



Islamic

School Syllabus

MANUAL

LEVEL
3

2017

Book 2 (Year 2)



THEOLOGY

JURISPRUDENCE

SOCIAL-ISLAM

Teacher's Name: _____

Student's Name: _____



Third Edition – 2017
Book 2 of 2 (LEVEL 3)

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This work has been approved by Sheikh Mansour Leghaei and is loosely based around the eHawza (www.eHawza.com). The lessons have been edited and checked for typographical and contextual errors to the best of available resources. Some errors may still be present. Islamic Syllabus does not take responsibility for the teaching of this content, teachers are advised to read widely and use the lessons provided as a foundation.

Supporting resources can be found at www.islamicsyllabus.com

About Us

This syllabus was written and compiled by a team of Islamic studies students and teachers. It was a combined effort from members of various Islamic centres around Australia and the wider global English-speaking Muslim community.

The work was generally supervised by Sheikh Mansour Leghaei, and is loosely based on the eHAWZA, an electronic English-language School of Islamic Theology (www.ehawza.com).

The syllabus has been eight years in the making. However, it remains a work in progress and all suggestions, queries or corrections are welcome.

Please direct these to info@islamicsyllabus.com

Islamic Syllabus Timetable and Calendar*

Week	Date	Islamic Date	Occasion	Main topic	Fiqh Topic
Term 1 -2017					
1	4th Feb	6th Jamadil Awwal	Ayyam Fatimiyyah	Imam Hassan (as)	Further Rules of Prayers
2	11th Feb	13th Jamadil Awwal		Imam Husain (as)	Congregational Prayers
3	18th Feb	20th Jamadil Awwal		Imam Sajjad (as)	Traveller's prayer
4	25th Feb	27th Jamadil Awwal		Imam Baqir (as)	Special Prayers
5	4th Mar	4th Jamadil Thani		Imam Sadiq (as)	Social Rules- Backbiting
6	11th Mar	11th Jamadil Thani		Imam Kadhim (as)	Social Rules- Suspiciousness
7	18th Mar	18th Jamadil Thani		Imam Redha (as)	Social Rules-Social Independence
8	25th Mar	25th Jamadil Thani	Birthday of Sayyida Fatima (as)	Imam Jawad (as)	Healthy Friendships 1
9	1st Apr	3rd Rajab	Martydom of Imam Hadi (as)	Imam Hadi (as)	Healthy Friendships 2
10	8th Apr	10th Rajab		Imam Askari (as)	Healthy Friendships 3
Term 2 -2017					
11	29th Apr	2nd Shabaan		Imam Mahdi 1 (AJTFS)	Being Sociable + Islamic Conversation
12	6th May	9th Shabaan		Imam Mahdi 2 (AJTFS)	Dealing with Our Enemies
13	13th May	16th Shabaan	Birthday of Imam Al-Mahdi (AJTFS)	Imam Mahdi 3 (AJTFS)	Goodness to neighbours + rules of hosting
14	20th May	23rd Shabaan		Prophet Adam (as)	Fasting 1: Intention, conditions
15	27th May	30th Shabaan		Prophet Nuh (as)	Fasting 2: Invalidators of fasting
16	3rd Jun	7th Ramadhan		Prophet Ibrahim (as) -1	Fasting 3: General rules of fasting
17	10th Jun	14th Ramadhan	Islamic Studies Exam	Prophet Ibrahim (as) -2	Fasting 4: Further Fasting Rules
	17th Jun	21st Ramadhan	Shahr Ramadhan Break		
	24th Jun	28th Ramadhan			
Term 3 - 2017					
18	22nd Jul	27th Shawwal		Prophet Yusuf (as) -1	Food and Drink 1
19	29th Jul	5th Dhul Qa'dah		Prophet Yusuf (as) -2	Food and Drink 2
20	5th Aug	12th Dhul Qa'dah		Prophet Musa (as) -1	Community Care
21	12th Aug	19th Dhul Qa'dah		Prophet Musa (as) -2	Community Service 1
22	19th Aug	26th Dhul Qa'dah		Prophet Musa (as) -3	Community Service 2 / Stealing
23	26th Aug	3rd Dhul Hijjah		Prophet Dawud (as)	Hajj
	2nd Sep	10th Dhul Hijjah	EID AL ADHA HOLIDAY		
24	9th Sep	17th Dhul Hijjah		Karbala 1	Hijab 1
25	16th Sep	24th Dhul Hijjah	Eid Mubahala	Karbala 2	Hijab 2
	23rd Sep	2nd Muharram	ASHURA PROGRAMS		
Term 4 - 2017					
26	14th Oct	24th Muharram		Ancient Prophets 1	Music
27	21st Oct	1st Safar		Ancient Prophets 2	Self-Praise (‘Ujb)
28	28th Oct	8th Safar		Prophet Sulayman (as)	Amr Bil Ma'roof/ Nahi Anil Munkar
29	4th Nov	15th Safar		Prophet Ayyoub (as)	Jihad
30	11th Nov	22nd Safar		Prophet Isa (as) 1	Animal Rights
31	18th Nov	29th Safar		Prophet Isa (as) 2	Islam and the Environment
32	25th Nov	7th Rabiul Awwal		Prophet Isa (as) 3	Transaction Laws 1
33	2nd Dec	14th Rabiul Awwal		Revision Lesson	Transaction Laws 2
	9th Dec	21st Rabiul Awwal	End of year examinations LEVEL 5 SYNOPTIC		
	16th Dec	28th Rabiul Awwal			

*** This timetable is based on the NSW school timetable and is assuming classes are on Saturdays. Dates and times may vary in the year (Islamic Dates, events etc.) and based on location. Parents and teachers are advised to keep up to date with school announcements.**

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THEOLOGY

السلام عليك يا حسن المجتبي

IMAM AL-HASAN [A.S]

امام الحسن (ع)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to a brief biography of Imam Ḥasan (as), including the story of his birth and the story of his martyrdom
- Discuss stories from his life showing his noble traits

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Lesson 1: Imam Ḥasan



Janat-ul-Baqee' – Medina

Imam Ḥasan (as) is the son of Imam 'Ali (as) and Sayyedah Fāṭimah (as). He is the grandson of the Prophet (saw). He is our second Imam, and was known particularly for his noble manners and good conduct with all people. In this lesson, we will learn some facts about his life, as well as discuss some of his amazing characteristics.

IMAM ḤASAN'S LIFE

Imam Ḥasan (as) was the oldest child of Imam 'Ali (as) and Sayyedah Fāṭima (as). A short while after they were married, he was born. When Imam 'Ali (as) was asked to name him, he said he would wait for the Prophet (saw) to name him. The Prophet (saw) came, but he said he would wait for a revelation from Allah before he named this young boy. Allah (SWT) ordered the Prophet (saw) to give him the same names as the son of Prophet Harūn (Aaron) the brother of Prophet Musa (as). The Arabic translation of the name of the son of Prophet Harūn was al-Ḥasan.

