, remember Allāh, and plead for forgiveness of their sins - and who forgives sins except Allāh? - and (they) do not persist in what they have committed while they know. [3:135]

Constant sinning causes hard-heartedness and takes one away from Allāh (SWT). Hard-heartedness is a state when a person may have a lot of knowledge but does not experience any love or feelings towards Allāh (SWT).



What are the symptoms of hard-heartedness?

- ☑ One no longer feels awe or love for Allāh (SWT)
- ☑ Cannot feel an emotional connection or cry when reciting *du'ā*
- ☑ There is no feeling of pleasure in faith (*īmān*)
- ☑ There is no feeling of 'sweetness' in worshipping Allāh (SWT)

The above symptoms are an indication of hard-heartedness. We should therefore always pray to Allāh (SWT) to 'soften' our hearts.

ACTIVITY



List a few examples of major and minor sins.

Imām 'Alī (A) has said, "Eyes do not dry, except due to the hardness of hearts and hearts do not harden, except due to the excessiveness of sins."



SINNING CAUSES HARD-HEARTEDNESS

Q: What are the causes of hard-heartedness?

Persistence in sin.

- χ Publicising one's sins to others or sinning openly and publicly.
- χ Being obsessed with physical pleasures and desires (food, sports, computer games, etc.).
- χ Spending too much time sleeping, eating, chatting and joking
- χ Not worshipping Allāh (SWT), or worshipping without attentiveness.
- χ Forming addictive habits (even if they are not *ḥarām*) e.g. coffee, smoking, games, internet, meaningless hobbies etc.
- χ Associating with sinful or irreligious friends.
- χ Not attending the Masjid and reciting the Qur'ān regularly.
- χ Being miserly with one's wealth and time and not volunteering unless there is some personal benefit in it.

Q: How do we overcome hard-heartedness?

- χ Pray *ṣalāt al-layl* often. This teaches us to struggle against the desire to sleep.
- χ Fast every Mondays and Thursdays. It is *mustahab* to fast on these days and it helps us overcome addiction to food, drink, smoking and also helps overcome lust.
- χ Practice *muḥāsabah* (self-accounting) by reviewing your actions at the end of every day. This will help you identify your weaknesses and areas that need improvement.
- χ Increase your knowledge of Islam. Read passages from books like *Nahj al-Balāghah* and *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah* for inspiration.
- χ Recite the Qur'ān everyday even if it is a few *āyāt* only. Read their translation and reflect on them.
- χ Watch your anger. When we first start resisting temptation and not giving in to desires, we get angry easily. If you feel angry, breathe deeply, lie down and recite *ṣalawāt* until it subsides.
- χ Help those in need. Feeding the poor, carrying out a humanitarian activity or giving charity with your own hands softens the heart.
- χ Plead with Allāh (SWT) for help in your struggle against the *nafs*.

IN SUMMARY



1. What is the difference between major and minor sins?
2. Why is it important to keep away even from minor sins?
3. Why are addictions harmful, even if they are not *ḥarām*?
4. What is hard-heartedness? What are its causes?
5. How do we overcome hard-heartedness?

DID YOU KNOW?



When people persist in sin, it makes them shameless. Thereafter, they sin openly and publicly without hiding their sinful habits.

A person who sins openly is called a *fāsiq*. Such a person cannot be trusted, and cannot be given a position of authority.

KEY POINTS



1. Sins are divided into two categories: major and minor. Major sins are those whose punishment has been clearly mentioned in the Qur'ān, whereas the punishment for minor sins is not directly mentioned in the Qur'ān. It is mentioned in *aḥādīth* of the *Ma'ṣūmīn* (A).
2. Persistence in minor sins is a major sin.
3. Constant sinning causes hard-heartedness, which takes one away from Allāh (SWT).

CONTROLLING DESIRES

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Why is it necessary for us to control our base desires?
2. How do we control our desires?

MY NOTES



WHY SHOULD WE CONTROL OUR VAIN DESIRES?

Although we enjoy free will, we need to exercise our free will in a responsible way by having some form of self control. We cannot simply follow our whims and desires and do whatever we want. We need to have self-control and self-discipline which leads to self-purification. If we purify our *nafs* (soul) we will no longer need to resist our temptations and control ourselves against lower desires and lusts, since a purified person desires nothing except what is good and moral for himself and others.

Desires in themselves are not bad provided they are channeled in healthy ways and controlled by one's intellect and faith (*īmān*). This could be the desire for food, the desire to become powerful etc. When desires control a person, he/she stops having a purposeful life. A person addicted to and driven by worldly desires and physical pleasures ends up destroying himself/herself.



In one *ḥadīth* we are told, **“Hellfire is ringed with desires while Paradise is surrounded with unpleasant things.”** This means that to get to Paradise, one must undergo many hardships. On the other hand, giving in to base desires and sinning, which may feel more enjoyable in this life, will lead one to hellfire.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur’ān:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ طَغَىٰ وَآثَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ
وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

As for him who was rebellious and preferred the life of this world, his refuge will indeed be hell. And as for him who is awed to stand before his Lord and forbids the soul from following desire, his refuge will indeed be paradise. [79: 37-41]

Imām ‘Alī (A) has said, **“Jihād against your desires is the price of Paradise.”**

ACTIVITY



In small groups, think of a few base desires that can lead you to sin, and identify ways in which you can overcome such desires.

People who do not struggle against their *nafs* to overcome their base desires remain shackled by their desires and are slaves to their addictions even if they think they love Allāh (SWT). A person only becomes free by becoming a true slave of Allāh (SWT) and surrendering to nothing but Allāh (SWT). **That is why Rasūl Allāh (S) said, “If you fight your vain desires, you will own (free) your selves.” He also said, “It is with struggle (mujāhadah) that evil habits (addictions) are overcome.”**

CONTROLLING VAIN DESIRES

Controlling our base desires is not an easy task, which is why *Rasūl Allāh* (S) referred to it as *Jihād al-Akbar* (the greater struggle). Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا

He will indeed be successful who purifies it (the soul) and he will indeed fail whoever pollutes and corrupts it. [91: 9-10]



One of the ways in which we can overcome our desires is to constantly remind ourselves of the temporary nature of this world and the permanence of the next world. It also helps to see ourselves as being on a journey and as we struggle with our soul, we get closer to Jannah.

Another way to do *jihād al-akbar* is to fast. Fasting is always difficult in the beginning because it forces us to overcome our bad habits (e.g. listening to music, watching indecent programs, overeating etc.). We often don't even know how addicted we are to these habits until we are forced to give them up. *Rasūl Allāh* (S) has also advised, "**Fight your selves with little food and drink, the angels will shade you and shayṭān will flee from you.**"



Imām 'Alī (A) has advised us to resist evil temptations by reciting the Qur'ān. Allāh (SWT) revealed the Qur'ān and sent *Rasūl Allāh* (S) and the *A'immah* (A) to guide us towards perfection. The verses of the Qur'ān and teachings of the *ma'sūmīn* (A) are a great inspiration for us, and help us make the right choices in life.

Another reason why humans give in to desire is because they forget their mortality. Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A) has said, "**The remembrance of death kills lusts.**"



IN SUMMARY



1. Why is it necessary to control one's base desires?
2. State any two desires that can lead to sin, and explain how one can control these desires.
3. What are some of the ways in which we can overcome our desires and temptation to sin?
4. What is *jihād al-akbar*?
5. How does reciting Qur'ān help us overcome our base desires?

DID YOU KNOW?



The word *zakāt* is derived from the same root as *tazkiyah* (purification) which means growth and purity. This is because giving *zakāt* purifies one's wealth and possessions, brings blessings and an increase in sustenance.

KEY POINTS



1. It is necessary to control our base desires and not give in to temptations so that we do not forget Allāh (SWT) and fall into sin.
2. In order to keep away from desires, it is important to purify one's soul through constant struggle against the temptation to sin. This is a difficult struggle and *Rasūl Allāh* (S) referred to it as *jihād al-akbar*.
3. Those who do not purify their soul remain shackled to their desires and cannot get closer to Allāh (SWT).

TAQWĀ

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. What is *taqwā*?
2. Why is it necessary to acquire *taqwā*?
3. What are the qualities of a person with *taqwā*?

MY NOTES



WHAT IS TAQWĀ?

The word **taqwā** comes from the Arabic word *wiqāyah* that means “to safeguard” or “to abstain from something in order to protect oneself from its harm”. *Taqwā* means to abstain from sin so as to safeguard oneself from eternal punishment. This is done by constantly being conscious of Allāh (SWT)’s presence (being God-conscious). In other words, *taqwā* is not to fear Allāh (SWT) but to fear disobeying Him. Allāh (SWT) does not want us to be afraid of Him because of His ability to punish us. He wants them to realize that sins cause us harm and lead us to Hellfire.

When we say “fear Allāh (SWT)”, we don’t mean “be scared of Him”. We mean be ashamed or sad at doing something that would displease Him. We will therefore define *taqwā* as “God-consciousness”.

One who practices *taqwā* is called a **muttaqī** and the plural is *muttaqūn* or *muttaqīn*.

Imām Ja’far al-Şādiq (A) defined *taqwā* as follows: **“It is to submit to the command of Allāh and not to go near the prohibited (ḥarām) acts.”**



‘One who is nourished with *taqwā* is nourished with the best of this world and the next.’
Rasūl Allāh (S)

‘One who plants the tree of *taqwā* will reap the fruits of guidance.’
Imām ‘Alī (A)

‘I advise you to be God-conscious, pious and to strive; and know that striving (to do good) without refraining from sins is useless.’
Imām al-Şādiq (A)

WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES OF A MUTTAQĪ?

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur’ān:



Taqwa is not to turn your faces to the east or the west; rather, taqwā is [personified by] those who have faith in Allāh and the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets, and who give their wealth, for the love of Him, to relatives, orphans, the

needy, the traveler and the beggar, and for [freeing] the captives, and maintain the prayer and give the zakāt, and those who fulfill their covenants, when they pledge themselves, and those who are patient in distress, and in times of struggle. They are the ones who are true [to their covenant], and it is they who are the muttaqūn. [2:177]



ACTIVITY



List the qualities of a *muttaqī* (a person with *taqwā*) mentioned in verse 2:177.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ACQUIRE TAQWĀ?

Taqwā is important for a person's spiritual growth and to attain closeness to Allāh (SWT). It is also necessary for any good work to be accepted by Allāh (SWT).

إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

Allāh accepts only from the muttaqūn [5:27]



A man called Sulaymān bin Khālid narrates, "I asked Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A) regarding the āyah:

يَوْمَ يَرُونَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ لَا بُشْرَى يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُجْرِمِينَ وَيَقُولُونَ حَجْرًا مَحْجُورًا
وَقَدِمْنَا إِلَى مَا عَمِلُوا مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَنْثُورًا



The day when they see the angels, there will be no good news for the guilty that day, and they (the angels) will say, 'Keep off [from paradise]!' Then We shall attend to the works they have done and turn them into scattered dust. [25:22-23]

Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) replied, "By Allāh, even if their good deeds are as white as Egyptian cotton they will be scattered like dust because they do not keep away from sin." Think of taqwā as a shield or a protective covering. It is what keeps us from committing sins. When we don't care about sinning or we are oblivious that Allāh (SWT) is watching us while we sin then we don't have our shield to protect us from the fire of Hell.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ



When those who have taqwā are touched by a visitation of shayṭān, they remember [Allāh] and, behold, they perceive. [7:201]

When shayṭān tempts those who have taqwā they are always on guard. Their God-consciousness (taqwā) helps them keep away from shayṭān and they seek refuge with Allāh (SWT) for His protection by reciting phrases like:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَ أَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ and أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

IN SUMMARY



1. What is the meaning of taqwā?
2. Why is it necessary to acquire taqwā?
3. What are the qualities of a muttaqī?
4. How does taqwā help us keep away from sins?
5. According to verse 49:13 of the Qur'ān, who is the most noble and honourable person?

DID YOU KNOW?



The sermons of the Ma'ṣūmīn (A) often start with the phrase "I advise you to adopt the taqwā" meaning "I advise you to first be conscious of Allāh and ensure you do everything wājib and keep away from everything ḥarām, before you start thinking of doing other noble deeds."

KEY POINTS



1. Taqwā means God-consciousness. It is to submit to the command of Allāh (SWT) and not to go near the prohibited (ḥarām) acts.
2. A person who has taqwā is called a muttaqī. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān that the most honourable and noble person is the one with the most taqwā.
3. It is very important to acquire taqwā because it brings us closer to Allāh (SWT) and keeps us away from sinning.

ZUHD

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

MY NOTES



WHAT IS ZUHD?

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

لا رَهْبَانِيَّةَ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ

There is no monasticism in Islam



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

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

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



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



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

ACTIVITY



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

Most people go through life driven only by desires, greed and fear. A lot of what we see as “progress” and “advances” by humans is only because of their pursuit for the world and their desire to invent new devices that will give them more

pleasure or material comfort. *Zuhd* does not stop us from progress, but keeps us grounded in the reality that we are here to prepare for the eternal life of the Hereafter, and should therefore divide our time accordingly between working for this life and preparing for the Hereafter.

HOW DO WE ACQUIRE ZUHD?

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

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

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

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

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

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

IN SUMMARY

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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

KEY POINTS



1. *Zuhd* is abstention from worldliness and materialism.
2. It is not abstention from the world, being part of society, earning a living and having a family.
3. One who practices *zuhd* is called a *zāhid* (male) or *zāhidah* (female).
4. People with *zuhd* are occupied in preparing for the Hereafter rather than wasting their time pursuing material pleasures of this world.

ĪMĀN AND YAQĪN

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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

ĪMĀN IS A HIGHER LEVEL OF FAITH THAN ISLĀM

Īmān is loosely defined as “faith”. Some people define it as “belief” but that is incorrect. Belief is what one believes with the mind, whereas faith is what one carries in the heart.

Most atheists do not believe in the ability to realise anything with the heart. They believe everything is a scientific, mental and rational process.

Muslims believe the mind is useful in making day-to-day decisions and determining good from bad or right from wrong, but true knowledge of Allāh (SWT) and understanding spiritual concepts deeply is only possible with the heart, because it is a matter of having faith and not just believing in words with the mind and thoughts.

A person with *īmān* is called a **mu'min** (female: *mu'minah*). *Īmān* is a higher level of faith than *islām* (submission). Any person who recites the *shahādah* is a Muslim, but a *mu'min* is one whose actions also show faith in Allāh (SWT) and submission to Him. A *mu'min* completely surrenders to Allāh (SWT).



