

وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ

37:181

PROPHECY

النبوة

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be reminded the fact that Allah sent Prophets to us and that God communicates directly with them
- Know why it is important to model our lives on the lives of Prophets
- Know the names of the Ulul 'Azm prophets
- Learn the concept that as Muslims we believe in all of the previous prophets
- Learn the rules and etiquettes of interacting with non-Muslims

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 2

Lesson 1: Learning about our Prophets

We have learnt previously that one of the most basic beliefs of Muslims is that of Prophecy (Nubuwwah). This means that we believe Allah (SWT) chose certain people to be His representatives and to teach us and remind us the best and easiest way to reach Him.

WHY DO WE NEED PROPHETS?

The Prophets were sent by Allah to be our guides and teachers. They were human like us, so that we could relate to them, and they could be examples for us. The Prophets were like bridge between people and Allah (SWT). These people were chosen by Allah (SWT) to be His messengers.

Allah (SWT) in His infinite Mercy and Wisdom has taught us to recognise good things. We know and like traits such as kindness and politeness. At the same time He has taught us to dislike bad things like stealing and rudeness.

Sometimes though, because of our desires, we forgot this knowledge we have and do wrong things. Allah (SWT) sent Prophets to remind us of the good things and teach us to avoid the bad things.

Class Activity

List some wrong behaviours that we see at school or around us that many people think is normal? (For example, listening to music)

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Now let's list five good things that many people do not do much of any more (like praying)

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

WHAT DO THE PROPHETS TEACH US?

The Prophets are messengers from God that bring us the rules that Allah (SWT) wants us to follow. They teach us:

- The easiest way to be successful in this world as well as in the hereafter.
- Or they remind us of things that are good for us to do and things that are bad for us to do.
- About things we cannot see or understand, such as Angels, Paradise and Hell.
- They teach us the secrets of this world and of the Hereafter that Allah (SWT) has allowed them to see and experience.
- The Prophets also teach us by being good examples for us. By seeing how they live their lives and what they do, we learn how to live our life as well. Let's listen to one story from the life of our last Prophet, Prophet Muḥammad (saw) and see what we can learn from his life.

'A man once came to Prophet Muḥammad (s) carrying with him his belongings and a box. He said, "O Prophet! While I was passing through a jungle, I heard the voice of some bird's babies. I took them and put them in this box. The moment I did that, their mother came fluttering round my head."

The Prophet said, "Put them down". When the man put the box on the ground, the mother of the young birds joined them. Seeing this, the Prophet asked the man who now had a look of surprise on his face, "Are you surprised by the affection of the mother towards her young? I swear by Him (Almighty Allah) who has sent me, surely, God is more loving to His servants than the mother to these young birds. Return these baby birds to the place from where you took them, and let their mother be with them."

This story shows us that our Prophet had so much compassion and caring not only for humans, but even for animals. It also shows us how much Allah cares for us and looks after us.

ALLAH COMMUNICATES TO THE PROPHETS

Allah communicated with the prophets in one of three ways:

1. Directly, like with Prophet Moses (as) on Mount Ṭūr
2. Through a dream, like with Prophet Ibrāhīm(as)
3. Through the angel Jibrāīl, like with Prophet Muḥammad (saw)

The prophets then related what Allah had told them to the tribe, community or family that Allah had sent them to. Only Prophet Muḥammad (SAW) was sent for the whole of mankind, till the Day of Judgement.

In this way, ordinary people like us could know what our Lord and Creator wanted from us, and could also learn about the Hereafter, the angels and other realities that we cannot see with our eyes.

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE PROPHETS

Allah (SWT) sent to this world 124,000 Prophets. There was no community of people who did not have the guidance of a prophet.

- The First of those was Prophet Ādam (as)
- And the last was Prophet Muḥammad (saw)

We will learn about many of the Prophets in more detail in later lesson.

Of the 124,000 prophets, 25 of them are mentioned in the Qur'an by name.

Class Activity

From the previous years, we have learnt the names of many prophets named in the Holy Qur'an. Let us try to name at least 15 Prophets named in the Holy Qur'an.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

6. – _____
7. – _____
8. – _____
9. – _____
10. – _____
11. – _____
12. – _____
13. – _____
14. – _____
15. – _____

THE STORY OF ‘UZAIR

The following story shows us an example of how Allah (SWT) communicated with His chosen servants, and the lessons we can learn from these communications.