During his childhood, Imam Ḥasan (as) was very close to the Prophet (saw). The Prophet (saw) would treat Hassan and Husayn very well and loved them very much. He would always play with them and spent a lot of time with them. One day, while he was giving a speech, the two young boys walked into the mosque. While walking, they tripped and fell. The Prophet (saw) stopped his speech, went to pick the two boys up and sat them on his lap until he finished his speech.

Another time, Osama (one of the Prophet's companions) knocked on Prophet's door during the night and saw something shiny in the lap of the Prophet. He asked what these lights were and the Prophet replied: "These are my sons (Hassan and Husain) and the sons of my daughter. O Allah you know I love them, so you too love them and love those who love them."

Imam Ḥasan (as) lived under the guidance of his grandfather (the Holy Prophet) for seven years and then his father Imam 'Ali (as) for over 30 years helping to spread the word of Islam. After his grandfather passed away, he assisted his father in many battles and was a brave and strong warrior for Islam. Before Imam 'Ali (as) passed away, he appointed his son Imam al-Ḥasan (as) as the next leader of the Muslim community. Imam al-Ḥasan (as) was the Imam of the Muslims for ten years before he himself passed away.

HIS IMAMAT

During the period of his Imamat, he suffered a lot of hardship. Mu'āwiyah, the tyrant ruler of Shām wanted to be the leader of the Muslims himself, and he was constantly causing problems for Imam Ḥasan (as) and his followers. Imam Ḥasan set out with an army to fight Mu'āwiyah, just like his father Imam 'Ali (as) had done. However, before the war began, the Imam's army betrayed him. Two of the top leaders of the army left the Imam and joined Mu'āwiyah's army, while his soldiers were easily tricked and confused by Mu'āwiyah's plans, and did not obey their Imam as they were supposed to. Finally, the Imam (as) was forced to sign a peace treaty with Mu'āwiyah to protect his true followers from harm and to keep the Muslim nation safe from being torn apart completely.

After ten years of being the Imam of the Muslims, Imam Ḥasan (as) was killed at the age of 47. He was poisoned to death, most likely by his wife, who had been convinced

by Mu'āwiyah to poison the Imam (as). His grave is now in Medina, in Saudi Arabia. It is located in the Baqī' cemetery, not far from the grave of the Holy Prophet.

THE IMAM'S GENEROSITYⁱ

The Imam (as) would always try his best to help people who were suffering from poverty.

The Imam (as) halved his entire wealth a number of times. He would take all that he had and halve it and give one half to the poor.

One day, he was praying in the Holy Mosque when he heard a man praying to Allah (SWT) because he needed a large amount of money. When the Imam (as) heard this, he went home and sent that exact amount to that man who was praying in the mosque.

There are many other examples of his generosity and we as his followers have to try to be generous too so that our Imam can be proud of us.

THE IMAM'S HUMBLENESS

The Imam (as) was extremely humble. One day, he was riding by on his horse when a group of poor beggars, who were eating a meal on the floor, asked him to join them and share their meal. He got down from his horse and joined them without any hesitation. This made them very happy. He did not feel like they were 'lower' than him or less worthy than him.

The Imam walked from Medina to Mecca on foot many times to perform the Hajj. He would go with people who did not know him so that they would not be too shy to let him walk.

One day, the companion of the Imam (as) saw him eating while a dog was nearby. The Imam (as) would eat one bite and throw the next bite for the dog. His companions said: '*Should I get rid of this dog for you?*' The Imam (as) replied:

"No, I am too shy to eat alone while another living creature is looking at me."

THE IMAM'S CALMNESS AND GOOD MANNERS

When a person insulted the Imam (as), rather than insulting them in return, he would stop and ask forgiveness for that person.

One day, a person from Syria came to the city of Imam Ḥasan (as) and began to curse and swear at the Imam (as) as soon as he saw him. The Imam (as) went over to that man and instead of insulting him invited him to his house. He fed the man, gave him accommodation and looked after him for three days. The man was very much impressed by this and began to love the Imam and hate the enemies of the Imam (as).

We have learnt some very special characteristics of this great Imam, let us try to follow his footsteps and try to be humble, generous, calm and good mannered to all the people we come across. Let's try extra hard to be good to our parents, siblings, relatives and friends.

Class Activity

Split into groups of three. Each group should pick one of the stories above from the Imam's life and act it out.

BRIEF SAYINGS OF THE IMAM

"There is no poverty like ignorance."

"The annihilation of people lies in three things; arrogance, greed and jealousy."

ⁱ The references for all the stories is Biharul Anwar, the chapter on the life and virtues of Imam Hasan (as)

Review Questions

Q1. The Imam (as) showed that:

- We should not mix with very poor people
- We should mix with poor people and make them feel comfortable
- We should mix with poor people but should not eat with them

Q2. When a person insulted the Imam (as), the Imam

- Would reply in the same way
- Would ask forgiveness for that person
- Would plan revenge against that person later

Q2. Imam Ḥasan signed a peace treaty because:

- He wanted to prevent further bloodshed of true believers
- He wanted to expose Mu'āwiyah
- Both of the above

Q3. Mu'awiyah was from which family?

- Umayyad
- Abbasid
- Banu Tamim

IMAM HUSAIN (A.S.)

امام الحسين (ع)

Objectives >>>

Students should understand:

- The objective of Imam Ḥusayn's sacrifice in Karbala
- The effects of his martyrdom on the Islamic nation
- That there are many untrue accounts of the events of Karbala and we need to distinguish the true narrations from the false ones
- That Imam Ḥusayn's love for Allah (SWT) was the motivation behind his sacrifice

Imam Ḥusayn (as)

In this lesson we will be introducing the Master of the Martyrs, Imam Ḥusayn (as). Imam Ḥusayn (as) is not an ordinary man, as he was one of the members of the purified household of the Holy Prophet (saw). However, beyond this, he was subject to a calamity which has made his name one of the most emphasised in our faith. Due to his highly-esteemed position and the greatness of the revolution he set off, we need to learn and understand as much about his life as we can. This way we might grow and learn from the life of our Imam even more

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3



IMAM ḤUSAYN: HIS LINEAGE AND POSITION

Imam Ḥusayn (as) was the third ma'ṣūm Imam. He is also father of all the remaining Imams (as they all came from his lineage), the last of which is our present Imam. Imam Ḥusayn (as) had a very special position in the eyes of the Prophet (saw) and the Prophet loved him very much. The Prophet (saw) used to say:

“O God, I love both of them (Ḥasan and Ḥusayn (as)). Therefore love them and love whoever loves them.”