“Īmān is to know with the heart, speak with the tongue and act with the limbs.”
Rasūl Allāh (S)

“Īmān is a tree. Its root is conviction (*yaqīn*). Its branches are *taqwā* (being God-conscious). Its light is modesty and its fruit is generosity.”
Imām 'Alī (A)

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُلْ لَمْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ

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



“Islām is to accept the truth without action. *Īmān* is to accept it with action.”
Imām al-Bāqir (A)

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

The faithful (*mu'minūn*) are only those who have attained faith in Allāh and His Messenger and then have never doubted, and who wage *jihād* with their possessions and their persons in the way of Allāh. It is they who are sincere.

[49:15]

ACTIVITY



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

Shakk (doubt) is a sign of weak *īmān*. A *mu'min* without *yaqīn* may sometimes doubt in Allāh (SWT) or His mercy, but as soon as he/she realises his/her mistake, he/she repents. On the other hand, hypocrites never recover from their doubt. The more signs they see, the more they doubt.

Nothing convinces them. Our level of *īmān*, *yaqīn* and *shakk* vary depending on how much importance we give to our souls and how hard we struggle against our egos. Everything we do physically affects us spiritually. What we eat, wear, say, do, watch, think, the friends we keep, our careers and livelihood, all affect our souls and therefore determine our level of *īmān*, *yaqīn* and *shakk*.



WHAT IS YAQĪN?

Above the level of *īmān* is the level of *yaqīn* (conviction). A *mu'qin* (or *mu'qinah*) is one who has total conviction and trust in Allāh (SWT). Nothing can shake his/her faith or trust in Allāh (SWT).

Even in the bleakest situations and greatest dangers, their faith (*īmān*) does not waver. In *sūrat Āl al-Imrān*, Allāh (SWT) describes people with *yaqīn* as follows:

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدِ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ



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

Allāh (SWT) also mentions the story of *Nabī Ibrāhīm* (A), one of the greatest prophets of Allāh (SWT), when he asked Allāh to show him how He would raise people back to life after they were dead. It is not that *Nabī Ibrāhīm* did not believe Allāh (SWT) could do this, but because he wanted to have *yaqīn* so that his heart would be at rest.

MY NOTES



ĪMĀN AND YAQĪN

DID YOU KNOW?



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

Nabī Ibrāhīm (A) said, "My Lord! Show me how You revive the dead". Allāh (SWT) said, "Do you not believe?" *Nabī* Ibrāhīm replied, "Yes indeed, but in order that my heart may be at rest." Allāh then told him, "Take four birds. Then cut them into pieces, and place a part of them on every mountain, then call them; they will come to you. Know that Allāh is all-Mighty and all-Wise." [2:260] 

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



KEY POINTS



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

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

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

IN SUMMARY



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

SHUKR AND QANĀ'AH

MY NOTES



وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ



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

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

WE MUST THANK ALLĀH (SWT) AT ALL TIMES

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

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

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

Imām Zayn al-Ābidīn (A) then explained that his true followers and Shī'ah are those who thank Allāh when:

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

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

Their example is like that of a boy who is at home on his



birthday and the doorbell rings. He opens the door and it is the postman delivering a shiny new bicycle for him. This makes him very happy.



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

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

DID YOU KNOW?



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

IN SUMMARY



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

KEY POINTS



1. Thanking Allāh (SWT) is called ***shukr*** in Arabic. We should thank Allāh for all His Blessings and bounties.
2. We can thank Allāh (SWT) by sincerely saying "*al-ḥamdu lillāh*" or "*shukran lillāh*".
3. When we receive a gift or favour from someone, we should thank Allāh (SWT) first before we thank the person who gave us the gift or favour.
4. ***Qanā'ah*** is contentment. It means being pleased and satisfied with whatever Allāh (SWT) has given us.

GENDER INTERACTION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. What is the Islamic perspective on gender interaction?
2. What sort of relationships should we develop with others?
3. What sort of relationships should we keep away from?
4. What is *zinā*? Why is it such a great sin?

MY NOTES



ZINĀ - A MAJOR SIN IN ISLAM

Islam views sins related to sexual behaviour as the result of a lack of chastity and modesty, or put simply, a lack of shame (*ḥayā*). In the Western world, chastity is defined only as sexual abstinence before marriage, but the word “chaste” and “chastity” originally meant “pure” or “virtuous”. A Muslim should be chaste in speech, dress, interaction with others, as well as - of course - in their sexual behaviour.

Islam puts restraints on the intermingling of the sexes to prevent sexual promiscuity. It is not permissible for a man and woman to be together in private if there is a possibility of sexual temptation. It is forbidden to look at someone of the opposite sex with desire, unless, of course, one is married to him/her.

In English, fornication refers to sexual relations between an unmarried man and woman, whereas adultery is when a married person has sexual relations with someone other than his/her spouse. In Islam, both are *ḥarām* and major sins and referred to by one word – *zinā*. The Qur’ān forbids it strictly:

وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا الزَّانِيَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا

Do not go near zinā, it is indeed an indecency and an evil way. ([17:32])



Rasūl Allāh (S) has warned us: “Zinā has three punishments in this world and three in the Hereafter. In this world, people who commit zinā lose their respect, their life is shortened and they become poor. In the Hereafter, they will have a harsh trial (hisāb), Allāh will be wrathful with them and they will live in Hell forever.”



Zinā starts with looking at a *non-maḥram* with lust. This is called *zinā* of the eyes. Then it is followed by thinking sinful thoughts (*zinā* of the mind), followed by speaking sinful things or going towards it. Allāh (SWT) tells us not to even go near *zinā*, let alone commit this sin. This means that we should keep away from even looking at or chatting to a *non-maḥram* with lust, as it is the first step towards *zinā*.

Some of the many reasons why Islam forbids *zinā* is because it discourages people from getting married, brings many social evils into society, breaks families, denies children their rightful inheritance, causes the spread of sexually-transmitted infections (STIs), promotes prostitution and generally drives human beings to become immoral and live like animals.

ACTIVITY



Is it appropriate for Muslims to have very close friends of the opposite gender?

HOW DO WE REMAIN CHASTE?

Remaining chaste in today's world is not easy because physical pleasure is greatly emphasised and sex is thrown at us everywhere – in newspapers, TV, computer games, the internet, advertising, magazines and so on. We live in a Godless society where religion has no value to people and no one sees a problem with having a girlfriend/boyfriend, dressing indecently, drinking alcohol, listening to music, swearing, partying and just making physical pleasure the goal of life.



We must remember that the desire for a companion and spouse is not evil or wrong. It is natural and Islam has provided marriage as the means to acquiring it. One of the ways of combating the indecency all around us is to be married. Another way to be chaste is to observe *hijāb* especially when interacting with the opposite gender. *Hijāb* for men is to lower their gaze, to dress modestly, to speak with God-consciousness and not flirt with the opposite gender. *Hijāb* for women is also to dress decently with loose clothing as per the *sharī'ah*, not interact excessively with the opposite gender, whether in person or online.

We can also maintain chastity by avoiding places where we know we will be tempted to commit *ḥarām* acts. However, being chaste does not mean isolating oneself from society. We can get involved in society whilst ensuring we remain chaste by keeping our thoughts clean and acquiring *taqwā*. Chastity starts with being pure in thought and heart. We should always be aware that Allāh (SWT) is watching us and always ask ourselves this question: ***If Imām al-Mahdī (A) was with me here today, would he be proud to call me his Shī'ah? What would my Imām think of me if he saw me doing this right now?***

Sometimes people are chaste in their speech and dress, but behave indecently when chatting with friends on the phone or computer. This is because it is easier to “hide” behind the keyboard, webcam, text messages etc. However, we must never forget that Allāh (SWT) watches everything we do.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is *ḥayā*? How does a person with *ḥayā* behave?
2. What is *zinā*? Why is it such a great sin?
3. What are the effects of *zinā* on a family?
4. What are the effects of *zinā* on society?
5. What can we do to keep away from sexual evils?

DID YOU KNOW?



Imām 'Alī (A) has said, ***“Beware of sinning when you are alone because at that time, the Judge is also the only Witness!”***



KEY POINTS



1. Islam puts great emphasis on social harmony. To maintain this harmony, it is necessary for everyone to remain chaste. Having *ḥayā* (shame) helps one keep away from sexual evils.
2. *Zinā* refers to adultery or fornication. This is when a person commits a sexual act with someone he/she is not married to.
3. Allāh (SWT) tells us not to even go near *zinā*, meaning that we should not do anything that may lead to *zinā*. This includes unnecessary chatting with someone non-*maḥram* on the computer or phone.

MARRIAGE IN ISLAM

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. An introduction to marriage in Islam
2. The importance and benefits of marriage
3. How to select a good spouse

MY NOTES



MARRIAGE IS THE SUNNAH OF RASŪL ALLĀH (S)

Islam teaches us to channel all our natural desires, in a positive way and within the bounds of the *sharī'ah*. Islam is against the total suppression of the sexual urge and condemns celibacy and monasticism. Every Muslim should therefore marry early to channel sexual energy in a positive way. In fact, marriage becomes *wājib* if by not getting married a person is likely to engage in unlawful acts.

Rasūl Allāh (S) has said:

النِّكَاحُ مِنْ سُنَّتِي فَمَنْ رَغِبَ عَنْ سُنَّتِي فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي



Marriage is my sunnah (practice), one who leaves this sunnah is not one of my followers.

Just as some foods are permissible and others forbidden in Islam, some sexual activities are permissible and others forbidden. The only legitimate way of satisfying one's sexual desires is with one's spouse. All other forms of sexual activity including adultery, homosexuality, and masturbation are forbidden and are major sins.

Muslims should also not flirt when interacting with non-*maḥram* people. It is forbidden to try to seduce someone, in whatever way (in person, via internet chat or email). Muslim men and women should be models of chastity and dignity. This does not mean, however, that Muslims should be confined to their homes and not interact in society. They should study, work and participate in all social and political activities, but without infringing any of the laws of the *sharī'ah*. In an Islamic marriage, a solemn contract is made between a man and a woman to become life-partners and to fulfil all the responsibilities and enjoy those rights that the *sharī'ah* has laid down for them. An '*aqd of nikāḥ*' (marriage contract) is recited to formalise the marriage.

The *mahr* (also called *ṣadāq*) is the *wājib* wedding gift that the bridegroom gives the bride. It is a token of friendship, a mark of honour for the woman, and security for her. It becomes the property of the wife and she can use it as she pleases. Anything that has value can be given as *mahr*. There is no specified amount but it should not be so high as to be beyond the financial status of the husband. When you feel you are ready for marriage, discuss with your parents or an older relative you trust (who can speak to your parents on your behalf) about your need to get married sooner.

This is especially true if your parents expect you to first complete university, find a job, etc. Parents usually want their children to show a sense of responsibility before they get married. Learn to be responsible and mature so that you can take on the responsibility of your own family sooner.

ACTIVITY



Make a list of things that you feel are important to you when selecting a spouse.

WHAT QUALITIES SHOULD WE LOOK FOR IN A SPOUSE?

The most important quality that one should look for in a spouse is *taqwā* (God-consciousness). One who has *taqwā* will never violate the limits of religion and therefore will not be unjust to his or her spouse. If a woman receives a proposal from a man who is not wealthy but is God-conscious, prays the daily *ṣalāh*, comes from a respectable family and is not a reputed sinner, the proposal should not be rejected only because of his financial situation.

Some *aḥādīth* relate that the cause of corruption and mischief in society is when women reject the proposal of decent men or demand high sums of dowry (*mahr*).

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

وَأَنْكِحُوا الْأَيَامَىٰ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَائِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ يَكُونُوا
فُقَرَاءَ يُغْنِيهِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

Marry off those who are single among you and the upright... If they are poor, Allāh will enrich them out of His grace, and Allāh is all-bounteous, all-knowing.

[24:32]

What sustains a marriage in the long-term is not physical looks or wealth, but piety, kindness of heart, patience, love and hard work. What often causes a marriage to break is selfishness, laziness, intolerance, impatience, sinful habits and disregard for Allāh (SWT) and religion, even when there is beauty and wealth.

A pious and religious spouse who is intelligent and not lazy will be a positive influence on one's progeny; and the children from such a marriage will be productive and useful members of their society. As a rule of thumb, one should seek a life partner who is as close to his or her self in religious values and social status. There is also no harm in seeking someone who is closer in financial status, education, culture and even physical stature as such closeness and compatibility only helps the new marital relationship adjust and thrive more easily.

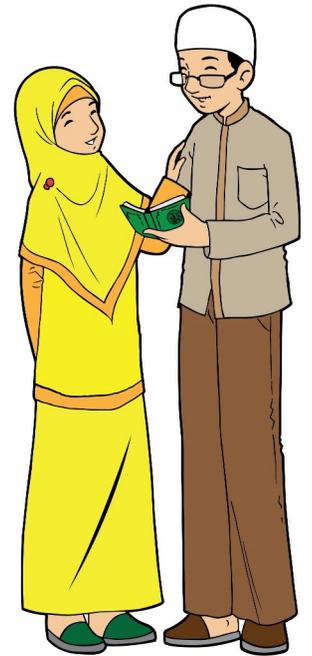
IN SUMMARY

1. Why does Islam place a lot of emphasis on marriage?
2. What has *Rasūl Allāh* (S) said about marriage?
3. Why should one not reject the marriage proposal of a good person purely based on his financial status?
4. What qualities should we look for when selecting a spouse?

DID YOU KNOW?



Divorce is permissible but highly discouraged and disliked in Islam. One should not take the decision of selecting a spouse lightly as an incompatible choice of life partner often leads to divorce.



KEY POINTS



1. Islam highly encourages and recommends marriage because it is the *ḥalāl* way to fulfil one's sexual desires and start a family.
2. *Rasūl Allāh* (S) has said that marriage is from his *sunnah*, and whoever leaves this *sunnah* is not one of his followers.
3. In an Islamic marriage, an 'aqd of *nikāḥ* is recited to formalise the marriage, and the husband has to give a gift called "*mahr*" to his bride.

ISLAM AND CULTURE

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. It is necessary to understand the difference between religion and culture.
2. There is nothing wrong in following one's culture provided it does not contradict with the *sharī'ah*.

MY NOTES



SEPARATING RELIGION FROM CULTURE

Islam is a universal religion and can be practiced by people of all cultures and background. However, Muslims must ensure that their culture does not contradict the laws of the *sharī'ah*. At the same time, care should be taken not to portray cultural beliefs are part of Islam. This is why it is necessary to distinguish culture from religion.

When a person adds, changes or removes something in Islam, he/she creates an innovation (*bid'ah*) in religion, which is *ḥarām*. This is usually done by people who think they love Islam, but are ignorant, so they introduce practices from their own culture into Islam.

Bid'ah is to make *ḥalāl* what Allāh has made *ḥarām*, or to consider *makrūh* what is not made *makrūh* by Allāh, or to make *wājib* what Allāh did not make *wājib* or to make *mustaḥab* what Allāh did not make *mustaḥab*.