One day, a pious servant of Allah by the name of ‘Uzair was travelling through the land. Although ‘Uzair was most likely not a prophet, he was a chosen servant of Allah (SWT). During his trip, ‘Uzair came across a town which had fall into ruin completely.

This made ‘Uzair wonder: ‘how can Allah (SWT) bring this town and land back to life after it had become dead?’

At this point, Allah (SWT) decreed to show ‘Uzair a great miracle. He caused ‘Uzair to die for one hundred year, then He brought him back to life. When ‘Uzair woke up, Allah (SWT) inspired to him: ‘how long did you sleep?’ He answered that he had slept a day or part of day. Allah (SWT) then inspired to him: ‘In fact, You slept a hundred years. But look at your food and drink, they have not rotted. We will make you a Sign for people.’

‘Uzair woke up to see a whole new world. The land he had wondered about had come back to life and he could hardly recognise it anymore. At the same time, despite 100 years passing, ‘Uzair had not aged, nor had his food even gone bad. When he saw this great miracle, he said:

“I know that Allah has power all things.” (2:259)

This was an example of the communication of Allah (SWT) with His chosen people. We learn so many lessons from these communications, and the Prophets go through so much hardship in order to bring these messages to us.

Review Questions

Q1. The Prophets of Allah (SWT) teach us:

- a. How to be good to our parents and all those around us
- b. About how to be successful in our lives
- c. About the angels and the hereafter
- d. All the above

Q2. A prophet reminds us:

- a. Of what is truth and what is falsehood
- b. Of what is good and what is evil in terms of action
- c. Both of the above

Q3. Who chooses a Prophet:

- a. The people
- b. The Prophet before him
- c. Allah (SWT)
- d. The angels

Homework (5 Marks)

It is your job to find out the names of five more prophets who are mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān. Make sure you get help from your parents.

- 1- _____
- 2- _____
- 3- _____
- 4- _____
- 5- _____

Lesson 2: Learning more about our Prophets

In this lesson, we are going to learn more about our prophets.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPHETS

The Prophets of Allah (SWT) were not ordinary people, they were special in many ways.

1. They are chosen and sent by Allah.
2. They were sinless (Ma'ṣūm), meaning that they have not committed any sin, even accidentally.
3. They were able to perform miracles, by the order and permission of Allah
4. They were the most perfect example of mankind at that time, in their behaviour and knowledge.

THE HOLY PROPHET OF ISLAM – A TEACHER OF UNITY

It had rained heavily and continuously for a long period, and the water poured down towards the Holy Ka'bah in Masjid-ul-Ḥarām, the big mosque in Mecca, The Ka'bah was in the lower section of Mecca. It had become old and collapsed.

So the rebuilding was started. The work progressed well enough until al Hajar-ul-Aswad, the Black Stone, was to be put back in its place.

Each quarter of the Ka'bah was being built by one leading family of Quraysh - the big and prominent tribe of Mecca. Each family of Quraysh felt the honour of placing the Black Stone belonging to it.

The disagreement became deeper, and led to a lot of argument, shouting and abuse. The members of each big family were thinking that a war was going to break out. No one was willing to change their mind. They regarded it as a great insult if they didn't have that special honour of putting the Black Stone back in its place.

One member stood up and said, "I have a suggestion, let us wait till tomorrow and see who enters the Masjid-ul-Ḥarām first in the morning; then let him decide". All agreed, since that sounded like a good suggestion.

The next morning, they were anxiously waiting to see who was the first person to come and enter the mosque.

Suddenly they heard footsteps heading towards them. It was Muḥammad (saw), the son of Abdullāh. Everyone, of course, knew, loved, admired and respected Muḥammad (saw).

They explained the situation to him and waited for his decision. Everyone thought he would choose his own family. Then the Prophet (saw) showed his wisdom by doing something that surprised everyone.

He put his robe on the floor, took the sacred Black Stone and put it in the centre of the robe and said. "The chief of each family will take one corner of the robe and lift it together." Everyone immediately realised what a great idea this was. It was a fair and just idea, and would maintain unity among the tribes.

When the robe with the Black Stone was lifted to a reasonable height, Muḥammad (saw) took the Black Stone and put it in its proper place with his own hands. None felt insulted and each had his share of the privilege and honour. This was an example of the character and wisdom of a prophet.