Then he said:

“Whoever loves Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, is the one whom I love. Whomever I love, God loves, and whomever God loves, He will cause to enter Heaven. Whoever hates them, I hate and God hates. Whomever God hates, He will cause to enter the Fire.”

Then he said:

“These two sons of mine are my two plants of sweet basil (to sweeten) the world.”

IMAM HUSAIN: HIS CHARACTERISTICS

HIS BRAVERY:

Imam Husayn's (as) bravery needs no introduction. One who vaguely knows the events of Karbala would immediately witness to his bravery and valour in all situations. With his small but sincere army, he faced an army of thousands. However, he did not back down and did not step back from his sacrifice. He was afraid of no one but Allah and he never stepped away from a battle for the sake of Allah and for the sake of justice.

HIS SACRIFICING SELF

As noted above, Imam Husayn (as) was willing to step forward and sacrifice everything for the sake of Islam. All of his actions on the day and before the day of Karbala present the way in which his only aim was the pleasure of Allah (SWT).

We see the peak of this on the day of Karbala, when Imam Husayn (as) is holding his infant son, the six month old Abdullah.. Abdullah was martyred in his father's own arms. An arrow was shot into the neck of this young child and the blood spurted onto the hands of Imam Husayn (as). At this very point we hear the immortal call of Imam Husayn (as):

“It makes what is befalling me easier, that it is happening in the sight of Allah.”

CAN WE FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF IMAM HUSAYN (AS)?

Now, we have seen how Imam Husayn (as) was prepared to sacrifice everything for the sake of Allah (SWT). But are we on the same path of the Imam?

We may not be in the same position as the Imam, however, we are still being tested in our lives to see which is more important to us, Allah (SWT) or this world. If we want to be like Imam Husayn (as) we must sacrifice like he did.

Let us consider some scenarios before us and see whether we would choose Allah (SWT) or this world:

- You are walking on a very hot day, you are sweating and tired. There is nothing around you, until you come across a corner shop and want to buy some water. The only thing is you are fasting. What would you do in this situation?
- You just organised a day out with your friends and you will be meeting up to spend some time together. You have been waiting for it all week. On the same day, your mother is tired and she needs help around the house. She asks you, “Can you please help me out around the house today, I really can't do it by myself?” Will you choose your friends or the pleasure of your mother? The pleasure of your mother is the pleasure of Allah (SWT).
- You have just finished your homework, after a long day at school and sport. You were looking forward to watching some television and relaxing. You get a phone call saying that the local Islamic centre needs your help, or there is a very special program at the centre tonight. Will you choose to relax or go to the centre?
- You have been saving up for six months to get one of your favourite game consoles. You then hear that there is an opportunity for a limited time, to send the money to go to orphans. What would you do?

All of the scenarios above did not require you to sacrifice your life or even your family; only a bit of time or money. Were some of us struggling in deciding what we should do?

Write a few scenarios yourself and share them with your classmates. You don't need to tell anybody what you will do, but answer yourself honestly, and see whether you would sacrifice for the sake of Allah (SWT) in these scenarios?

Some of the different types of sacrifice for Allah (SWT):

- Money
- Time

- Life
- Family
- Ego

BRIEF SAYINGS OF THE IMAM

“Do you not see that the right is not being put into practice and distance is not being taken from the falsehood? (In this situation) the faithful is inclined to meet Allah.”

(TUHAFUL UQOOL, P 245)

“The intellect does not achieve completion except by observance and following of the right.”

(BIHAR UL ANWAR VOL 78, P 127)

Review Questions

Q1. Imam Husayn (as)

- Was the nephew of the Prophet (saw)
- Was the grandson of the Prophet (saw)
- Was the great-grandson of the Prophet

Q2. Imam Husayn (as) taught us

- We should sacrifice our pleasures in this world for the sake of God
- We should take care of ourselves in this world
- We should sacrifice time and money, but never our lives, for the sake of God

KARBALA

کربلاء

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Imam Ḥusayn (as)

THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE MUSLIMS LEADING TO KARBALA

When Prophet Muḥammad (saw) passed away, the teachings of Islam that he had introduced also died with him. The Muslims were being ruled by tyrants who mocked and made fun of the original teachings of Islam. In addition, narrating the words of the Prophet (saw) was not allowed anymore. During this time, racism was very common and the Zakāt money was being used for personal gain and luxury.

When Mu'āwiyah ibn Sufyan took power, the situation became worse and the environment in which the Muslims were living in became even more threatening. There were very few Muslims who dared to speak out against him & show support towards the Ahlul Bayt (as); those who did were brutally murdered. After Mu'āwiyah's death, his son Yazīd continued to rule the people by instilling fear in them. Just like his father, he was a very corrupt man who drank wine, killed innocent people and openly disobeyed the laws of God.

THE KŪFANS TURN TO IMAM ḤUSAYN

The Muslims in Kūfah were desperate to end the injustice of Yazīd's rule. They wrote to Imam Ḥusayn (as) urging and pleading him to come to Kūfah to be their leader. Imam Ḥusayn (as) was in Medina at the time when he received almost 12000 letters from the Kūfans. Imam (as) sent his cousin Muslim Ibn Aqīl to Kūfah, to find out exactly what was going on before Imam (as) himself took any action.

Objectives >>>

Students should understand:

- The political and social situation of the Imam, Muslims and Islam prior to Karbala
- What happened in Medina that caused Imam Ḥusayn (as) to leave
- Know that Imam moved to Mecca so as to seek a global platform, seek refuge with Allah (SWT) and as opposition to falsehood
- Understand why Imam left Mecca to go to Kūfah with brief details of his journey.
- Be reminded that Karbala and 'Āshurā' should always be upheld for it keeps our Islam alive
- The composition of the Imam's army, including most prominent family members and companions
- The characteristics of the people in the Imam's army, and how this can be generalised to any time or place
- How the Imam ended up at the land of Karbala
- The events prior to 'Āshurā' and brief details of the events of the tenth day, dispelling common myths such as
 - The age of Ali al-Akbar and al-Qāsim ibn Ḥasan
 - Exaggeration about people killed by the army of Imam Ḥusayn (as)
 - Apparent marriage of Qāsim
- Should be wary of sermons where preposterous and fabricated stories of Imam Ḥusayn (as) are mentioned that contradict Islamic principles
- Should be aware of the most reliable literature on the story of Karbala in the English language.
- The role of Zaynab (as) on the night after 'Āshurā' and thereafter
- A brief discussion of the aftermath of 'Āshurā'

In the meantime, Imam Ḥusayn (as) learnt that Yazīd had sent secret agents to Mecca to kill him. In order to avoid bloodshed in the holy land of Mecca, Imam Ḥusayn (as) together with his family left for Kūfah. It is important to remind ourselves of the objective and intention of the Imam (as) and why he carried out this movement. Imam Ḥusayn (as) says:

“Certainly I am not departing (Medina) out of pleasure or seeking corruption or oppression. I am only rising to make correction to the nation of my grandfather Muhammad peace be upon him and his family. I want to command good, forbid evil...”