However, not every new act is considered *bid'ah*. According to 'Allāmah al-Majlisī, *bid'ah* only applies to religion and not general matters. For example, if people wear clothes that were not worn during the time of *Rasūl Allāh* (S) or eat foods that *Rasūl Allāh* (S) did not eat, that is not *bid'ah*. *Bid'ah* is to create or innovate in worship and Islam things that have no proof in the Qur'ān or reliable *aḥādīth* (of a *ma'sūm*) and then to implement them as if they are a part of religion.

Even though *bid'ah* is to add or remove from matters that are *wājib* and *ḥarām*, it is also not desirable to add or reduce from what is *mustaḥab* or *makrūh* because we are adding to or removing from what was taught by a *ma'sūm*. For example, adding phrases or sentences to supplications or *a'māl* which were not originally there, is not desirable because we are changing it from the way it was originally taught by a *ma'sūm*.

Similarly, there may be rituals introduced by our own communities that are not in the *sharī'ah*. These may not be *bid'ah* or *ḥarām*, but we need to ensure that people know the origins of these practices. The Shī'ah faith is not intolerant and does not rush to brand everything as *bid'ah*, provided that people don't forget with time and assume these things to be a part of religion.



ACTIVITY



Can you think of any cultural practices that we often perform as part of our religious acts?

THE NEED TO EDUCATE PEOPLE ABOUT RELIGION & CULTURE

To ensure a community is not misguided and does not introduce its own emotional and cultural practises into religion, those who are learned in the community must educate others of cultural practices that exist in the name of Islam, so that people are able to understand the difference and give up practices that are against the *sharī'ah*.

Such cultural practices may be part of *'azādārī* of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A), in praise of the *A'immah* (A), a part of marriage ceremonies and so on.

Therefore, those who are not well grounded in matters of the *sharī'ah* should not take on the role of spiritually guiding a community.

Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A) has said, ***“Anyone who calls people to himself whilst amongst him/her there is one who is more knowledgeable than him/her, is a misguided innovator.”*** 

Secondly, every Muslim is responsible to try and stop *bid'ah* in the community, just as *al-amr bī'l-ma'rūf* and *al-naḥy 'an al-munkar* are *wājib* on all who know better. *Rasūl Allāh* (S) has said: ***“When you see one who innovates (in religion), make his lie known to him.”*** 

He also said, ***“One who smiles at the face of an innovator has helped in the destruction of his religion.”*** 

Knowledge helps us identify what is real Islam from what is an innovation and therefore a person of knowledge is obliged to speak out against *bid'ah* even when everyone else keeps quiet.

Rasūl Allāh (S) said, ***“When innovations become manifest in my ummah, then let the learned (‘ālim) reveal his knowledge. Whoever (is learned and) does not do so, then on him is the curse of Allāh.”*** 

IN SUMMARY



1. What is the meaning of *bid'ah*?
2. What types of innovation are not allowed in Islam?
3. Why is it necessary to differentiate between religion and culture?
4. What sort of cultural practices are not permissible in Islam?
5. Whose responsibility is it to educate people about innovations that may have crept into religious practices in a community?
6. Can you think of any cultural practices that are commonly mistaken to be religious practices?

DID YOU KNOW?



Rasūl Allāh (S) has said: ***“The zakāt of knowledge to is to teach one who does not know.”***

KEY POINTS



1. It is necessary to differentiate between religious and cultural practices, because creating new religious practices is not permissible in Islam.
2. Innovating new religious practices and changing or getting rid of existing religious practices is called *bid'ah* and is *ḥarām*.
3. Only *bid'ah* in religion is *ḥarām*. Innovation in general matters such the clothes we wear and the food we eat is not *ḥarām*.
4. When we see a cultural practice being conducted as if it is part of religion, we must educate the people doing it, so that it does not become a part of religion over time.

'AṢABĪYYAH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. What is 'aṣabīyyah?
2. What is the Islamic perspective on racism and discrimination?

MY NOTES



'AṢABĪYYAH IS PREJUDICE

'Aṣabīyyah is an inner quality that is manifested in favouring those with whom one has some kind of relation, whether it is religion, race, language or culture. It is a moral vice that is aimed at discriminating against those who are not like us and promoting those who are like us.

Racism and racial discrimination are examples of 'aṣabīyyah. Racism is defined as the belief that all members of each race possess characteristics, abilities or qualities specific to that race, especially so as to distinguish it as inferior or superior to other races.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ
لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۗ



O mankind! Indeed We created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes so that you may identify yourselves with one another. Indeed the noblest of you in the sight of Allāh is the most God-conscious among you.

[49:13]

In this verse, Allāh (SWT) is telling us that no group of people is superior to another purely based on nationality or race. The best person is the one who has the most *taqwā*. Therefore, there is no room for racism in Islam.

Allāh (SWT) also says that He created us into nations and tribes, meaning that the existence of various races and tribes is actually as a result of Allāh (SWT)'s wisdom and plan. Those who look down on others indirectly deny this wisdom and plan of Allāh (SWT).

Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A) has said: *"Whoever possesses 'aṣabīyyah (prejudice in any of its forms such as tribalism, racism, nationalism) even to the extent of a mustard seed, Allāh will raise him/her on the Day of Judgement with the people of Jahiliyyah."*

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا
مِنْهُمْ ...



O you who have faith! Let not one group of people ridicule another: it may be that they are better than they are...

وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ ۗ

And do not defame one another, nor insult one another by calling nicknames...

[49:11]

ACTIVITY



What are some of the reasons why racism is still prevalent today? What can we do to overcome racism in our community and society?

DEALING WITH RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

Faith or attitudes about people based on external differences are known as racism. Racism mostly attacks people of a particular skin colour or ethnic group. Racism leads to discrimination and sometimes pugnacity. When racism results in hate crimes in a community, it tears the community apart. Some forms of racism are obvious; others are hidden.

We can help overcome racism by speaking up when we hear someone being racist. For example, if a person makes a racist joke, we should not remain silent. We should tell them not to make such comments.

We should also be a role model to others. By showing them that we don't tolerate hatred, we encourage them to do the same. Treating others with respect sends the message that no one should be treated unfairly or differently because of their race or ethnicity.

We should recognise stereotypes and consciously learn to refrain from them.

We should also respect differences in all populations. This does not mean that we should not be proud of our faith and heritage. Rather, we should not feel superior to others or disrespect them for being different from us.

If someone is rude to us, we should not reciprocate with rudeness. Sometimes people may discriminate or appear racist due to their past experiences or a lack of knowledge and understanding about others. If we respond with kindness to those who are rude to us, we will be able to win them over. On the other hand, if we are rude, we will make the situation worse and re-enforce their stereotypes about us.

There are numerous examples of incidents where the *A'imma* (A) responded with kindness towards those who insulted them and were rude to them.



DID YOU KNOW?



One of *Rasūl Allāh* (S)'s great achievements was to unite the Arab tribes throughout Arabia into a single nation. These tribes were frequently at war with each other and *'aşabīyyah* was high on their agenda. They would put their tribesmen above all else, even when they were wrong. *Rasūl Allāh* (S) managed to bring them all under the banner of Islam into one united *ummah*.

KEY POINTS



1. *'Aşabīyyah* is favouring those with whom one has some kind of relationship, be it religion, race, language or culture.
2. Racism, discrimination, nationalism and prejudice are examples of *'aşabīyyah*.
3. There is no room for racism or discrimination in Islam. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān that the best person is the one who is the most God-conscious.

IN SUMMARY



1. What is *'aşabīyyah*?
2. Why is racism wrong? How can we overcome it in our society?
3. What are some of the negative effects of racism and discrimination on individuals and societies?
4. How should we respond when someone is racist towards us?

JIHĀD IN ISLAM

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. What is *jihād*?
2. What are the two types of *jihād*?
3. What are the common misconceptions about jihad in Islam?
4. How are verses of the Qur'ān misquoted to portray Islam as a violent religion?

MY NOTES



ISLAM IS A RELIGION OF PEACE

Islam has been criticized in the media for promoting violence, and attempts are constantly made to convince the public that Islam supports terrorism and that “*jihād*” is all about killing non-Muslims in the name of Allāh (SWT).

Islam is a religion of peace. Its name comes from *silm* which means two things: *submitting to God* and *peace*. Even when dealing with enemies, Islam always showed its preference for peace over war. The Qur'ān commands the Muslims when dealing with their enemies:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ
شَنَاةُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ



O you who believe, be maintainers of justice (and bearers of) witness for (the sake of) Allāh. Let not hatred of a people incite you to act unjustly; be just - this is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allāh, surely Allāh is aware of what you do. [5:8]

The very first battle in Islam took place 2 years after *hijrah* when the Muslims were able to defend themselves against an attack from the Quraysh. Even though they were outnumbered and ill-equipped, the Muslims defeated the Quraysh and took 70 prisoners of war. The norm among the Arabs at the time was to either kill the prisoners or make them slaves, but *Rasūl Allāh* (S) instructed the Muslims to treat them humanely. They were brought back safely to Madīnah and given decent lodging in the houses of the Muslims.



The way *Rasūl Allāh* (S) dealt with the prisoners was revolutionary. Those who were poor were released for free whereas those who were rich had to pay a specified ransom. The most interesting case was of those prisoners who were literate – *Rasūl Allāh* (S) made a deal with them that they could go free if they could teach ten Muslims how to read and write.

Even during battle, Muslims were given strict rules to abide by:

- * Do not kill anyone who is not fighting you in battle, especially the elderly, women and children.
- * Do not cut down a tree unnecessarily, especially a fruit-bearing tree.

ACTIVITY



Read verse 4:74 How can this verse be misquoted to show that Islam encourages war? What reason is given in the next verse 4:75 to justify the command for battle?

- * Do not destroy any crops or burn down any palm-trees.
- * Do not poison any water.
- * Do not mutilate the bodies of your enemy.
- * If the person facing you in battle drops his weapon and turns to flee, do not run after him to kill him.
- * Do not harm or kill anyone who surrenders while fighting.



Islam therefore holds human life as sacred, regardless of whether it is the life of a Muslim or non-Muslim. To kill an innocent person is a great crime in Islam, regardless of whether the individual is a Muslim or not.

Whosoever kills a person without any reason, it is as though he has killed all the people. Whosoever saves a single life, it is as though he has saved all the people. [5:32]



WHAT IS JIHĀD?

Jihād literally means striving, struggling or working hard. A *mujtahid*, for example, is one who “struggles” to find the correct laws in Islam and so he practices *ijtihad* (a word that shares the same Arabic root verb as *jihad*). *Jihad* is a religious duty for Muslims and it is of two kinds: minor *jihad* (*al-jihad al-aṣghar*) and major *jihad* (*al-jihad al-akbar*).

Minor *jihad* is a legitimate armed struggle that is fought in defense. It does not mean violence, taking the law into one’s hands or a war of aggression fought only to occupy the land of others or take over their resources. When the Muslims came under attack from the Quraysh, Allāh (SWT) revealed the verse:

Permission is granted to those who are fighting because they have been oppressed...those who have been expelled from their homes without any just cause... [22:39-40]



Fight in the way of God those who are fighting against you; and do not exceed (the limits). Verily Allāh does not love those who exceed (the limits). [2:190]



It is clear from these verses that the permission to fight is only to defend oneself. There is no talk of initiating aggression at all. Even in a defensive struggle, Allāh (SWT) warns the Muslims not to exceed the limits.

MY NOTES



JIHĀD IN ISLAM

DID YOU KNOW?



The term holy war was used to refer to the Crusades when Christians massacred Muslims between the 11th and 13th centuries in the name of religion. Today, *jihād* is wrongly translated as holy war perpetrated by Muslims to kill the non-Muslims.

Qur'ānic verses are often misquoted and read out of context to show that Islam encourages violence and commands Muslims to kill non-Muslims. To read something "out of context" means to purposely read only certain parts of it, because it suits a person's own agenda. Furthermore, the historical background behind the revelation of the verses should also be taken into account to properly understand what the verses are referring to. The message of the Qur'ān should be studied in its entirety, because some verses of the Qur'ān explain other verses. If all of this is not done, then we end up understanding verses "out of context".

For example, the verse "*kill them wherever you find them...*" [2:191] is often quoted to show violence in the Qur'ān. When we read the same verse in context (by reading the complete verse), it's clear that it is only allowing Muslims to defend themselves against the aggression of the Quraysh who expelled them from their homes. It does not say that Muslims should go around killing any non-Muslim that they find!

It is also important to note that just because the term *jihād* is misused by the media, Muslims should not be ashamed to say that fighting in the way of Allāh (SWT) can be necessary and valid at times. We should not abandon this noble concept of our faith nor be ashamed or apologetic about it. Just as others have the right to defend themselves, Muslims too have the right of defense.

KEY POINTS



1. Islam is a religion of peace. It does not condone violence at any time. Even in a state of war, Muslims are reminded to act justly and there are strict guidelines for battle.

2. The term *jihād* means struggle. This can be an inner struggle against one's *nafs* (*al-jihād al-akbar*) or fighting to defend the rights of those who are oppressed and under attack (*al-jihād al-aṣghar*).

3. People often misquote verses of the Qur'ān to portray Islam as a violent religion. It is important for us to learn these verses so that we can defend our religion.



IN SUMMARY



1. What does the word Islam mean?
2. What is the meaning of the word *jihād*?
3. What are the two types of *jihād*?
4. How did *Rasūl Allāh* (S) treat prisoners of war from the battle of Badr?
5. Give an example of a verse that is quoted out of context to show that Islam is a violent religion, and explain the true meaning of that verse.

ISLAM AND THE WEST

DID YOU KNOW?



Allāh sent *Rasūl Allāh* (S) to Arabia, a land that was one of the most difficult places to live in at the time. The people followed such evil practices such as burying their daughters alive and leading pagan lifestyles that the period they lived in was called the period of *Jāhiliyyah*. Yet *Rasūl Allāh* (S) was able to influence these people through his excellent character, and established the greatest religion in some of the worst conditions.

reputation, manners and dealings with others must be impeccable and with the highest morals.

SOME NEGATIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WESTERN WORLD

All values in general are now disappearing from society, and morals are being replaced with ever more complicated laws. The sense of wrong and right is being eroded to a position where everything is right. Religion is considered old fashioned with no part to play in a modern 21st Century world.

Drugs, binge drinking, casual relationships is the definition of youth culture today and unless a person indulges in some or all of these activities, they are considered to be boring, and have not 'lived' or experienced the real world yet.

Homosexuality is promoted as an equally valid alternative to a traditional family structure, and generations are being taught and even encouraged to consider this as a way of life.