THE SELECTED PROPHETS

Of all the 124,000 prophets, Allah (SWT) in his Infinite wisdom had chosen 5 of these to be the messengers of divine law. As we learnt in previous years these are the Ulul-'Azm prophets.

Can we recall who the ulul-'azm prophets are?

- Prophet Nūḥ (Noah) (as)
- Prophet Ibrāhīm (Abraham) (as)
- Prophet Mūsā (Moses) (as)
- Prophet 'Īsā (Jesus) (as)
- Prophet Muḥammad (SAW)

Although a lot of time has passed between us and the Prophets, Allah (SWT) in His infinite wisdom allowed us to still benefit from the teachings of His prophets. He revealed books to them which were preserved for long periods of time such that people could refer to them.

ALLAH (SWT) COMMUNICATES WITH US THROUGH HOLY BOOKS



For the guidance of mankind, Allah honoured four famous Prophets by revealing to them four Holy Books:

- 1) Taurāt to Prophet Musa (Moses);
- 2) Zabūr (Psalms) to Prophet Dawūd (David);
- 3) Injīl (Bible) to Prophet ʿĪsa (Jesus);
- 4) Qur'an to Prophet Muḥammad (saw)

The commandments of Allah are contained in these books. The first three books were for the earlier times. These books after many years got corrupted by people who added and removed things from them because they wanted power or wanted to control the community.

The Holy Qur'an is the last book of God and is for the guidance of entire mankind till the Day of Judgement and therefore is the living miracle of the Holy Prophet (saw).

Class Activity (5 marks)

Listed below are some of the Prophets mentioned in the Qur'ān. Circle the letter before the names of those who came with a divine law.

- (a) Prophet Ya`qūb (Jacob) (as)
- (b) Prophet ʿAyyūb (Job) (as).
- (c) Prophet Mūsā (Moses) (as)
- (d) Prophet Yaḥyā (John) (as)
- (e) Prophet Muḥammad (saw)
- (f) Prophet Yūnus (Jonah) (as)
- (g) Prophet Ibrāhīm (Abraham) (as)
- (h) Prophet Yūsuf (Joseph) (as)
- (i) Prophet ʿĪsa (Jesus) (as)

- (j) Prophet Nūḥ (Noah) (as)
- (k) Prophet Ismāīl (Ishmael) (as)
- (l) Prophet Zakariyyā (Zacharia) (as)

PROPHETS- OUR ROLE MODELS

When we are young, we copy our parents in everything they do, they teach us how to speak and how to walk so that we can be independent in this world- at that stage of our lives our parents are our models. All human beings need a role model so that they can learn how to behave. Allah (SWT) in His wisdom sent down to us the perfect models for every stage of our lives. If we follow the examples of the Prophets, we would be successful in this world and the next, undoubtedly.

We learn a special lesson from each of the Prophet:

- We learn patience from Prophet Ayyūb
- We learn kindness and mercy from Prophet Jesus
- We learn bravery from Prophet Abraham
- We learn to trust in Allah from Prophet Yūsuf
- We learn to be fair and just from Prophet David

Class Activity

Let us all sing the following nashīd together and colour in the picture.



A Muslim follows Allah's Prophets
And His Messengers, see
May Allah bless each one of them
And peace upon them, be.

They came to teach us al-Islam
and how we should behave
they were the best of all Muslims
Truthful, kind and brave.

They came at different times to people
Far into the past
From Ādam, Mūsā, Hārūn, Īsā
And Muḥammad (saw) came last.
So let's all learn about the Prophets
Read what they came for
‘Alayhimus salām we say
And love them more and more!

Review Questions

Q1. The Ūlul ‘Azm prophets were special because:

- They were the first prophets
- They were the last prophets
- They were the prophets who showed the most patience and strength
- They were the prophets who were given divine laws

Q2. We do not use the previous holy books anymore because:

- The Qur’an covers all their teachings
- we do not have access to those books any more
- Those books have been changed and corrupted
- All the above

Q3. The Book al-Taurāt was revealed to which Prophet:

- Prophet Moses (as)
- Prophet Abraham (as)
- Prophet David (as)

Lesson 3: An Important Message from the Prophets

ALL PROPHETS CAME TO REMIND PEOPLE OF ALLAH (SWT)

All our prophets (124,000) came to remind people of one message, that of believing in Allah (SWT). Therefore, it can be said that all the Prophets (who were muslims) came to teach people who had forgotten about Allah (SWT) (non-muslims). They lived amongst those who did not believe in them nor in their message.