From this we learn that Imam Ḥusayn’s (as) main motive and goal was to re-establish those Islamic values and practises that died with the Prophet (saw).

MUSLIM IBN AQĪL, THE IMAM’S MESSENGER

Muslim Ibn Aqīl received a very warm welcome when he initially arrived in Kūfah. He was there to see whether the Kūfans were truthful in their invitation to the Imam (as). On seeing the overwhelming support from the Muslims of Kūfah, Muslim Ibn Aqīl wrote to Imam (as) asking him to come to Kūfah. Having heard about this, the governor of Kūfah, Ubaydullāh Ibn Ziyād, scared of all the support that Muslim Ibn Aqīl was receiving from the Kūfans, threatened to kill anyone who associated themselves with Muslim Ibn Aqīl.

Sadly, it did not take long for the Kūfans to desert Muslim Ibn Aqīl and leave him all alone. He was left wandering the streets of Kūfah with no supporters while Ubaydullāh’s men searched for him. This showed Muslim that the Kūfans were not sincere in their invitation. Yet now he had no means to let Imam Ḥusayn (as) know of the sudden change in circumstances.

Muslim Ibn Aqīl wandered the streets of Kūfah with no place to stay nor food to eat when a kind woman by the name of Ṭaw’ah offered care to Muslim. She knew exactly who Muslim was and she loved Imam Ḥusayn (as). Muslim Ibn Aqīl spent the night worshipping Allah (SWT) as the army of Ibn Ziyād were looking for him everywhere. Unfortunately, Ṭaw’ah’s son, who had heard of the reward that Ibn Ziyād had placed for whoever finds Muslim, revealed the location of Muslim Ibn Aqīl to Ibn Ziyād and his army. In the early hours of the morning, Muslim heard the march of the army and hooves of the

horses and immediately understood that the army were here to take and kill him.

Muslim Ibn Aqīl thanked his kind host before he left her house. It is reported that Muslim Ibn Aqīl fought with the enemies bravely. However, the power and strength of one man fighting hundreds eventually diminished. Muslim Ibn Aqīl was attacked from every side until he was captured and taken to the castle. There, he was taken to the roof, where his head was severed and his body was thrown from the roof then dragged through the streets of Kūfah.

In his final moments, the person who killed Muslim mentions that as he got closer to Muslim, he heard him glorifying God and seeking His forgiveness.

THE IMAM’S JOURNEY

As we mentioned earlier, Imam Ḥusayn (as) left Medina and made his way to the holy city of Mecca. While he was there, he learnt of Yazīd’s plan to kill him. Therefore, to avoid bloodshed in the holy land of Mecca, he left for Kūfah. On his journey, Imam Ḥusayn (as) stopped at 13 different places and as mentioned in history books, our Imam (as) stayed at some of these places, met people and also delivered sermons



THE MEETING WITH ḤURR

Before reaching Kūfah, the Imam’s army were stopped by a small army led by a man by the name of Ḥurr. Ḥurr was a general in the army of Yazīd and he had been ordered to stop the Imam from reaching Kūfah.

When the two armies met, Ḥurr's men were thirsty so Imam Ḥusayn (as) ordered his men to give them water. The Imam himself helped several thirsty soldiers to drink. Even animals were given water to drink. Ḍuhr prayers were led by the Imam (as) and all prayed behind him including Ḥurr's soldiers. Here the Imam Ḥusayn (as) told Ḥurr about many letters from Kūfah. He said:

“O People of Kūfah, you sent me your delegations and wrote me letters that you had no Imam and that I should come to unite you and lead you in the way of Allah. You wrote that we the Ahlul Bayt are more qualified to govern your affairs than those who claim things to which they have no right and act unjustly and wrongly. But if you have changed your mind, have become ignorant of our Rights and have forgotten your promises, I shall turn back.”

However, Imam Ḥusayn (as) was denied from turning back by Ḥurr's army and was lead to bypass Kūfah. After a few more days, the Imam (as) and his camp were led through the desert till they reached a place called Karbala. The Imam asked for the name of the place. Someone said Karbala. On hearing this name, the Imam asked the caravan to stop and settle there for they had arrived at their destination. The Imam (as) said:

“This is the place of our Martyrdom. This is Karbala”

Like the people of Kūfah who were hypocritical to the Imam of their time, we need to look into ourselves and question our sincerity and love toward our Imam. Are we amongst those who constantly call and pray for his quick reappearance but at the same time pay little attention to the majority of our actions that displease him? Are we cowards in front of the tyrants of our time? Are we willing to sacrifice all our comforts to be with him? ⁱ

Review Questions

Q1. Who did the Imam send as his representative to Kūfah:

- Muslim Ibn Aqīl
- Hani Ibn 'Urwah
- Ali al-Akbar, his oldest son

Q2. Why didn't the people of Kufa support the Imam?

- They loved this world and did not want to sacrifice it
- They were attracted by the expensive gifts that Ubaydulāh Ibn Ziyād offered to them
- They did not like Imam Ḥusayn

Lesson 2: The Imam's Army

Imam Ḥusayn (as) left Medina with an army of 72 people, including women and young children. Some of his immediate family members in this army included:

- The Imam's three sons:
 - Imam Zainul Abidīn (as)
 - Ali al-Akbar
 - Abdullah (Ali al-Asghar)
- The Imam's brother Abbas Ibn Ali
- The Imam's sister Zaynab Bint Ali along with her two young sons 'Aun and Muḥammad
- The Imam's young nephew Qāsim ibn al-Ḥasan

As the Imam left Mecca and headed towards Kūfah, thousands of people joined his army. However, when they heard the news of the death of Muslim in Kūfah, they slowly began to leave the Imam also. According to historical reports, the Imam's army consisted of about 72-100 people by the time he reached Karbala ⁱⁱ but with almost 8000 soldiers in the army of Ibn Ziyad, the Imam's army did not appear as a strong one.

THE CHARACTER OF THE IMAM'S ARMY

The fighters and companions of the Imam (as) army were unique in many ways. They were not scared of death and instead would compete with each other for martyrdom. The Prophet (saw) said:

“Ḥusayn (as) will be amongst those who will glitter like shining stars, those who compete against each other for martyrdom”

When someone asked Imam Ṣādiq (as) as to why the companions had such a positive attitude toward death and why they were so eager toward it, he replied:

“The curtain of this world was removed for them and they observed their status in Paradise.”

We need to ask ourselves why we don't share the same enthusiasm as the companions of the Imam (as). We are told of the reality of our actions by our Imam. For example, we know that attending the gathering of remembrance of Allah (SWT) and the Ahlul Bayt (as) is as if we are entering the gardens of paradise.