The internet has made it easier for people to watch pornography and people are constantly on their smart phones and tablets, with no time for meaningful conversations, visiting the sick and the elderly and engaging in worship without any distractions.

Having understood the nature of the world we live in today, it is necessary that we arm ourselves with the necessary knowledge, values and faith to protect us from immorality so that we can remain steadfast on the right path.

KEY POINTS



1. The West used to ascribe to Christian values in the past, but these are slowly fading away as society becomes increasingly God-less and materialistic.

2. What was considered immoral (such as abortion, homosexuality, alcoholism, gambling etc.) is now considered normal and acceptable.

3. It is therefore necessary for us as Muslims to equip ourselves to ensure our future survival and ability to practice our faith freely.

Q: How can we equip ourselves to maintain our faith whilst living in the West?

It is important to acknowledge that not everything in the Western world is bad. There are many good things that we can learn from and promote. As Muslims living in non-Muslim lands, we have a responsibility to follow the laws of the land that we are living in, and not to break them nor help someone else to break them.

IN SUMMARY



1. What are some of the positive characteristics of the West?
2. What are some of the negative characteristics of life in the West?
3. How is religion generally viewed in the West today?
4. What does being a British Muslim mean to you? How does your religion help you become a good British citizen?
5. How can we positively engage in Western society to influence and shape a better future for ourselves and our community?
6. How can we equip ourselves to maintain our faith in the West?

ḤUQŪQ AL-NĀS

DID YOU KNOW?



Imām Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (A) used to carry sacks full of dates and bread on his shoulders and distribute it to the poor. Many poor people of Madīnah used to receive food daily but they did not know its source. When the Imām passed away and the people did not receive their meals, they realised that it was the Imām who was bringing food for them in the darkness of the night.

OUR NEIGHBOURS’ RIGHTS OVER US

Imām Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (A) explains the rights of neighbours in his *du‘ā* for his neighbours and friends. In this *du‘ā*, which can be found in *al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjadiyyah*, he prays to Allāh (SWT) to give him the ability to:

- * Be gentle to his neighbours
- * Remedy their shortcomings
- * Visit them when they are sick
- * Guide them
- * Give them good advice when they ask for it
- * Help them when they are away on a journey and when they return
- * Hide their faults and secrets
- * Sharing with them
- * Helping them when they are in need even before they come to ask for it

The Imām also makes special mention of the rights of neighbours in his famous work titled *Risālat al-Ḥuqūq*.

Rasūl Allāh (S) has said that neighbours are of three kinds:

1. one who has got one right upon you
2. one who has got two rights upon you
3. one who has got three rights upon you

The neighbour having three rights upon you is the one who is a Muslim and a relative. The neighbour having two rights is the one who is either a Muslim or relative. The neighbour having one right is the one who is neither a Muslim nor a relative.

KEY POINTS



1. *Ḥuqūq al-nās* means people’s rights over us. Just as we have rights over others, they too have rights over us.

2. It is very important for us to fulfil the rights of others because Allāh (SWT) does not forgive those who wrong others until their victims have forgiven them.

3. *Imām Zayn al-‘Ābidīn* (A) has written a detailed treatise explaining the rights of various groups over us. This treatise is called *Risālat al-Ḥuqūq*.

Rasūl Allāh (S) also said:



“That person is not from me who sleeps contentedly while his neighbour sleeps hungry.”



IN SUMMARY



1. What are *ḥuqūq al-nās*?
2. Why is it very important for us to fulfil the rights of others?
3. What is *Risālat al-Ḥuqūq*?
4. According to *Rasūl Allāh* (S), what are the 3 types of neighbours?
5. What are some of the rights people have over us?
6. What are the rights of our neighbours?

THE MUSLIM UMMAH

MY NOTES



Allāh (SWT) reminds the Muslims in the Qur'an:

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۗ وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا ...

Hold fast, all together, to Allāh's rope, and do not be divided. And remember Allāh's blessing upon you when you were enemies, then He brought your hearts together, so you became brothers with His blessing... [3:103]

Rasūl Allāh (S) used the example of the human body to describe the Muslim *ummah*. Even if one small part of our body is not healthy or in pain, the entire body will suffer. Similarly, if one group of Muslims is in trouble, all Muslims will feel the effects.

Therefore, when we see or hear of a group of Muslims suffering somewhere in the world, we should feel their pain, pray for them and more importantly, do whatever we can to help them.

WHY IS THE MUSLIM UMMAH DISUNITED?

One of the main reasons for disunity amongst the Muslims is as a result of differences in thought and belief. It is not uncommon to hear one group of Muslims cursing another group or calling them disbelievers.

This attitude is wrong and cannot achieve peace and unity amongst the Muslims.



At a time when Islam is under attack on many fronts, it is essential that Muslims remain united so that they can help, support and defend one another.

We see so many injustices carried out against Muslims all over the world, especially in the Middle East which is the birth place of Islam and occupied predominantly by Muslims.

Yet, as Muslims continue to suffer, many of them at the hands of their fellow Muslims, the *ummah* is occupied with infighting and mistrust of one another.

There is nothing wrong in explaining to other Muslims that their beliefs are incorrect. However, there is a way to do this effectively without insulting and cursing one another. Islam does not allow us to insult other Muslims just because their beliefs are different from ours. Allāh tells us in the Qur'an:

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ۗ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ
أَحْسَنُ ۗ

Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good advice and dispute with them in a manner that is best... [16:125]

If we follow this advice and are polite to each other, we will remain united and a more effective *ummah*.

Another reason for disunity amongst Muslims is discrimination based on nationality and race. Allāh (SWT) tells us in the Qur'an that He has created us into different races and cultures so that we get to know each other and benefit from our diversity. We shouldn't think therefore that any one race is better than another, such as Arabs being better than non-Arabs. The best in the eyes of Allāh (SWT) is the one who is the most God-conscious.

DID YOU KNOW?



Allāh (SWT) has made seven rights *wājib* upon a believer towards another believer: To respect him, love him in his heart, share with him in his property, consider backbiting against him unlawful, visit him in his illness, escort his coffin, and say nothing but good about him after his death.

IN SUMMARY



1. What does the word *ummah* mean?
2. Why has Allāh (SWT) created us into different tribes and nations?
3. Why is it important for Muslims to remain united?
4. How can we promote unity amongst Muslims?
5. Can a united global *ummah* become a reality in our age?

KEY POINTS



1. The word *ummah* refers to the community of Muslims. *Rasūl Allāh* (S) regularly used this word to refer to his community.
2. In the Qur'an, Allāh (SWT) tells the believers that they all belong to one united community, so they should remain united.
3. We can promote unity amongst Muslims by respecting each other and being helpful to one another.

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:

Qīṣaṣ al-Anbiyā'

This part looks at the stories of the prophets before *Rasūl Allāh* (S). *Qīṣaṣ* 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 LŪṬ (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



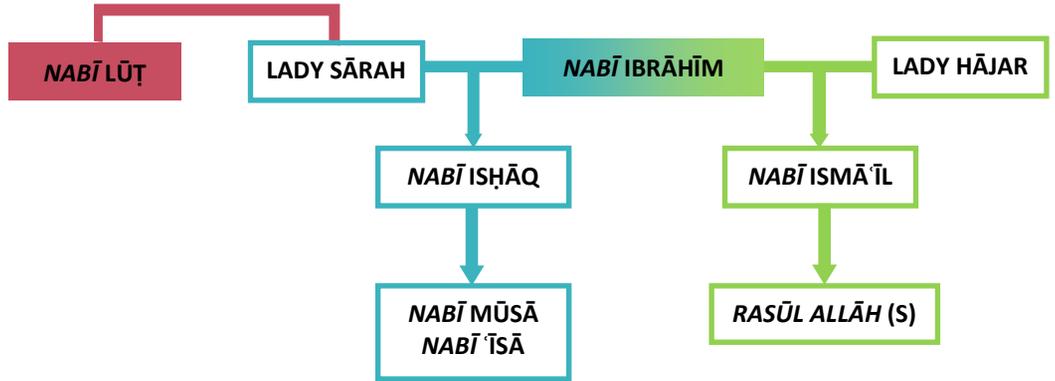
1. Who was *Nabī Lūṭ* (A)?
2. What challenges did he face in his community?
3. How did Allāh (SWT) punish the people of Sodom?

MY NOTES



NABĪ LŪṬ (A) AND THE PEOPLE OF SODOM

Nabī Lūṭ (A) was the cousin of *Nabī Ibrāhīm* (A). Their mothers were sisters and *Nabī Lūṭ*'s sister, Lady *Sārah*, was *Nabī Ibrāhīm*'s first wife. The two Prophets migrated together to Palestine, and *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) settled in the district of Sodom in Jordan.



The people of Sodom were unsociable and treated strangers disgracefully. Anybody who passed through their town would be robbed of all their possessions. They loved singing, merrymaking and gambling. However, by far the worst vice in their community was homosexuality, which was openly practised.

Allāh (SWT) sent *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) to guide the people of Sodom. He preached to them the message of Allāh (SWT) and begged them to give up their evil ways. However, after 30 years of preaching, only a handful of people had accepted his teachings. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

وَلَوْطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُسْرِفُونَ وَمَا كَانَ

جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِنْ قَرْيَتِكُمْ إِنَّهُمْ أَنْاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

And Lūṭ, when he said to his people, 'What! Do you commit an indecency none in the world ever committed before you?! Indeed you come to men with (sexual) desire instead of women! You are indeed transgressing beyond bounds. But the only answer of his people was that they said, 'Expel them from your town! They are indeed men who want to be clean and pure!' [7:80-82]

ACTIVITY



In small groups, read verses 11: 69-83 and write down the main events that Allāh (SWT) has mentioned in these verses.

While *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) increased his efforts to guide the people, they wanted to banish him and his followers from the town. When he warned them to fear Allāh (SWT) for their indecent behaviour they laughed and said that they did not care. Finally, Allāh (SWT)'s punishment descended on them.



ALLĀH (SWT) PUNISHES THE PEOPLE OF SODOM

Allāh (SWT) sent angels in human form, including Jibrā'īl, to the house of *Nabī Lūṭ* (A). On their way to the town of Sodom, they passed by the house of *Nabī Ibrāhīm* (A) to give him the good news that he and Lady *Sārah* were going to have a son called *Ishāq*, who would be blessed with a son called *Ya'qūb*.

The angels then went to *Nabī Lūṭ*'s house. When he saw that his guests were handsome youths, *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) became worried because he knew very well the habits of his people.

Nabī Lūṭ's wife was an evil lady. She informed the people that there were handsome guests at her house, so they started coming to the house of *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) with evil intentions in their mind. *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) said to them, **“O my people, here are my daughters. It is better for you to marry them rather than desire my male guests. Is there not a right-minded man among you?”**

They replied, **“You certainly know that we have no interest in your daughters, and indeed you know what we want.”**

Jibrā'īl then asked *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) to leave town that night with his family and the virtuous believers, but to leave his evil wife behind. As soon as *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) and his followers were safely out of town, rocks began falling from the sky on the town and the whole place was turned upside down. This is mentioned in various places in the Qur'ān. For example:

فَأَنجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا امْرَأَتَهُ كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا
فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ



So We saved him (Lūṭ) and his family, except his wife; she was one of those who remained behind. Then We poured down upon them a rain (of stones). So look how was the end of the guilty! [7:83-84]

Every prophet and messenger of Allāh (SWT) has condemned and cursed those who practiced homosexuality. The *A'imma* (A) have said that those who commit this indecency will be raised with the people of *Sodom* on the Day of Judgement.

IN SUMMARY

1. How was *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) related to *Nabī Ibrāhīm* (A)?
2. What indecent acts did *Nabī Lūṭ*'s people commit?
3. What did the people of Sodom say to *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) when he warned them of Allāh (SWT)'s punishment?
4. Why was *Nabī Lūṭ*'s wife also punished by Allāh (SWT)?
5. How did Allāh (SWT) punish the people of Sodom?

DID YOU KNOW?



The word “sodomy” (which has the same meaning as homosexuality) comes from the word “Sodom”, a district in Jordan where the people of *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) lived.

Allāh (SWT) refers to them as the people “whose town was turned upside down”. [9:70, 53:53, 69:9]



KEY POINTS



1. *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) was *Nabī Ibrāhīm* (A)'s cousin. Their mothers were sisters.
2. Allāh (SWT) sent *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) to the people of Sodom, who committed many evil deeds including robbing people who passed through their town and engaging in homosexuality.
3. *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) spent 30 years trying to guide them but they wouldn't listen to him.
4. In the end, Allāh (SWT) sent angels to tell *Nabī Lūṭ* (A) to leave the town with his family and followers. He then punished the evil ones by showering stones on them and turning their town upside down.

QIŞAŞ AL-ANBIYĀ' : NABĪ MŪSĀ (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. The story of *Nabī Mūsā (A)* and *Khiḍr (A)* in the Qur'ān
2. The lessons we can learn from this story

MY NOTES



NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) MEETS KHIḌR (A)

Nabī Mūsā (A) was one of the most learned man of his time, but even his wisdom did not comprehend everything. Allāh (SWT) told him to go in search of a man named *Khiḍr (A)* who was more knowledgeable and *Nabī Mūsā (A)* could learn from him.

Nabī Mūsā (A) had to travel a very long distance to meet *Khiḍr (A)*. Allāh (A) told him he would find *Khiḍr (A)* at a place where the two seas met. In order to identify the exact location, Allāh (SWT) told *Nabī Mūsā (A)* to take some fishes with him which, at some point, would miraculously find their way back into the sea (even though they were not alive). This would be the place



where they would find *Khiḍr (A)*. *Nabī Mūsā (A)* met *Khiḍr (A)* at this location and wanted to accompany him on his travels to learn from him, so he said to him, *"May I follow you so that you may teach me some of the knowledge you have been taught?"*

Khiḍr (A) said it would be difficult for *Nabī Mūsā (A)* because he would not be able to understand his actions. He said to *Nabī Mūsā (A)*, ***"Indeed you can't have patience with me! And how can you have patience about that which is beyond your understanding?"***

However, *Nabī Mūsā (A)* insisted and said, ***"You will find me, God willing, to be patient, and I will not disobey you in any matter."***

Khiḍr (A) agreed to take *Nabī Mūsā (A)* along with him but on one condition. He said, ***"If you follow me, do not question me concerning anything until I myself explain it to you"***. *Nabī Mūsā (A)* agreed to this, so they went on their journey together.