We are Muslims, and therefore we believe in all the previous prophets and as we learnt in the previous lesson, have to try to follow in their footsteps and copy

them so that we can be successful in this world and the next.

As the followers of these Prophets, one of the most important message they taught us was to respect all other people, no matter where they are from, what they look like, what language they speak or which religion they follow. Our Holy Prophet Muḥammad (saw) made sure that he treated everyone equally and did not give himself respect over others. He worked hard just as his friends and companions worked hard. He respected all of them, no matter what their background.

BEHAVIOUR OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (S)

To memorise

In the Quran, Allah says about Prophet Muḥammad (saw):

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

“And truly you (Muḥammad) possess great manners”
(68:4)

The Prophet himself said:

“Surely, I was sent to perfect noble manners”ⁱⁱ

He always spoke in a simple and gentle manner, and with a smiling face.

RESPECTING MUSLIMS

The Prophets (as) taught us that one of the most important things we should do is to respect people, especially if they are Muslims. When we around other Muslims, the Prophets (as) have told us to:

- Smile at them and be cheerful towards them
- Help them whenever they need help
- Never insult them or make jokes about them
- If they need something, we should give it to them even if we need it more than them

RESPECTING NON-MUSLIMS

Just like the prophets taught us to respect Muslims, they have also taught us to respect non-Muslims. Just

because a person is not a Muslim, it is not an excuse to insult them or hurt them in any way.

Imam Ḥasan (as), our second Imam, had the habit of waking up early in the morning and joining his mother Sayyedah Fāṭimah in reciting *Salatul Layl* or the mid-night prayer. He would see that his mother would pray for all their neighbours but would never pray for herself or her own family. One day he asked her why she did this. She said: 'The neighbour comes before one's own family'.

The Prophet (saw) used to respect his neighbours so much. In fact, one time, the prophet had non-Muslim neighbours who made a hole in the wall between their houses and would push their rubbish into the Prophet's yard. When the Prophet noticed this, his neighbours became very scared and thought the Prophet would start a fight with them. However, the Prophet simply cleaned the rubbish and did not say anything. They were so amazed by this that they themselves became Muslim.

From this we learn that whether our neighbours are Muslims or not, we should respect them and not be rude to them. In fact we should be friendly towards them, and set a good example by showing good manners and respect, so that they can see through us what a great religion Islam is.

In conclusion: We need to show a lot of respect to all people, especially Muslims, but also non-Muslims. We can do this by:

- Helping our neighbours, fellow students at school, people at work regardless of skin colour, age or religion
- Being kind and generous towards everyone
- Spreading Islam to them by showing good character
- Never insulting or hurting anyone

THE PROPHET'S KINDNESS

One day Prophet Muḥammad (saw) was going somewhere at noon and it was too hot in the desert when he saw an old woman carrying her luggage on her head. Prophet Muḥammad (saw) helped her and took the luggage from the woman and carried it for her.

He asked the woman that where she was going and why? She said that I am leaving this town as I have heard that a magician named Muḥammad is in town.

Prophet Muḥammad (saw) was very patient and kind, so he did not say anything and kept listening. The lady kept complaining about Prophet Muḥammad (saw) and that she was felt he was driving her out of her town. She of course did not know it was the Prophet himself who was helping her.

While walking with the Holy Prophet (saw), the lady noticed that this young man had a bright face and was always smiling. He also had a nicely scented perfume.

When they reached the destination, Prophet Muḥammad (saw) put down the luggage and was about to leave when the old woman said: "O, kind person! At least tell me your name!"

Prophet Muḥammad (saw) replied: "I am the person because of whom you left the town." The old lady was amazed to hear that and said that such a kind and helpful person could not be a magician. She decided to return home and became among those who loved the Prophet (saw).

Rather than getting angry at the woman or arguing with her, the Prophet (saw) remained helpful and kind, and in this way he invited her to the path of Truth.

Review Questions

Q1. Islam teaches us that we should:

- a) Respect Muslims and non-Muslims
- b) Respect only Muslims
- c) We don't need to respect anyone

Q2. When it comes to our neighbours:

- a) It's not important how we treat them
- b) We should treat them well, and not do anything to harm them
- c) Neither of the above

ⁱ <http://www.al-islam.org/gallery/kids/Books/istories/13.htm>

ⁱⁱ Mizanul Hikmah, narration no. 1946