So why aren't we as passionate in performing those actions just like the companions of Imam Ḥusayn (as)?

BRIEF EVENTS OF THE NIGHT AND DAY OF ASHURA

The companions were extremely loyal toward the Imam and would never allow any harm to reach him. For example, some of his companions would surround the Imam (as) whilst he recited his prayer and their bodies took all the arrows the enemies shot.

The Imam (as) was taking a nap before midday on the day before 'Āshūrā' (9th Muḥarram) when the hooves of the horses and the beat of the drums were heard in the distance. The enemies tried to instil fear in the hearts of the Imam's camp. Umar ibn Sa'd cried out to his men: 'O horseman who are riding their horses for the sake of God, ride towards Ḥusayn so that I give you the good news of paradise'.

On hearing this, Imam Ḥusayn (as) requested his brother Abbas to speak to the enemies and ask them for one more extra night so that they could worship and pray. The enemies obliged thinking that the Imam's men were scared.

Before sunset, Shimr shouted at the Imam's camp: 'Where are the children of our sisters? Where are our nephews (referring to the children of Ummul Banīn i.e. Abbas). Come over (onto our side) and you will be safe.'

Abbas shouted back:

"Shame on you! May your hands be cut off! Which blood relation is more important to safeguard? Yours or that of the Holy Prophet (saw)?"

After Maghreb, the Imam gathered his companions and gave them a talk. He began with the sweet praise of Allah (SWT) even though he knew what was going to happen to him and his family the following day. The Imam (as) said:

"I do not know of any companions more loyal and better than all of you. These enemies are after my blood so take advantage of the darkness of this night and leave if you have any commitments (obligations)."

(Some narrations also say that Imam turned his face so that no one would feel embarrassed to leave his presence)

Not a single person moved.

'Abbas said to his Imam:

"O Imam! Where will we go? How can we leave you? We will all die before they touch you!"

Replies from other companions:

- Muslim Ibn 'Awsajah:

"O Ḥusayn, This is my sword and I have been sharpening it. This is my arrow and I have been sharpening it. Even if I lose this sword, I shall fight with my bare hands but I will never leave you."

- Sa'id bin Abdullah:

"I don't care even if I'm martyred and then miraculously brought back to life, and then burnt to death and then brought to life again 70 times just in order to protect you. What is once giving my life for the sake of God?"

- Zuhair Ibn al-Qayn:

"I wish I was given life a thousand times just so that I can protect you"

These brave and loyal companions spent the rest of the night worshipping Allah (SWT), their prayers sounded like the humming of bees; and many spent most of the night in prostration (sujūd), bowing and crying.

MARTYDOM OF QĀSIM BIN AL ḤASAN

Qāsim was the son of Imam al-Ḥasan (as). He was very young when the event of 'Āshūrā' took place. He asked permission to go to the battlefield but Imam Ḥusayn (as) refused to grant him permission. Qāsim continuously kissed the hands and feet of Imam Ḥusayn (as) until he gave him the permission. Qāsim left for the battlefield while tears were flowing from his eyes as he addressed the enemies giving them an introduction of who he was. He fought bravely and even though he was so young he fought thirty-five men until eventually the weak enemies surrounded Qāsim and killed him. Qāsim called for his uncle to pay his final respects to the Imam. The Imam pressed Qāsim's head against his chest and said:

"Far be the nation who have killed you, while their enemy on the day of Qiyyamah (judgement) shall be your grandfather (the prophet)"

MARTYDOM OF 'ALI AL AKBAR

Ali al-Akbar was the oldest son of Imam Ḥusayn (as). He resembled the Prophet (saw) in every way. Ali al-Akbar asked permission from his father to fight. The Imam (as) reluctantly gave him permission and looked at his son as though he was never going to see him again. It is related that the Imam lifted his beard toward the heaven and said:

“O Allah, be a witness upon these men, that the youth who resembles your Prophet the most in character and speech is proceeding towards them. Whenever we desired beholding the face of your Prophet, we would look at him.....”ⁱⁱⁱ

Ali al-Akbar entered the battlefield like a vicious lion, attacking several enemies. He killed so many soldiers that the enemy started grieving. However, after some while, Ali al-Akbar, who hadn't had water for three days, eventually became tired; he went to his father saying:

“O father! Thirst is killing me while the load of iron has rid me of strength. Is there water available so that I may regain strength and pounce (ambush) the enemies?”

Hearing this Imam Ḥusayn (as) wept and said:

“O dear son! Fight for a while, and very soon you shall see your grandfather. You shall drink from his flowing cup and shall never be thirsty”

Ali al-Akbar returned towards the battlefield and continued killing the enemies until one person faced him and threw a spear at him throwing him to the ground. Seeing that Ali al-Akbar was on the ground, the enemy surrounded him from all sides and continued attacking him with their swords and arrows mercilessly. As he lay on the floor, he called out to his father:

“O dear father! Peace be upon you! Here is my grandfather, the Prophet of Allah (SWT) calling me to hasten toward paradise”

MARTYDOM OF ‘ABBAS

‘Abbas was the brother of Imam Ḥusayn (as) and the commander of the Imam's army. ‘Abbas was known for his physical strength and bravery. He was never permitted to fight until the children's cries for water were heard from the camp so the Imam (as) asked ‘Abbas to bring water for the children. ‘Abbas proceeded toward the enemies and advised and warned them but to no avail.

He took a water-skin and mounted on his horse and rode toward the river Euphrates. He made his way through the group of the enemy who were guarding the water and made it to the Euphrates. He filled the water-skin and headed back toward the camp. The enemies blocked his way and one of them severed ‘Abbas's right hand with his sword. ‘Abbas (as) placed the water-skin on his left shoulder. Another enemy severed his left hand. ‘Abbas carried the water skin with his teeth until an enemy pierced the water skin and all the water flowed from it. Another arrow pierced his heart and he fell off from his horse and called out to his Imam:

“O Master! Peace be upon you”^{iv}

It is stated that when ‘Abbas (as) was martyred, Imam Ḥusayn (as) said:

“Now my back has bent, and my efforts have weakened”

WHY DO WE MOURN FOR IMAM HUSAYN AND HIS FAMILY?

Throughout the year and in particular during the month of Muḥarram, we mourn for Imam Ḥusayn (as) and his family. The reason we do so is not only because of the brutal and merciless treatment that the Imam and his family faced, but also to remember the values that the Imam stood for. This includes intolerance towards any tyrant and oppressor who openly violates the laws of God stand up for the truth and to fight off evil.

BRIEF SAYINGS OF THE IMAM (AS)

“One who wishes to reach a goal and aim through sin and transgression, the way to that aim would get blocked and soon he would fall into danger.”