When they reached the sea, they had to get on a boat to continue travelling. When they boarded the boat, *Khiḍr (A)* made a hole in it. *Nabī Mūsā (A)* was surprised at this action and said, ***"Did you make a hole in it to drown its people? You have certainly done a dreadful thing!"***

Khiḍr (A) replied, ***"Did I not say, indeed you cannot have patience with me?"***

Nabī Mūsā (A) remembered the condition he had agreed to and said, ***"Do not take me to task for my forgetting, and do not be hard upon me."***

ACTIVITY



In small groups, draw a storyboard showing *Khiḍr (A)*'s actions

So they continued travelling. When they met a boy, Khiḍr (A) killed him. Nabī Mūsā (A) said, ***“Did you slay an innocent soul, without him having killed anyone? You have certainly done an evil thing!”***

Khiḍr (A) replied, ***“Did I not tell you, indeed you cannot have patience with me?”***

Nabī Mūsā (A) said, ***“If I question you about anything after this, do not keep me in your company. You have already got sufficient excuse on my part.”***

So they continued on their journey. When they came to a town, they asked its people for food, but the people refused to show them any hospitality. They then came across a wall which was crumbling so Khiḍr (A) repaired it. Nabī Mūsā (A) was surprised that Khiḍr (A) did a favour for people who did not even offer them food, and said, ***“Had you wished, you could have taken payment for it.”***

Khiḍr (A) replied, ***“This is where you and I shall part. I will inform you about the interpretation of that over which you could not maintain patience.”***

KHIDR (A) EXPLAINS THE WISDOM BEHIND HIS ACTIONS

Khiḍr (A) explained to Nabī Mūsā (A) that the king was taking away all the good boats by force for himself. Making a hole in the boat would make it defective, so the king would not take it away from its owners who could then repair the hole and use the boat again.

Khiḍr (A) said to Nabī Mūsā (A), *As for the boat, it belonged to some poor people who work on the sea. I wanted to make it defective, for behind them was a king seizing every boat by force.*

As for the boy, his parents were faithful people, and We feared he would overwhelm them with rebellion and disbelief. So We desired that their Lord should give them in exchange a child better than him in respect of purity and closer in mercy.

As for the wall, it belonged to two boy orphans in the city. Under it there was a treasure belonging to them. Their father had been a righteous man. So your Lord desired that they should come of age and take out their treasure — as a mercy from your Lord. I did not do that out of my own accord. This is the interpretation of that over which you could not maintain patience.’ [18: 79-82]



MY NOTES



QIŞAŞ AL-ANBIYĀ' : NABĪ MŪSĀ (A)

DID YOU KNOW?



Khiḍr (A) is still alive until today. He has not been mentioned by name in the Qur'ān. Allāh (SWT) refers to him as **“one of Our servants whom We had granted a mercy from Ourselves, and taught him knowledge from Our own.”** [18:65]



KEY POINTS



1. *Nabī Mūsā (A)* was one of the greatest Prophets of Allāh (SWT) but didn't know everything. Allāh (SWT) told him to meet and learn from *Khiḍr (A)* who possessed special knowledge from Allāh (SWT).

2. *Khiḍr (A)* was reluctant to allow *Nabī Mūsā (A)* to accompany him because he would not be able to understand his actions. When *Nabī Mūsā (A)* insisted, he agreed on the condition that *Nabī Mūsā (A)* should not question his actions until he himself explained them.

3. *Nabī Mūsā (A)* could not control his urge to question *Khiḍr (A)* every time he saw him do something, so *Khiḍr (A)* could not allow him to continue travelling with him. However, before they parted, *Khiḍr (A)* explained to him the wisdom behind his actions.

Notice the use of different pronouns by *Khiḍr (A)* for the three actions (underlined above). As for making a hole in the boat, *Khiḍr (A)* said that he did it. This is because it was a negative action, even though it was done with the right intention, and *Khiḍr (A)* did not want to attribute it to Allāh (SWT).

With regards to killing the boy, he used the pronoun We, indicating that although he performed the action, it is only with the permission of Allāh (SWT) that a life can be taken. Life and death are decreed by Allāh (SWT).

As for repairing the wall, this was a good and positive act, so *Khiḍr (A)* attributed it to Allāh (SWT), saying that it was an action that your Lord desired. This teaches us that whenever we perform a good act, especially if it is a favour to others, we should remember that we are only the means through whom Allāh (SWT) helps others. If we understand this, we would never be proud of our good actions, and would not expect any praise or reward from people.

IN SUMMARY



1. Why did Allāh (SWT) tell *Nabī Mūsā (A)* to go and meet *Khiḍr (A)*?
2. Who was *Khiḍr (A)*?
3. Why was *Khiḍr (A)* reluctant to allow *Nabī Mūsā (A)* to accompany him on his travels? On what condition did he agree to take *Nabī Mūsā (A)*?
4. What three things did *Khiḍr (A)* do which *Nabī Mūsā (A)* could not understand? What was the explanation behind these actions?

RASŪL ALLĀH (S) - PART 1

DID YOU KNOW?



The city of Madīnah was known as Yathrib before the Hijrah. It came to be known as Madīnat al-Nabī (city of the Prophet) after Rasūl Allāh (S) migrated there from Makkah.

Abū Dharr met Rasūl Allāh (S) in Makkah and asked him about Islam. After listening to Rasūl Allāh (S), he was convinced that Islam was the right religion and became a Muslim. He then went back to his people in Madīnah to spread Rasūl Allāh's message among his people.

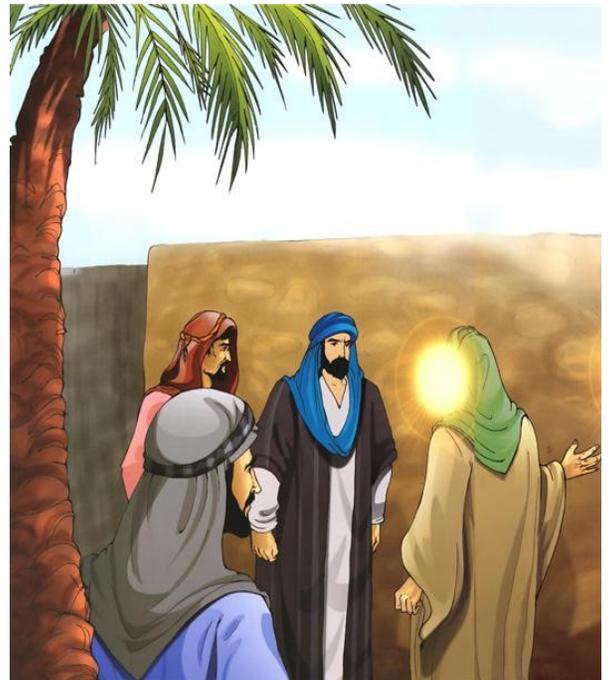
One of Abū Dharr's great qualities was that he never lied. He was always truthful. One day, Rasūl Allāh (S) said to his companions, 'Who is one out of you who will meet me on the Day of Judgement in the same condition in which I leave him in the world?' On hearing this everyone kept quiet except Abū Dharr who said that it was he. Rasūl Allāh (S) replied, 'You are right. O my companions! Remember what I am telling you. There is no man between the earth and the sky more truthful than Abū Dharr'.

MIQDĀD AL-ASWAD

Miqdād was another great companion who was much loved by Rasūl Allāh (S). He was from the *al-Kindī* tribe. He was a staunch supporter of Rasūl Allāh (S) and had complete faith in Islam. He was very well versed in the Holy Qur'ān and taught it to others.

Rasūl Allāh (S) once said to his companions, 'Allāh (SWT) has ordered me to love four people whom He loves as well. They are 'Alī, Abū Dharr, Salmān and Miqdād.'

All these companions mentioned by Rasūl Allāh (S) remained loyal to the *Ahl al-Bayt* even after his *wafāt*. Miqdād was deeply saddened and spoke out openly about the injustices carried out by the people against the *Ahl al-Bayt* of Rasūl Allāh (S).



KEY POINTS



1. The *ṣaḥābah* (companions) of Rasūl Allāh (S) are Muslims who saw Rasūl Allāh (S) and heard his words directly from him.

2. Those who did not see Rasūl Allāh (S) but saw the companions and heard the *aḥādīth* of Rasūl Allāh (S) directly from them are known as the *tābi'ūn*.

3. Not all the companions of Rasūl Allāh (S) were the same. Some were very loyal to him whereas others disobeyed him or were hypocrites.

IN SUMMARY



1. What is the definition of a *ṣaḥābah* of Rasūl Allāh (S)?
2. Who are the *tābi'ūn*?
3. Were all of Rasūl Allāh's companions good people?
4. Who were some of the great companions of Rasūl Allāh (S)?
5. Why was Rasūl Allāh's companion Salmān given the title of *al-Fārsī*? What title did Rasūl Allāh (S) give him?

RASŪL ALLĀH (S) - PART 2

DID YOU KNOW?



Islam does not also allow a Muslim to justify killing an innocent person in any way. For example, some Muslim extremists will kidnap and kill innocent civilians and say, "this is in revenge for what the non-Muslim armies or governments did to our fellow Muslims in such-and-such a land." But this is not Islam. You cannot kill an innocent non-Muslim just because some other non-Muslims killed an innocent Muslim.

HOW DID THE SPREAD OF ISLAM OCCUR?

Islam spread around the world mostly through the efforts of individual scholars and pious ascetics who travelled to different regions of the world to share the message of Islam.

Muslims ruled India for about 800 years, but there never was a Muslim majority in that country. The numbers themselves show that force was not part of the spread of Islam in that region. Similarly, no Muslim army ever landed in Malaysia or Indonesia. Yet even today, Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world. Islam spread there only through Muslim traders and missionaries.

The Ottoman empire was a multi-religious empire ruled by a Turkish caliph. It dominated vast regions of Christian land in Eastern Europe but never forced its citizens to convert to Islam. They were given the right to live according to their own religious traditions. Greece, was colonized by Muslim Turks for about 500 years, but there is not even a sizeable minority of Muslims among the Greeks today and there never was even in the past. In fact, according to some historians, when Greece became independent, many Greeks migrated into the Ottoman Empire because they found them to be better rulers than the Greek.

When Syria was conquered by Muslims, Christians had the choice of migrating to other Christian territories but chose to remain in Syria. This shows there was no compulsion on them to accept Islam. In fact, the conversion of countries like Syria, Egypt and Persia to Islam was gradual and spread over more than a century.

Muslims ruled over Spain for some several hundred years. If the sword had been used to spread Islam, the people of Spain would be Muslims.

When the Mongols dismantled the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate and occupied the Muslim lands, they held the swords over the heads of the Muslims. Their original aim had been to destroy Islam but they ended up converting to Islam themselves.

Today Islam faces an enemy in form of the biased media. Yet amazingly, in spite of all these hurdles, Islam is still the fastest growing religion in the world. Muslims also have a strong presence in Europe. This speaks volumes about how this religion has spread and is spreading even today.

KEY POINTS



1) The spread of Islam from Arabia to the rest of the world has always taken place through peaceful means.

2) The reason why some people believe that Islam was spread by the sword (through force and compulsion) is because some tyrant Muslim caliphs waged wars to conquer lands. This was done out of greed, to expand their empires and not to spread Islam.

IN SUMMARY



1. How did Islam spread during the early years in Makkah?
2. Why did the early Muslims fight so many battles if Islam is a peaceful religion?
3. What is the difference between the spread of Islam and the expansion of the Muslim empire?
4. Why did some caliphs not encourage people to convert to Islam?

THE A'IMMAH - IMĀM 'ALĪ (A) (PART 1)

MY NOTES



new governors. Abū Mūsā conceded and wrote back from Kūfah, stating that the Kūfans were at the service of the new Caliph, but Mu'āwiyah did not respond.

Meanwhile, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr came to Imām 'Alī (A) asking to be appointed as governors. Imām 'Alī (A) refused to appoint them, so they met with 'Ā'ishah and plotted to arouse the people against Imām 'Alī (A). Thus, Imām 'Alī (A) was faced with a double threat to the security of his government - from 'Ā'ishah, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr in Basra and from Mu'āwiyah in Damascus (Syria).

'Ā'ishah, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr raised an army of 30,000 and marched to fight Imām 'Alī (A). On the way, they stopped at a place called Ḥaw'ab where 'Ā'ishah heard dogs barking all night. She asked what the place was called and when she was told 'Ḥaw'ab', she began screaming and crying because she had heard *Rasūl Allāh (S)* curse one of his wives once and say, 'Woe to the one to whom the dogs of Ḥaw'ab bark!'

THE BATTLE OF JAMĀL

Imām 'Alī (A) met 'Ā'ishah's army of 30,000 with 20,000 of his own men who were mostly from Kūfah. This was the first time that Muslims would fight one another. It was therefore the first civil war in Islam. Before the battle Imām 'Alī (A) tried very hard to reason with 'Ā'ishah, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr so as to prevent bloodshed but to no avail. Imām 'Alī (A) reminded al-Zubayr that *Rasūl Allāh (S)* had prophesized to him that one day he would fight against Imām 'Alī (A) but he would be wrong. This shook al-Zubayr to the core. He left the battlefield when the war started and fled to another town where someone recognised him and killed him. Ṭalḥah was also shot with an arrow.

'Ā'ishah was mounted on a red camel called al-'Askar. She kept encouraging the men to fight. The Basra army rallied around her camel and hence the battle came to be known as the Battle of al-*Jamāl* (the Camel). With Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr no more, the entire battle centred around 'Ā'ishah's camel. Thousands of men died senselessly as she urged them to fight.

Finally, Imām 'Alī (A) ordered his commander Mālīk al-Ashtar to 'kill the red camel'. As soon as the camel fell, the battle came to an end. 'Ā'ishah fell from the camel and Imām 'Alī (A) ensured she was carried away to safety and later returned to Madīnah.



In total, 10,000 men on the side of 'Ā'ishah and 5,000 men on the side of Imām 'Alī (A) were martyred in the Battle of *Jamāl* due to 'Ā'ishah's hatred and jealousy for Imām 'Alī (A) and Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr's greed for power.

After the Battle of *Jamāl*, Imām 'Alī (A) decided to transfer the headquarters of the Islamic government from Madīnah to Kūfah. This was because the expansion of the Muslim empire made it difficult to manage it from Madīnah. Imām 'Alī (A) also felt the need to be in Kūfah because he knew his next challenge would be Mu'āwiyah in Syria; and Kūfah (being in Iraq) was closer to Damascus (Syria).

The people of Kūfah welcomed Imām 'Alī (A) and offered him to stay at the governor's palace but he refused and instead chose a humble house for his residence.



IN SUMMARY

1. Why did Imām 'Alī (A) first refuse to become caliph?
2. Who were Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr?
3. Why did they plot with 'Ā'ishah to fight Imām 'Alī (A)?
4. Why did 'Ā'ishah cry when she heard the dogs barking at Ḥaw'ab?
5. What were the reasons for Imām 'Alī (A) moving his headquarters to Kūfah?

DID YOU KNOW?