(TUHFUL AQOOL, P248)

“The one who loves you forbids you (from committing evil) and the one who has enmity with you entices and allures you (to commit evil)”

(BIHAR UL ANWAR VOL 78, P 128)

Review Questions

Q1. Why were the companions of the Imam competing against each other for martyrdom?

- a. They wanted to be the first to protect their Imam
- b. They had seen their great position in paradise
- c. Both a and b

Q2. We cry and weep for Imam Ḥusayn because:

- a. he was killed in a merciless way
- b. we love the Imam very much
- c. we wish to purify our sins by crying
- d. It is a reminder that we should fight for truth against falsehood
- e. All of the above

ⁱ References:

All historical facts and sayings of the Imam in this lesson are from *Nafasul Mahmoom* by Sheikh Abbas Al Qummi .

ⁱⁱ According to the 'Holy Visiting' the companions numbered 89, according to *Mahallati* 228 and according to *Seyyed Mohsin Ami* 139

ⁱⁱⁱ *Tasliyatul Majalis* as quoted in *Nafasul Mahmoom* Pg 269

^{iv} *Bihar al- Anwaar*

السلام عليك يا زين العابدين و سيد الساجدين

IMAM AL-SAJJAD [A.S]

امام السجاد (ع)

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Imam al-Sajjād (as)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- That Imam al-sajjād is our fourth Imam
- The amazing worship of Imam sajjād (as)
- The historical environment in which the Imam lived, and how he was an example for the Shi'ah through his worship and supplications
- The rewards of prostration and be introduced to special prostrations

Imam al-Sajjād (as) is the fourth divinely appointed Imam and successor of the Holy Prophet. In previous years, we have learnt about his great personality and his outstanding level of worship of Allah (SWT). In this lesson, we will take a brief look at the life of Imam al-Sajjād (as), focusing on some of the outstanding characteristics that the Imam had so we can learn from them, such as the amazing nature of his worship and supplications.

IMAM AL-SAJJĀD (A.S)

Imam Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn (as) is our fourth holy Imam, and so the fourth successor after the Holy Prophet (saw). His father was Imam Ḥusayn (as), and his mother's name was Shahrbanoo, the daughter of the last Sassanid king of pre-Islamic Iran. Imam Ali ibn Ḥusayn worshipped Allah (SWT) while in prostration (sajdah) so much so that he was known amongst the people as al-Sajjād (the prostrating Imam), and Sayyidul-Sajidīn (the leader of those who prostrate). The Imam was also famously known as Zainul 'Abidīn (the Adornment of the Worshipers), due to the amount of worship he used to perform to Allah (SWT). It is said that time and again his grandfather 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib would hug him and say, "My son, you are Zainul Abidīn"

THE AMAZING LEVEL OF WORSHIP

In order to illustrate the amazing worship of Imam al-Sajjād (as), we will relate the following story. It is reported by Sheikh Mufīd that once Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (as) saw that his father's face had turned yellow through weeping all night. His forehead was hurt.

His legs and feet were swollen from standing long hours in prayers. Imam al-Bāqir (as) started weeping. Imam al-Sajjād (as) asked his weeping son to bring to him the book containing the prayers of Imam Ali (as). He then read from the book for a while and closing it, he said: "who is strong enough to worship the way 'Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib used to do?" The message from Imam al-Sajjād (as) was: compared to my grandfather my prayers are too short and too little. So let me do as much as I can.

THE AFTERMATH OF KARBALA

The historical period directly after Karbalā', was a very severe and difficult one for the Ahlul Bayt (as) and their followers. After the tragedy in Karbalā', more and more revolts and uprisings were occurring against the rule of Yazīd. As a result, the tyrant Yazīd continued to brutally pursue and kill anyone who opposed his rule. In order to keep Islam alive in such a severe situation, without angering the government of Yazīd, Imam al-Sajjād (as) led a quiet life while preaching Islam in two main ways.

Firstly, he kept alive the message of his father Imam Ḥusayn (as) regarding Islam through mourning. There was not a day that passed without the Imam crying in memory of his father and those who gave their lives in Karbalā'. He also encouraged his followers to regard it as their duty to remember the martyrs of Karbalā' as often as they could.

The second most important thing that the Imam did after returning from Damascus was to spend a lot of his time praying to Allah (SWT). His prayers were not only in the form of Salāt but also in the form of du'ā' or supplications. By reading these supplications and teaching them to his followers, the Imam not only taught Muslims how to pray to Allah (SWT), but also explained to them the true teachings and essence of Islam.

PROSTRATION: THE BEST POSITION

As we mentioned earlier, Imam al-Sajjād (as) received this title because of his frequent and long prostration to Allah (SWT). What is the benefit of this prostration that our Imam used to do for long periods of time?

Our sixth Imam, Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) has said:

"Prostration is the highest degree of worship that man can perform."ⁱ

So the closest we can ever get to Allah (SWT) spiritually is while we are in the state of prostration.

There are at least two special types of prostrations:

For gratefulness (shukr):

- The prostration of shukr (thankfulness) is highly recommended. It is a way of expressing thanks to Allah (SWT) for the incessant divine blessings which have been showered upon us and our family. During the prostration of shukr, any dhikr or supplication is permissible, but the recital of "shukran lillāh" (thanks to Allah) and "al-ḥamdulillāh" (all praise belongs to Allah) are recommended.

For repentance (tawbah):

- The prostration for repentance is a way of seeking the forgiveness of Allah (SWT) for past sins and mistakes that we have committed. In the prostration, any words can be recited, one of which is: 'Astaghfirullāh Rabbi Wa Atūbu Ilayh' (I seek forgiveness from my Lord, and I repent to Him).

DU'Ā': OUR BOND WITH ALLAH (SWT)

Another outstanding aspect of Imam al-Sajjād's (as) character was the Imam's attention to supplications to Allah (SWT). In the following āyah, Allah (SWT) says that had it not been for people supplicating to Him (their Creator), He would have had nothing to do with them:

" Say: 'Had it not been for your prayers (supplications), my Lord would not have cared about you'"ⁱⁱⁱ

So to keep a strong bond between us and our Creator, we have to continuously turn to our Lord and supplicate to Him.

Supplication also helps us reach our goals more easily. The Holy Prophet (saw) said:

"When Allah wants to answer or respond to His servant, He allows him [through divine succour] to supplicate."ⁱⁱⁱ

AL-ṢAḤĪFAH AL-SAJJĀDIYAH

Most of the supplications of Imam al-Sajjād (as) today exist in a book called "al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah". The Imam used to teach these supplications to his sons Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (a.s) and Zayd, the martyr. The following du'a' is from this most valuable book of wisdom and spirituality:

"Make us love what we dislike in Your decree and make easy for us what we find difficult in Your decision!"^{iv}

BRIEF SAYINGS OF THE IMAM

"Take care not to acquire the companionship of a liar for he is like a mirage (deceiving). He shows you the near thing as distant and the distant thing as nearby."