The *Sunnī* Muslims refer to the first four caliphs Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and Imām 'Alī as “*Rightly Guided*” (*al-Khulafā' al-rāshidūn*).

KEY POINTS



1. After the death of 'Uthmān, the caliphate was offered to Imām 'Alī (A). Imām refused it at first because he knew that a lot of people would oppose him. However, when the people of Madīnah insisted, he accepted.
2. There were two main groups opposed to Imām 'Alī (A). One of them was 'Ā'ishah, who had joined up with Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr to fight Imām 'Alī (A). The other was Mu'āwiyah.
3. 'Ā'ishah fought Imām in the Battle of *Jamāl* (camel) but lost.

THE A'IMMAH - IMĀM 'ALĪ (A) (PART 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Why did the battle of Şiffin take place?
2. What was the result of this battle?
3. Who were the Khawārij?

MY NOTES



THE BATTLE OF ŞİFFĪN

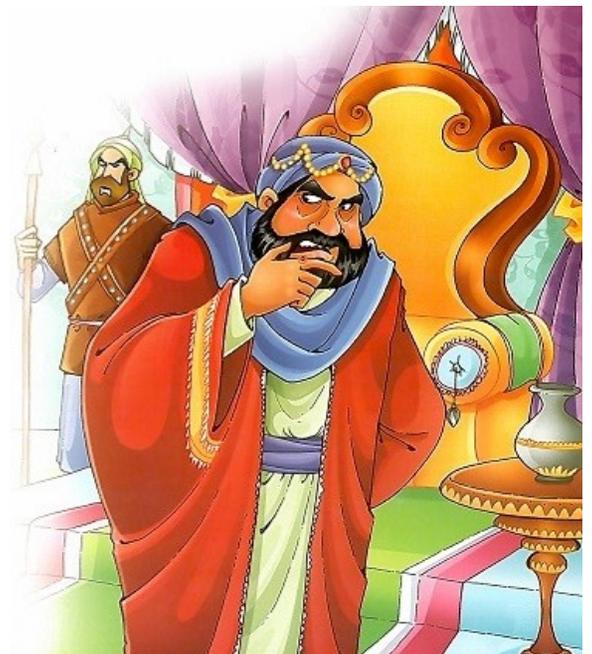
Mu'āwiyah insisted fighting Imām 'Alī (A) rather than surrender to him as the new caliph of the Muslims. During the caliphates of 'Umar and 'Uthmān, Mu'āwiyah had been governor of Syria and he did not want to give up his power. He had also brainwashed the Syrians against Imām 'Alī (A) to such an extent that they were ready to fight the Imām.

Before engaging Mu'āwiyah in battle, Imām 'Alī (A) tried to settle matters peacefully but Mu'āwiyah would not budge. Imām 'Alī (A) then marched towards Syria to face Mu'āwiyah at a place called Şiffin. Mu'āwiyah had an army of 120,000 men. Imām 'Alī (A) had 90,000 men with him.

At first, Mu'āwiyah stopped Imām 'Alī's men from gaining access to water from the river. Mu'āwiyah used the argument that 'Uthmān was denied water in his palace and therefore his murderers should also be kept thirsty! This was very ironic because it was Imām 'Alī (A) who had sent water for 'Uthmān when he was under siege. Imām 'Alī's men fought the Syrians and took over the river. Thereafter Imām ordered that the Syrians be given free access to water.

Imām 'Alī (A) tried to minimise the loss of lives by challenging Mu'āwiyah to single combat but Mu'āwiyah was too scared to come forward. *Rasūl Allāh's* companion 'Ammār bin Yāsir was martyred in Şiffin. *Rasūl Allāh* (S) had predicted 'Ammār would be killed by a rebellious group. When 'Ammār fell, the Syrians were shaken in faith because they realised they were the rebels that *Rasūl Allāh* (S) had prophesized. To overcome their fears, Mu'āwiyah's adviser 'Amr ibn al-Āş told the men that Imām 'Alī (A) had brought 'Ammār to battle and therefore he had killed him! When Imām 'Alī (A) heard this, he remarked, *'Subḥān Allāh! Then it means Rasūl Allāh (S) killed Ḥamzah when he brought him to Uḥud!'*

At one point the battle was so fierce that the men fought each other even during the nights. Slowly but steadily, Imām 'Alī's men were winning the battle. At one point 'Amr ibn al-Āş ventured into the battlefield to show off. Imām 'Alī (A) came forward too but with his face covered. As 'Amr got closer, Imām 'Alī (A) uncovered his face. 'Amr was terrified. He tried fleeing but fell off his horse. As Imām 'Alī (A) was about to strike him, he removed all his clothes. Imām 'Alī (A) turned away and 'Amr fled. Mu'āwiyah forever teased 'Amr as 'the man who used his private parts



ACTIVITY



Do a role play in class on the battle of Şiffin

to save his life' while 'Amr mocked Mu'āwiyah as a coward who dared not accept the challenge of Imām 'Alī (A) to single combat.

When Mu'āwiyah realised he was about to lose the battle, 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ came up with the plan to raise pages of the Qur'ān on spears and shout, *'let the Qur'ān decide between us!'* The plot worked. Suddenly the weak-minded people on Imām 'Alī's side were confused. They came to Imām asking him to stop the battle. Imām 'Alī (A) warned them this was a trick but the hypocrites led by al-Ash'ath ibn al-Qays would not listen. They threatened Imām 'Alī (A) and insisted he declare a truce.

THE TRUCE WITH MU'ĀWIYAH AND THE RISE OF THE KHĀRIJITES

After agreeing to a truce, both sides had to choose someone to represent them. Mu'āwiyah chose 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ to represent him. Imām 'Alī (A) wanted Mālik al-Ashtar or 'Abd Allāh ibn al-'Abbās to represent his army but the hypocrites insisted they wanted Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī. Abū Mūsā was a coward and confused man who pretended to be very pious but had refused to take any side in the battle. He was once the governor of Kūfah and now spent all his time at home in worship.

During the arbitration, 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ managed to trick Abū Mūsā into confessing that 'Uthmān was killed wrongfully and that Mu'āwiyah was his rightful heir. The damage was done. The Syrians rejoiced and pledged allegiance to Mu'āwiyah as their caliph and the people of Ḥijāz (Madīnah and Makkah) as well as Iraq (Kūfah and Basra) turned away in anger.

With no conclusion to the Battle of Ṣiffīn, Mu'āwiyah had lost 45,000 men and 25,000 men were martyred on the side of Imām 'Alī (A).

After the truce, a group of men separated themselves from the rest and began murmuring and complaining about the truce and why they had accepted the compromise. They acknowledged that they were wrong to have forced Imām 'Alī (A) to stop the battle but now wanted Imām to also acknowledge he was wrong to have accepted their threats and they wanted him to 'repent' for his 'sin'! They were even more angry with how 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ had



DID YOU KNOW?



In 38 AH, Imām 'Alī (A) sent his most loyal commander Mālik al-Ashtar as governor to Egypt but Mu'āwiyah arranged to have him poisoned. Mālik's death was a great blow to Imām 'Alī (A). Mu'āwiyah rejoiced saying, *"Alī had two arms. I cut one off in Ṣiffīn (meaning 'Ammār bin Yāsir) and now I've cut the other."*

MY NOTES



THE A'IMMAH - IMĀM 'ALĪ (A) (PART 2)

KEY POINTS



1. Mu'āwiyah refused to accept Imām 'Alī (A) as caliph. He brought an army of Syrians to Şiffin to fight Imām 'Alī (A).
2. Imām's army was winning the battle at Şiffin when 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ came up with the idea of putting the Qur'an on spears to stop the battle.
3. Seeing this, the weak-minded people in Imām's army refused to continue fighting and insisted on arbitration. Mu'āwiyah chose 'Amr b. al-Āṣ to represent him whereas the people in Imām 'Alī's army went against his advice and chose Abū Mūsā al-al-Ash'arī.
4. 'Amr tricked Abū Mūsā into accepting Mu'āwiyah as the rightful successor of 'Uthmān. This made the people in Imām's army furious. Some of them left the army and formed a group called *Khawārij*. They fought Imām at the Battle of Nahrwān but lost. They then plotted to kill Imām whilst he was in prayer.

tricked Abū Mūsā al-al-Ash'arī and wanted Imām to 'repent' for allowing these two men to decide the fate of the Muslims.

Imām obviously did not accept their ridiculous requests and reminded them that it was not only they who stopped the battle when they were about to win but it was also they who insisted on having Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī as their arbitrator. The group therefore broke away claiming that their ruler was neither Mu'āwiyah nor Imām 'Alī (A), and that *'no one has authority except Allāh (SWT) (lā ḥukma illā lillāh)*. This became their motto and their battle-cry.

This fanatic breakaway group came to be known as the Khārijites (Arabic: Khawārij) which means, *"the outcasts"*. They fought Imām 'Alī (A) at the battle of Nahrwān and lost. However, some of them escaped and plotted to kill Imām 'Alī (A). Ibn Muljim, the person who killed Imām 'Alī (A) by striking him with a sword whilst Imām was in *sajdah*, was a Khawārij.



IN SUMMARY



1. What were the reasons behind the battle of Şiffin?
2. Who was 'Amr bin al-Āṣ? How did he save himself from being killed by Imām 'Alī (A)? What plan did he use to save Mu'āwiyah's army from losing the battle?
3. Who were the Khawārij? Why did they fight Imām 'Alī (A)?
4. Who killed Imām 'Alī (A)?

TĀRĪKH IN THE QUR'ĀN

WHEN WAS THE QUR'ĀN COMPILED?

We know that the Qur'ān is complete and nothing is missing in it. Allāh (SWT) Himself has guaranteed the preservation of the Qur'ān:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

Indeed We have sent down the Reminder (Qur'ān), and indeed We will preserve it.
[15:9]

There is a common misconception amongst Muslims that the Shī'ah have a different Qur'ān or that the Shī'ah believe the present Qur'ān is incomplete or that Imām 'Alī (A) had written a more complete Qur'ān. These are not true. What the Shī'ah believe is that Imām 'Alī (A) had written some notes on the margins of his copy of the Qur'ān to explain the verses according to the teachings of *Rasūl Allāh* (S). These notes were not a part of the Qur'ān's original revelation. Some people are of the opinion that the Qur'ān was not compiled into the form of a book until the time of the third caliph, 'Uthmān. However, this is not true. The Qur'ān was compiled in full before the *wafāt* of *Rasūl Allāh* (S). *Rasūl Allāh* (S) himself said during his Farewell *hajj* sermon that Jibrā'il used to recite the entire Qur'ān to him every month of *Ramaḍān* but that year he had recited it twice, therefore he felt he was going to leave the world that year.

There are also *aḥādīth* from *Rasūl Allāh* (S) that indicate that the Qur'ān was in the form of a book before he passed away. For example, the *ḥadīth al-thaqalayn* states: **"I am leaving behind two weighty things: the Book of Allāh and my family..."** Obviously *Rasūl Allāh* (S) would not say this if there was no Qur'ān accessible to people. During the time of the caliph 'Uthmān, there were concerns that the original Qur'ān would be altered as there were different 'versions' of the Qur'ān. 'Uthmān therefore appointed a team to compile an official version of the Qur'ān, and ordered all other copies to be destroyed. These other copies were the same Qur'ān, but they had explanatory notes and details of when and where certain verses were revealed. In this official version, the arrangement of the *suwar* was altered and the order of the *suwar* today is not the same as the order in which Imām 'Alī (A) had arranged his copy of the Qur'ān based on the instructions of *Rasūl Allāh* (S).

IN SUMMARY

1. When was the Qur'ān written down?
2. What are the names of some of the scribes of the Qur'ān?
3. How can we be sure that the Qur'ān we have today is complete and has not been changed?
4. How was Imām 'Alī's copy of the Qur'ān different from other copies?
5. What did *Rasūl Allāh* (S) say in *ḥadīth al-Thaqalayn*?

DID YOU KNOW?



The original Qur'ān was written without any vowels or marks (i.e. without dots or signs for *fathah*, *kasrah*, *ḍammah*, *shaddah* and *sukūn*).

KEY POINTS



1. The Qur'ān was written down from the beginning of revelation. *Rasūl Allāh* (S) used to dictate verses that were revealed to him to the scribes of Qur'ān, who would then write it down.
2. The order of verses in each chapter was also done by *Rasūl Allāh* (S) as the verses were not revealed in order. They were revealed based on the relevance of the occasion.
3. During the time of 'Uthmān, there were concerns that the Qur'ān would be altered. He therefore appointed a team to compile an official version of the Qur'ān, and all other copies were destroyed.

THE BEGINNING OF 'UMAYYAD RULE

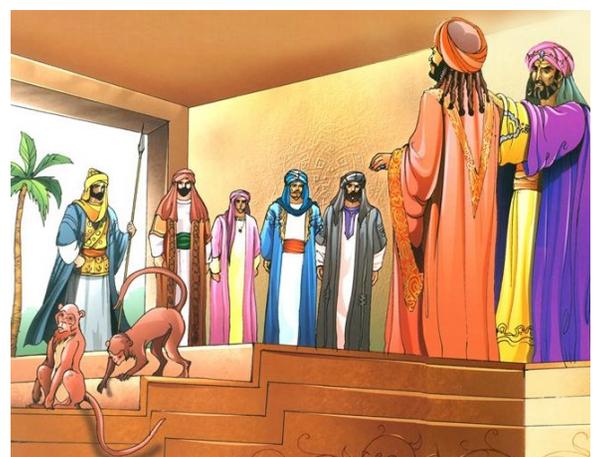
After the passing away of *Rasūl Allāh* (S), Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān became caliphs one after the other. After 'Uthmān was murdered, the people asked Imām 'Alī (A) to lead them. The Sunnī Muslims refer to the first four caliphs as 'The Rightly-Guided Caliphs' (*al-Khulafā' al-Rāshidūn*) because the caliphs after them were not regarded to be 'rightly-guided'. Even though strictly speaking the first 'Umayyad ruler was the 3rd Caliph 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (he gave his family members positions of power that led to the creation of the 'Umayyad dynasty), historians generally mark the start of the 'Umayyad dynasty after the martyrdom of Imām 'Alī (A). The first three 'Umayyads caliphs after Imām 'Alī (A) were descendants of Abū Sufyān and the rest were from a different line of descent of the *Banū 'Umayyah* called Marwānids (descendants of Marwān).

Mu'āwiyah ibn Abū Sufyān was the son of Abū Sufyān, the arch-enemy of *Rasūl Allāh* (S), and his mother was Hind, the woman who chewed the liver of Ḥamzah the uncle of *Rasūl Allāh* (S) after he was martyred at Uḥud.