(TUHAFUL UQOOL, P 279)

"Guard against lies, both small and big of them, in all conditions, both in seriousness and joke."

ⁱ (al-Da'aawat, p. 33, no. 70)

ⁱⁱ (Holy Qur'ān, 25:77).

ⁱⁱⁱ (Kanz al-'Ummal, no. 3156)

^{iv} (Sahifah Sajjadiyha - His Supplication in Asking for the Best)

Other References:

Review Questions

Q1. Imam al-Sajjād (as) was also known as:

- Sayyidul Sājidīn (the leader of those who prostrate)
- Zainul 'Abidīn (the Adornment of the Worshippers)
- Both of the above

Q2. Imam al-Sajjād (as) safeguarded Islam by:

- Remaining at home and being silent
- Making a peace treaty with Yazīd
- Mourning for his father and teaching Islam through his amazing worship and supplications.

Q3. According to Imam al-Ṣādiq (as), prostrating to Allah (SWT) is:

- a good worshipping act
- quite rewarding but not as much as other acts
- the highest degree of worship that humans can perform

http://en.rafed.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=166&Itemid=967

<http://www.imamreza.net/eng/imamreza.php?id=9211>

http://www.al-islam.org/dua_hasan-hamdouhi/

IMAM AL-BAQIR^[A.S]

إمام الباقر (ع)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Become acquainted with Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir's biography and titles
- Understand how Imam Bāqir dealt with academic problems at his time
- Understand the importance of knowledge, teachers and scholars

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Imam al-Bāqir (as)

Name: Muḥammad al-Baqir

When referring to the Imam's (as) name, al-Bāqir means the "Unveiler" of knowledge"

Father: Imam Zainul Abidīn (as)

Mother: Fatima bint Ḥasan (she was the daughter of Imam Ḥasan)



Birthplace: Medina



Place of Burial: Medina, Jannatul Baqī'

Duration of Imamate: 19 years

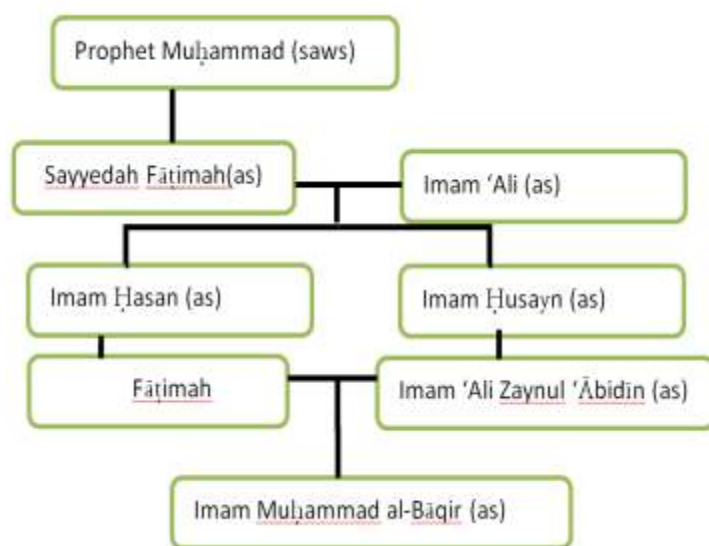
Cause of Martyrdom: Poisoned

HIS TITLES

Al-Bāqir: means to have extremely sharp knowledge that could easily penetrate ignorance. This means that Allah (SWT) had gifted Imam Bāqir (as) all the knowledge about the physical and spiritual world. This title was given to him by the Holy Prophet (saw) long before Imam Bāqir (as) was born. The Prophet (saw) told his companion Jābir ibn ‘Abdullah al-Ansārī:

“You will live long enough to see a descendant of mine whose title will be al-Bāqir. When you see him give him my greetings.”

Ibnul Khiyaratayn: means the son of the two good people – because Imam Bāqir (as) is the only Imam whose parents were both from the descendants of



the Prophet (saw)

WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE IMAM MUḤAMMAD AL-BĀQIR’S (AS) TIME?

- The people who took the position of leadership and government after the Prophet were harsh towards Ahlul Bayt and did not let them freely preach the true teachings of the Prophet.
- During this time, many narrations and teachings that the Prophet (saw) left behind were changed and manipulated.
- This restriction against Ahlul Bayt continued for about 90 years after the Prophet (saw) passed away.

AT THE TIME OF IMAM AL-BĀQIR (AS)

The government was weaker because they were fighting amongst themselves for power, so they could not pay as much attention to Ahlul Bayt and their teachings.

However by that time, many people had wrong information about Islam.

Also, other people were making up narrations (what the Prophet said) so they could sell them and make money.

As you can tell this caused the spread of wrong information about Islam.

HOW DID IMAM AL-BĀQIR (AS) DEAL WITH IT?

People wanted to know the truth about the teachings of Islam. The only person they could find who could answer all their questions was Imam Bāqir (as). That is because he was al-Bāqir i.e. the one who knew all knowledge including the hidden knowledge that other people do not have access to.

He answered all their questions with reasoning and proof from the Holy Qur’ān.

Some people who did not like Ahlul Bayt tried to argue with the Imam but the Imam would always prove them wrong from the Qur’ān.

Even the enemies of Ahlul Bayt had the best to say about the Imam:

“He is the one who split knowledge... His heart was pure, so were his knowledge and actions... he had the noblest character.”ⁱ

WHY DO WE NEED KNOWLEDGE?

Knowledge is in everything and is everywhere! Even behind the tiniest object, there’s an amazing amount of knowledge! Also before you do anything you need to **know** what you are doing and why you are doing it. So to live a proper life and do good things we need knowledge. Imam Bāqir (a.s.) says:

“Actions will not be accepted except if they are done with knowledge. And knowledge is not valued unless it is followed by action.”ⁱⁱ

ⁱⁱⁱImam al-Bāqir (as) says:

“Revising knowledge for an hour is better than staying up the whole night in worship.”^{iv}

What we learn from our Imams and especially Imam al-Bāqir (as) is that we need to make sure that we get the right knowledge so that when we act according to our knowledge we end up doing the right thing and not the wrong thing. We should not just accept anything that anyone tells us without thinking about it. If we don't know what the right thing is we need to ask an expert so that we do not do the wrong thing. That is why we need our scholars.

RESPECTING SCHOLARS

Scholars are very much respected and praised by the Prophet (saw) and Ahlul Bayt because they are the ones who search for true knowledge and give us the best of it to help us in life. So we need to respect them too.