Mu'āwiyah was appointed governor of Syria by the 2nd Caliph 'Umar and when Imām 'Alī (A) became Caliph, he immediately asked Mu'āwiyah to step down as governor but he refused. Instead, he fought Imām 'Alī (A) at the Battle of Ṣiffin. When Imām 'Alī (A) was martyred in 40 AH, Mu'āwiyah bribed the commanders of Imām al-Ḥasan's army and finally agreed to a peace treaty with Imām al-Ḥasan (A) that he quickly broke. In 50 AH, Mu'āwiyah had Imām al-Ḥasan (A) poisoned through his wife Ja'dah and in Rajab 60 AH, Mu'āwiyah died after appointing his son Yazīd as his successor.

Yazīd loved drinking wine, playing with dogs and monkeys and gambling. He had absolutely no respect for religion and believed that the Qur'ān was forged by *Rasūl Allāh* (S) so that the *Banū Hāshim* could take power! Yazīd ruled for 3 years only. The first year he killed Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) in Karbala. The second year he ransacked Madīnah and his soldiers murdered over a thousand men, including companions of *Rasūl Allāh* (S) and over a thousand women were raped. The third year, he attacked Makkah, and attacked the Ka'bah with catapults and burnt it down.

After Yazīd died, his son Mu'āwiyah II was not interested in ruling and condemned his father Yazīd. He died shortly afterwards and is believed to have been poisoned by his family members. His teacher was buried alive because the Umayyads believed he had influenced him. The 'Umayyad rule was then taken over by Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam who was also an 'Umayyad. He was a cousin and son-in-law of the 3rd caliph 'Uthmān. His rule was the beginning of the Marwānid dynasty, consisting of a line of 13 caliphs after him.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Who were the 'Umayyads?
2. How did they gain control of the caliphate?
3. What were the defining features of their rule?

MY NOTES



ACTIVITY



In small groups, draw a mind map showing the various 'Umayyad caliphs and their actions.

THE 'UMAYYADS

THE MARWĀNID CALIPHS

Marwān was succeeded by his son 'Abd al-Malik who is well known for his atrocities such as poisoning Imām 'Alī Zayn al-Ābidīn (A), attacking the Ka'bah and appointing the evil Ḥajjāj bin Yūsuf al-Thaqafī as one of his governors. Ḥajjāj bin Yūsuf is recorded as one of the cruellest men in history. He used to kill for fun and in particular enjoyed watching old people and children being tortured and killed. His favourite pastime was to ridicule and curse Imām 'Alī (A), and to kill the Shī'ah. People would be afraid of even being 'accused' of being a Shī'ah. Wherever a Shī'ah was found, his limbs were immediately amputated and then he was killed or he would be thrown into prison and tortured. Amongst the famous Shī'ah that Ḥajjāj killed were Imām 'Alī's servant Qanbar, Kumayl ibn Ziyād, and Sa'īd ibn Jubayr.

The Caliph 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān chose Ḥajjāj as his governor specifically for Iraq and Hijāz (today's Saudi Arabia) to ensure he would have no opposition from these regions while he ruled Syria, Yemen, Iran and other Muslim regions. When Ḥajjāj died in 714 CE, the Muslims rejoiced and offered thanks to Allāh (SWT) for the relief. During his lifetime, he had tortured and killed at least 120,000 Muslims, and there were another 80,000 men and women in his prisons.

After 'Abd al-Mālik b. Marwān, his sons Walīd and Sulaymān ruled as caliphs, followed by their cousin 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz. Unlike all other 'Umayyad caliphs, 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz was loved by people for his honesty and justice. He is often regarded by the Sunnīs as the '*fifth rightly-guided caliph*'. One of his virtues is that he stopped the cursing of Imām 'Alī (A) after *Jum'ah* prayers and from the pulpit – a practice that was established by Mu'āwiyah ibn Abū Sufyān.

Another great deed of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz is that he returned the garden of Fadak to the descendants of *Sayyidah* Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (A) because he believed it was taken from her unjustly. It is believed that the reason 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz was so different from the other 'Umayyad Caliphs is because his teacher loved Imām 'Alī (A) and had guided him correctly when he was a child. This was just like the case of Mu'āwiyah II (the son of Yazīd). This tells us the important role that teachers' play and how they can influence a person.

IN SUMMARY

1. Explain how the seeds of the 'Umayyad dynasty were sown during the time of the caliph 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān.
2. What were the atrocities committed by Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah in each of the three years of his rule?
3. Who was Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī? What were his qualities?
4. State any two positive things that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz accomplished during his reign as caliph.

DID YOU KNOW?



After about 90 years of 'Umayyad rule, the Abbāsids defeated Marwān II in 132 AH and took over Damascus. Marwān II – the last 'Umayyad Caliph – was killed in Egypt. The 'Abbāsids destroyed all the tombs of the Umayyads in Syria except for the tomb of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz.



Coin from the Marwānid era showing the caliph 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān

KEY POINTS



1. The 'Umayyad caliphate started after the caliphate of Imām 'Alī (A), but its roots can be traced back to the caliphate of 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān.
2. The first three Umayyad caliphs were descendants of Abū Sufyān and the rest were from a different line of descent of the *Banū 'Umayyah* called Marwānids.
3. Most 'Umayyad caliphs were very cruel. They tortured and killed the Shī'ah, and ridiculed and cursed Imām 'Alī (A).

THE 'ABBĀSIDS

MY NOTES



course, it would be an honour,” replied Hārūn. “Well,” said the Sayyid, “he wouldn’t ask me for my daughter’s hand in marriage because she would be his mahram! This answers your question: while I am a descendant of Rasūl Allāh (S), you are not.” Hārūn was very angry at having been defeated and left the gathering in a rage.

On another occasion, Hārūn came to Madīnah and stood before the grave of Rasūl Allāh (S) and exclaimed, ‘Peace be on you, O Cousin, O Messenger of Allāh!’ He did this to show off his relation to Rasūl Allāh (S) because his ancestor ‘Abbās ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib and Rasūl Allāh’s father ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib were brothers. Just then Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A) came in and said, ‘Peace be on you, O Grandfather, O Messenger of Allāh!’ This humiliated and enraged Hārūn. He was responsible for imprisoning and poisoning Imām al-Kāẓim (A).

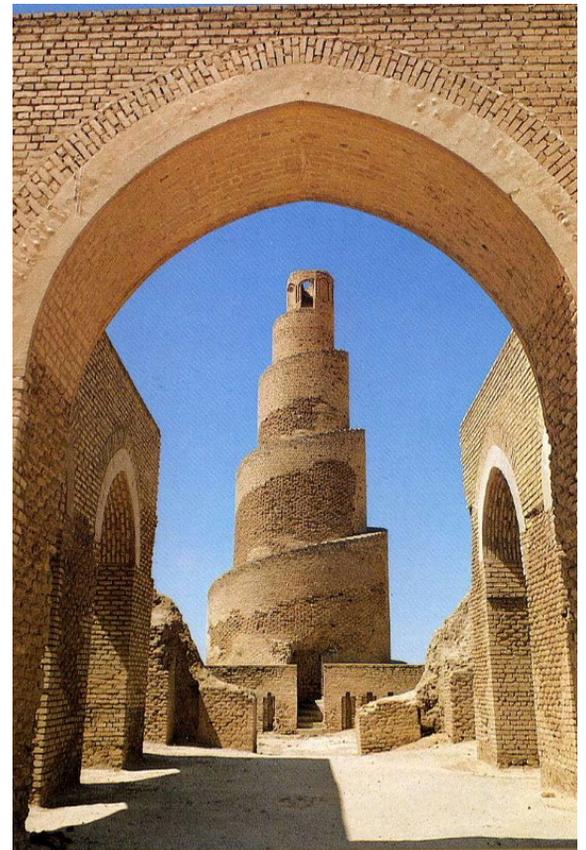
THE FALL OF THE 'ABBĀSIDS

It was during the rule of Mutawakkil that the ‘Abbāsīd empire began to deteriorate, as corruption and evil behaviour became widespread. Mutawakkil did not love knowledge but loved the idea of magnificence and of being a king. He built the Great Mosque of Samarrā’, which was once the biggest mosque in the world. The ruins of its minaret – a vast spiralling cone - still stands today in Samarrā’.

Mutawakkil had an extreme hatred for the Shī’ah. He banned people from going for the ziyārah of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) in Karbala and even tried to remove all traces of Imām al-Ḥusayn’s grave by directing the flow of the river Furāt towards the graves of the martyrs of Karbala but it all failed.

During the rule of Mutawakkil, the Ahl al-Bayt (A) lived under house arrest and in extreme poverty. The Shī’ah and descendants of Imām ‘Alī (A) became almost non-existent. There was so much fear that the Sādāt (descendants of Imām ‘Alī (A) and Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A)) as well as the Shī’ah changed their names to hide their identities. Others fled to far off foreign lands where they lived in poverty and secrecy.

Mutawakkil was finally killed by his own son Muntaṣir while he was



drunk in a party in his palace. This was during the time of Imām al-Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (A).

The ‘Abbāsids had hired many Turkish soldiers and army commanders, and after the reign of Mutawakkil, these Turkish commanders were in control of the ‘Abbāsīd government. The caliphs were appointed and deposed or killed by the influence of the Turks and they remained puppets living in fear of their commanders at all times.

As a consequence of this development, the Shī‘ah were able to live in peace once again and many great Shī‘ah scholars were able to contribute to our present day knowledge of Islam.

In all there were 37 kings of Banū ‘Abbās, and their reign lasted until 656 AH when the Mongol king Hulagu Khan attacked Baghdad. They were completely replaced by the Ottoman Empire in 1517 that established its capital in Constantinople (present day Istanbul, Turkey).



DID YOU KNOW?



During the years when the ‘Abbāsids were busy fighting the Umayyads, the Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq (A) used the opportunity to set up schools in Madīnah to teach Islamic sciences. A lot of the contributions that Muslim scientists and philosophers made later on were as a result of their teachings.

KEY POINTS



1. The ‘Abbāsids rose to power by gathering support from the Muslims on the pretext that they were fighting for the right of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (A). However, once they were in power, they imprisoned and killed the *Ahl al-Bayt* (A), their families and their Shī‘ah.
2. The ‘Abbāsids employed the Turks to fight for them. Over a period of time, these Turks became very powerful one of the main causes for the fall of the ‘Abbāsids.

IN SUMMARY



1. What were the reasons that led to the fall of the ‘Umayyad dynasty?
2. What slogan did the ‘Abbāsids use to gather support from the people?
3. How were the ‘Abbāsids related to the *Ahl al-Bayt* (A)?
4. Why was the period of Hārūn al-Rashīd known as the golden age of Islam?
5. What did the Imams al-Bāqir (A) and al-Ṣādiq (A) do to promote Islamic learning whilst the ‘Abbāsids were busy fighting the Umayyads?

POST 'ABBĀSID ERA - PART 1

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Who ruled the Muslim lands after the fall of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate?
2. A brief explanation on the Crusades against the Muslims.
3. A brief explanation on the Mongol invasion.

MY NOTES



MUSLIM DYNASTIES AFTER THE FALL OF THE 'ABBĀSIDS

As the 'Abbāsīd Dynasty grew, it became too large an empire to run and the cost of managing it was too great. Furthermore, the 'Abbāsīd rulers became mere puppets after the reign of Mutawakkil and the rivalry between the Arabs, Persians and Turks increased.

In the meantime, a group claiming descent from Imām 'Alī (A) and *Sayyidah Fāṭimah* (A) known as the **Fāṭimids** established their own rule in North Africa covering what is today Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. They founded the city of Cairo and made it their base. The Fāṭimids were very tolerant of other groups and appointed people on merit rather than sect. Despite being Ismā'īlī Shī'ahs themselves, many of their officials were Sunnī Muslims as well as Christians and Jews. The rest of the Muslim world (outside North Africa) was still under 'Abbāsīd rule.

In the 8th Century, the Christian Roman Empire (that extended from England to the borders of Spain), under orders from the Pope, decided to invade Muslim lands and take back Jerusalem. These

attacks are known as the **Crusades** and lasted for several centuries.



Around the late 12th century, another Muslim dynasty rose in North Africa and the Eastern Arabian Peninsula called the **Ayyūbid Dynasty**. Its most famous ruler was Ṣalāḥ al-dīn ibn Ayyūb (known as 'Saladin' in the West). He is most famous amongst Muslims for his success in fighting back the Christian Crusaders. Although the Crusades could not take over the Muslim lands; they weakened the Muslim Empire and prevented it from spreading further into Europe beyond Spain.

Ṣalāḥ al-dīn also attacked the Fāṭimids and took Egypt from them because the Fāṭimids were Shī'ah. *Ṣalāḥ al-dīn* also had all Shī'ah libraries burnt and destroyed in Egypt including the famous library of Alexandria (north of Egypt) that housed almost 200,000 books on different sciences.

ACTIVITY



In small groups, draw a timeline showing the various dynasties that ruled over Muslim lands from time of *Rasūl Allāh* (S) to date.

In the early 13th century, the Muslim Empire was attacked by the **Mongols** under the leadership of Genghis Khān. This marked a violent end to the 'Abbāsīd era. The Mongol Empire spread rapidly through Central Asia and Persia. They took over Isfahan (the capital of Persia), Baghdad (the capital of the 'Abbāsīds) and all other major cities including Damascus and Aleppo (in Syria).

MUSLIM DYNASTIES AFTER THE FALL OF THE 'ABBĀSIDS

The **Mongols** were defeated by the **Mamlūks** – the Turkish slaves of the 'Abbāsids who became powerful rulers and commanders and took over Egypt and Syria. The Mamlūks also fought the Crusaders. Meanwhile, the defeated Mongol rulers embraced Islam as they favoured it over other religions.

In the 15th and 16th centuries three major Muslim empires emerged:

- * The Sunnī 'Uthmānid (**Ottoman empire**) in much of the Middle East and North Africa
- * The Shī'ah **Şafavid empire** in Iran
- * The **Mughal empire** in South Asia (today's India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan).

By the end of the 19th century all these three empires had declined significantly. The last to stand was the Ottoman Empire which was official abolished in July 1923 and reduced to what is now the Republic of Turkey. With the end of the Ottoman rule the last Muslim empire collapsed. Foreign powers took over the Middle East and broke it up into little countries.

Egypt then became the voice of the Sunnī Muslims whereas Iran and Iraq being Shī'ah-majority countries (where most of the *marāji'* lived) represented the voice of the Shī'ah.

To a large degree the Shī'ah and Sunnī lived peacefully in recognition of each other. In 1935, the **Wahhābīs** who hold extreme views of Islam (based on the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah) invaded Hijāz and renamed it the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. They began propagating their teachings and replaced Egypt as the voice of Sunnī Muslims. They were able to do this using the massive wealth generated from crude oil. The *Wahhābī* despise the Shī'ah and do not regard them as Muslims. The Shī'ah on the other hand have continued to promote Muslim unity throughout the world.

IN SUMMARY

1. What were the main reasons that led to the fall of the 'Abbāsīd dynasty?
2. Who were the Fāṭimids? Where was their base?
3. Who brought the fall of the Fāṭimid empire?
4. What were the Crusades against the Muslims?
5. What was the effect of the Mongol invasion on the 'Abbāsīd era?

DID YOU KNOW?



The Şafavid dynasty was one of the most significant ruling dynasties of Persia (modern Iran), and is often considered the beginning of modern Persian history. They ruled one of the greatest Persian empires after the Muslim conquest of Persia and established the Twelver school of Shī'ah Islam as the official religion of their empire, marking one of the most important turning points in Muslim history.



KEY POINTS



1. After the fall of 'Abbāsīds, the Fāṭimids came to power. They were Shī'ah Ismā'īlī Muslims and set up their base in Cairo.
2. The Fāṭimids were very tolerant of other faiths and appointed people on merit rather than sect. However, *Şalāḥ al-dīn* attacked them and took over Egypt.
3. *Şalāḥ al-dīn* also fought against the Christian Crusades ordered by the Pope against Muslims.

POST 'ABBĀSID ERA - PART 2

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. An overview of the Mughal dynasty
2. The effects of Mughal rule on the Indian subcontinent.

MY NOTES



THE MUGHALS

The Mughal Empire ruled most of India in the 16th and 17th centuries. This was long before the partition of India when Pakistan became an independent country.

The Mughals were descendants of the Mongols. They had converted to Islam and assimilated the culture of the Middle East, while keeping elements of their Far Eastern roots, especially their military skill. They ruled India, a country with a large Hindu majority, and brought about many changes to India:

- * They established a centralised government that brought together many smaller kingdoms.
- * They delegated authority and allowed Hindus to reach senior government or military positions.
- * They introduced Persian art, culture and architecture (e.g. Taj Mahal).
- * Persian language was mixed with Arabic and Hindi to create Urdu.
- * There were periods of great religious tolerance.

Babur, first Mughal Emperor, was a descendent of Genghis Khan. Under his rule, Hinduism was tolerated and new Hindu temples were built. Trade with the rest of the Islamic world, especially Persia and through Persia to Europe, was also encouraged. The importance of slavery in the empire diminished and peace was made with the Hindu kingdoms of Southern India. Babur brought a broad-minded, confident Islam from central Asia and had great ideas about civilisation, architecture and administration.

Babur's son Humāyūn succeeded him, but almost lost the empire due to his poor governance and hedonistic lifestyle. Humāyūn was succeeded by his son Akbar.



ACTIVITY



Draw a family tree listing the names of the Mughal emperors from Babur to Aurangzeb.

MUGHAL RULE IN INDIA

The Mughal emperor Akbar worked hard to win over the hearts and minds of the Hindu leaders. While this may well have been for political reasons, it was also a part of his philosophy. He believed that all religions should be tolerated, and that it was a ruler's duty to treat everyone equally, whatever their belief. Akbar's government included many Hindus in positions of responsibility. Non-Muslims were not forced to obey Islamic law, and Hindus were allowed to regulate themselves through their own law and institutions.

Akbar took his liberal beliefs a step too far when he introduced a new version of Islam, which was a mixture of Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist and Christian beliefs. He called new religion *dīn-e-ilāhī*. It was not popular at all and died out when he died. Akbar's son Jahāngīr re-established Islam as the state religion but continued the policy of religious tolerance. He also began building monuments and gardens by which the Mughals are chiefly remembered today, importing hundreds of Persian architects to build palaces and create magnificent gardens. Jahāngīr's approach was typified by the development of Urdu as the official language of the empire. Urdu uses an Arabic script, but Persian vocabulary and Hindi grammatical structure.

The architectural achievements of the Mughals peaked during the reign of Jahāngīr's successor Shah Jahan. He commissioned the Taj Mahal, a building which marks the peak of the Mughal Empire. Its architecture symbolises stability, power and confidence. The money Shah Jahan spent on buildings and on various military projects emptied his treasury and he was forced to raise taxes, which aggravated the people of the empire.

Shāh Jahān's son Aurangzeb was the last great Mughal Emperor. He ruled for nearly 50 years. He came to the throne after imprisoning his father and having his older brother killed. He was a strong leader whose conquests expanded the Mughal Empire to its greatest size. Aurangzeb did not support the religious tolerance upheld by previous emperors. He imposed *Sharī'ah* law over the whole empire and became unpopular as a result. The Hindus fought him back, often supported by the French and British. The Mughal Emperors that followed Aurangzeb effectively became British or French puppets. The last Mughal Emperor was deposed by the British in 1858.

IN SUMMARY



1. Who were the Mughals?
2. What policies did they adopt which made them popular?
3. Which of their policies made them unpopular?
4. What impact did the Mughal Empire have on India?
5. What were the main causes that led to the fall of the Mughal Empire?

DID YOU KNOW?



The Taj Mahal is a white marble mausoleum located in Agra, India. It was built by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his wife Mumtāz.



KEY POINTS



1. Mughals were descendants of the Mongols. They ruled most of India in the 16th and 17th centuries. Babur was the first Mughal Emperor.
2. Most Mughal emperors promoted religious tolerance. This made them popular amongst the masses, majority of whom were Hindus.
3. Aurangzeb was the last great Mughal emperor. He imposed *Sharī'ah* law even on non-Muslims, and heavily taxed the population to finance construction and the military. This made him unpopular and people rebelled against him.

POST 'ABBĀSID ERA - PART 3

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. When did Ottoman rule begin?
2. What were the causes that led to the fall of the Ottoman empire?

MY NOTES



THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

The Ottoman Empire was created by Turkish tribes in Anatolia. It was one of the most powerful states in the world during the 15th and 16th centuries, and spanned more than 600 years. At its height, the empire included most of south-eastern Europe (including modern day Hungary, Serbia, Bosnia, Romania, Greece, and Ukraine); large parts of the Middle East (Iraq, Syria, Palestine and most of the Arabian peninsula), and North Africa (from Egypt in the East to as far west as Algeria).

After the fall of Baghdad (capital of the 'Abbāsids) by the Mongol invasion, the Seljuks declared an independent sultanate in east and central Asia. In 1301, 'Uthmān overthrew the Seljuks and proclaimed himself the Sultan of Asia. This was the beginning of Ottoman rule. In fact, the term Ottoman is derived from his name ('Uthmān). He was a Turk from Anatolia.



At first, Ottoman rule was insecure. To consolidate their empire they formed a powerful army and inflicted a series of defeats on the declining Christian Byzantine Empire and then quickly expanded westward.

Constantinople was the heart of the Byzantine Empire. It became the capital of the Ottoman Empire when it was conquered by the Ottoman sultan. The Ottoman empire had now replaced the Byzantine Empire as the major power in the Eastern Mediterranean. With Constantinople (now called Istanbul) as its capital city, the Ottoman Empire was a centre of interaction between the Eastern and Western worlds for six centuries. One of its most famous rulers was Sulaymān the Magnificent.

The Ottoman empire's territories were not based on national, ethnic or religious boundaries, and were determined by the military and administrative power of the dynasty. The Ottomans attempted to bring as much territory as possible under their control.

The empire came to an end in 1922 when it was replaced by the Turkish Republic and various successor states in south-eastern Europe and the Middle East. With the end of Ottoman rule the last Muslim empire (or *khilāfah* according to Sunnī school of thought) collapsed.

ACTIVITY



Prepare a personal development plan showing three things you can do to prepare for the reappearance of the Imām.

THE SUCCESS OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

There were many reasons that led to the success of the Ottoman empire. It was the largest Muslim empire and ruled for over 600 years. Some of the main reasons behind its success include the following:

- * Religion was incorporated in the state structure, and the Sultan was regarded as *the protector of Islam*.
- * It was united by Islamic ideology and law, and Islamic organisational and administrative structure.
- * The administration was highly pragmatic, taking the best ideas from other cultures and making them their own
- * The Sultans encouraged loyalty from other faith groups, and created alliances across political and racial groups
- * The empire was highly centralised and power was always transferred to a single person, and not split between rival princes. Promotion to positions of power largely depended on merit.
- * It had a state run education and judicial system.
- * They had a very powerful military, including a strong slave-based army. They were experts in developing gunpowder as a military tool, and military ethos pervaded whole administration.

Q: How is this advice different from the approach taken by the 'Abbāsid and 'Umayyad caliphs?



IN SUMMARY

1. Who founded the Ottoman empire?
2. What strategy did the Ottomans use to defeat the Byzantine empire?
3. What policies did the Ottomans adopt to ensure their success?
4. What caused the fall of the Ottoman empire?

DID YOU KNOW?



When the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet conquered Constantinople which was under Christian Byzantine rule, he renamed it Istanbul (the city of Islam).

Istanbul (current capital city of Turkey) became not only a political and military capital, but also one of the great trade centres of the world because of its position at the junction of Europe, Africa, and Asia.

KEY POINTS



1. 'Abbāsid rule came to an end with the Mongol invasion.
2. After the fall of the 'Abbāsid empire, the Seljuks ruled over East and central Asia.
3. The Turkish leader 'Uthmān overthrew the Seljuks and established the 'Uthmānī (Ottoman) empire. This was the largest Muslim empire and its rule lasted 600 years.
4. The Ottoman empire was the last Muslim empire to rule over Muslim lands. It came to an end in 1922.

THE RETURN OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A) FROM GHAYBAH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. An overview of the key facts pertaining to Imām al-Mahdī (A), the Imām of our time.

2. How should we prepare for his reappearance?

MY NOTES



THE RETURN OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A) FROM GHAYBAH

Imām al-Mahdī (A) is our living Imām. His name is Muḥammad, but he is usually referred to by his titles. Some of these are:

- * **Al-Mahdī** (the one guided by Allāh (SWT))
- * **Al-Qā'im** (the one who will rise to establish justice)
- * **Al-Ḥujjah** (the proof of Allāh (SWT))
- * **Sāhib al-'Aṣr wa al-Zamān** (Master of the present age and time)
- * **Al-Muntazar** (the Awaited Imām)
- * **Baqiyat Allāh** (Allāh (SWT)'s remaining representative on earth)

Key Facts

Birth date: 15th Sha'bān 128 AH in Sāmarrā'

Father: Imām al-Ḥasan al-'Askarī (A)

Mother: Sayyidah Narjis

al-Ghaybah al-Ṣuḡhrāh: 260 AH - 328 AH

al-Ghaybah al-kubrāh: 328 AH to date

When we refer to Imām al-Mahdī (A), we say '*ajjal Allāh ta'ālā farajahu al-sharīf*' which means '*may Allāh (SWT) hasten his return*'.

Imām al-Mahdī (A) is currently in *ghaybah*. The Shī'ah believe that he lives amongst people but they don't recognise him. He always helps and guides people without their knowing. The '*return*' of the Imām from *ghaybah* is therefore the revealing of his true identity to people.

The first people to pledge allegiance (give *bay'ah*) will number 313. They will be the most pious, learned and courageous people on the earth at that time and will come from different parts of the world.



Through a miracle, Allāh (SWT) will bring them all together to Makkah for this grand event in the history of humankind.

These 313 will give their pledge of allegiance to Imām al-Mahdī (A) while he stands between the *Rukn* (the corner of the *Ka'bah* where the *Ḥajar al-Aswad* is lodged) and *Maqām of Ibrāhīm*.

ACTIVITY



Prepare a personal development plan showing three things you can do to prepare for the reappearance of the Imām (A).

PREPARING FOR THE REAPPEARANCE OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A)

Waiting for Imām al-Mahdī (A) to return is called *Intizār*. During this period, the most important thing is not losing faith in the existence of the Imām. We should never doubt in the presence of Imām al-Mahdī (A). If Allāh (SWT) could raise *Rasūl Allāh* (S) physically all the way to the heavens for *mi'rāj*, and raise *Nabī 'Īsā* (A) and keep him alive until he returns, it is also very easy for Allāh (SWT) the Imām (A) alive on the earth for a long time.

During the time of *Intizār*, it is the duty of all the followers of the Imām (A) to work for the good of humanity and be good role models for others, showing them how people will live after the establishment of peace and justice when the Imām (A) returns. It is therefore necessary that we live our lives based on justice, honesty and fairness.

Naturally, those whose values and character are most similar to the values of the Imām (A) will easily be able to join the him on his return. Obeying Allāh (SWT) and keeping away from *ḥarām* are the first duties we have towards showing our loyalty to Imām al-Mahdī (A). Thereafter, serving humanity and praying for the return of the Imām (A) are also part of our duties to the Imām (A).

We should pray for the safety and reappearance of the Imām (A) by reciting the *du'ā'*: *Allāhumma kun li-waliyyik al-faraj...* after every *ṣalāh*. We should also say *salām* to our Imām (A) every day by reciting his *ziyārah*. We should also try to recite *du'ā' al-'ahad* as often as we can. It is said that one who recites this *du'ā'* on 40 consecutive mornings after *ṣalāt al-fajr*, he/she will be one of the helpers of the Imām (A).

Other ways in which we can remember the Imām (A) of our time and build a strong connection with him, include giving *ṣadaqah* on his behalf, remembering him in our prayers especially *ṣalāt al-layl*, congratulating him on happy occasions such as the *wilādāt* of the *Ma'sūmīn* (A), and sharing in his grief on the *wafāt* of the *Ma'sūmīn* (A). Just as we are doing '*intizār*' (waiting) for the Imām (A), so is the Imām (A) doing '*intizār*' for us. The Imām (A) will only return when Allāh (SWT) wills. Imām (A) is made aware of all our activities every week. He rejoices when he hears good things about his Shī'ah, but feels sad when he is told that the Shī'ah are committing evil or neglecting their religious and moral obligations.

IN SUMMARY

1. What are some of the titles of Imām al-Mahdī (A)?
2. What is *intizār*?
3. Where will the Imām (A) first reappear?
4. What can we do to prepare for the return of Imām al-Mahdī (A) from *ghaybah*?
5. How is it possible for the Imām (A) to have such a long life?

DID YOU KNOW?



Rasūl Allāh (S) said:



"One who dies without knowing the Imām of his time dies the death of Jāhiliyyah"

Jāhiliyyah refers to the period of ignorance. This was the time before Islam when most people in Arabia worshipped idols.



KEY POINTS



1. Imām al-Mahdī (A) is our living Imām. His name is Muḥammad, but we refer to him using his titles.
2. When we mention his name, we say '*ajjal Allāh ta'ālā farajahu al-sharīf* which means '*may Allāh (SWT) hasten his return*'.
3. The Imām (A) is currently in *ghaybah*. Waiting for his reappearance is called *intizār*.