Imam 'Ali (as) says:

“He who shows respect to a scholar has respected his Lord (Allah SWT).”^v

The Holy Prophet (saw) also says:

“... he who sits in the company of the scholars has indeed sat in my company, and whoever sits in my company is as if he has sat in the company of my Lord.”^{vi}

We are also encouraged to teach others what we learn, once we know it well enough. The Holy Prophet says:

“The best form of charity is for a man to gain knowledge and then teach it to his fellow brother.”^{vii}

BRIEF SAYINGS OF THE IMAM

“Nobody remains safe from sin unless he guards his tongue.”

(TUHAFUL UQOOL, P 298)

“Hold the present day in esteem as it is not known to whom tomorrow will belong”

(TUHAFUL UQOOL, P 299)

Review Questions

Q1. Our Imams have taught us that:

- a. Scholars are not important
- b. Scholars should be respected
- c. It is good to spend time with scholars
- d. Both b & c

Q2. Imam al-Bāqir (as) was called Ibnul Khiyaratayn because:

- a. He was from the children of Imam 'Ali (as)
- b. He was from the children of the Prophet (saw)
- c. He was a descendant of both Imam Ḥasan and Imam Ḥusayn (as)

ⁱ (ehawza, as-Sawā'iq al-Muḥriqa, p 201)

ⁱⁱ (Tuḥaf al-Uqūl, p 348)

ⁱⁱⁱ References:

ehawza: First semester, course 2, lecture 9 Imam Bāqir, the unvieler of knowledge

The Scale of Wisdom

Tuḥaf Al-Uqūl

A Bundle of Flowers

The photograph of the Imam's grave:

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Thebes/8540/baqi.gif>

^{iv} (The Scale of Wisdom, p 774)

^v (The Scale of Wisdom, p 783)

^{vi} (The Scale of Wisdom p782)

^{vii} (The Scale of Wisdom, p 778)



IMAM AL-SADIQ ^[A.S.]

امام الصادق (ع)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to Imam al-Ṣādiq as our sixth Imam
- Learn some basic biographical facts about the Imam
- Be introduced to humility as a characteristic the Imam encouraged and practised
- Discuss the definition of humility
- Discuss the opposite of humility which is arrogance
- Discuss the benefits of humility

Imam al-Ṣādiq (as)

In this lesson we are going to discuss the lessons we can learn from the life of our sixth Imam. His name was Imam Ja'far (as). Here are some basic facts about our Imam:

Name:	Ja'far
Title:	Al-Ṣādiq (as) – The Truthful One
Father:	Imam al-Bāqir (as) – the 5 th Imam.
Mother:	Um Farwah Bint Qāsim
Birthdate:	17 th Rabi'ul Awwal 83 A.H (in Medina)
Imamat:	Imam al-Ṣādiq became Imam at the age of 31 years. He was Imam from 114 A.H to 148 A.H (for 34 years)
Martyrdom:	25 th Shawwal 148 A.H He was poisoned.
Buried:	Medina, Saudi Arabia, the cemetery of Baqī'

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) continued his father's legacy of setting up a large teaching centre, like a university. He would teach students from all over the world about various sciences. The success of these institutes can be seen by the number of graduates that the Imam had produced. They numbered over 4,000 in various fields. One of his famous students was Jābir ibn Ḥayyan, famously known today in the Western world as the pioneer of Geometry.

Despite all this great knowledge and achievements of Imam al-Ṣādiq (as), he was always very modest and humble. Not only did the Imam encourage others to be humble, but he himself practiced humility perfectly in all aspects of his life.

WHAT DOES HUMILITY MEAN?

Humility is to avoid acting in a manner which portrays that we are better than others. A person who practices humility is said to be humble. Often, many of us pretend to be humble in the presence of some people and arrogantly when we are in the presence of others. True humility is when it stems from our heart i.e. wherever we go or whoever we meet, we behave in exactly the same way. True humility is best described by the Holy Prophet (saw) when he says:

“There are four distinguishing marks of the humble ones: they pay constant attention to Allah in private and in public, they carry out good works, they contemplate about the Day of Resurrection, and they engage in intimate supplication with Allah.”¹

The opposite of humility is pride and arrogance – the characteristic that caused Satan to be cast away from Allah's mercy.

¹Tuhaf al-'Uqoul, no. 20

Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'ān:

"And when we said to the angels "Prostrate to Adam!" they all prostrated except Iblīs. He refused and he was rude with pride, and so he became one of the unbelievers." (2:34)

Satan (previously known as Iblīs), was a very devoted Jinn. He used to worship Allah (SWT) very much. However, when Allah (SWT) created Adam and ordered all the angels, and Iblīs, to bow down to Adam, Iblīs refused. He said that he was more superior to Adam because he was made from fire and Adam was made from clay.

Similarly, if we find ourselves arrogant and defiant toward the commands of Allah (SWT), we will face the same end as Iblīs. This ayah also teaches us that whoever finds himself to be arrogant should realise that he is under the influence of Satan and he needs to act quickly to remove this arrogance.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HUMILITY?

Although there are several benefits to being humble, we will talk about two of them here:

1. A person who is humble attracts a lot of friends. People enjoy being around him since the humble person listens to them attentively, never makes fun of them and is always willing to help them. This is why the Prophets and Imams were so successful in spreading the message of Islam to their people. The next time you find a simple person who is loved by other people, try to identify what the reason may be.
2. Since a humble person does not think of himself as the best, he finds it very easy to take advice from others or to accept criticism from them. The humble person then acts on the advice to improve himself. An arrogant person on the other hand does not improve himself because he never accepts advice from anyone.

Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) despite being the most pious, knowledgeable and popular person of his time, used to say that the best type of friend was the one who would tell his friend about his faults:

"My best friend is the one who gifts me my weaknesses and shortcomings."²

THE HUMILITY OF PROPHETS

Prophet Mūsa used to climb Mount Sinai and engage in conversation with Allah (SWT). One day Allah (SWT) asked Prophet Mūsa to bring a creature that he (P.Musa) thought was of a lower status than himself.

Prophet Mūsa spent a lot of time thinking about who would be of a lesser status. No matter who he saw, he would think: *'maybe somehow or in this aspect that person is better than me'*.

Eventually, he found no one.

He was on his way back to his place of worship alone. As he was travelling, he saw a rabid dog and thought that surely this dog is of worse status than a human and a prophet. So he put a leash on the dog and took it along with him. However, on the way, he reconsidered and thought: *'even this rabid dog may somehow be better than me'*.

So he set the dog free and came to his place of worship and said to His Lord that he had found no one. Allah, the Exalted, then said:

"O Mūsa, had you brought any of my creatures with you, I would have stripped you of your status as a prophet".

BRIEF SAYINGS OF THE IMAM

"The person who sees his brother involved (in a problem) which is the cause of his trouble and worry and he does not remove it from him although he can do that, has committed a dishonesty with him."

(AMALI AL SAQUD, P 162)

"The most beloved of the brothers to me is the one who presents and indicates to me my faults and shortcomings."

(TUHAFUL UQOOL, P 336)

Review Questions

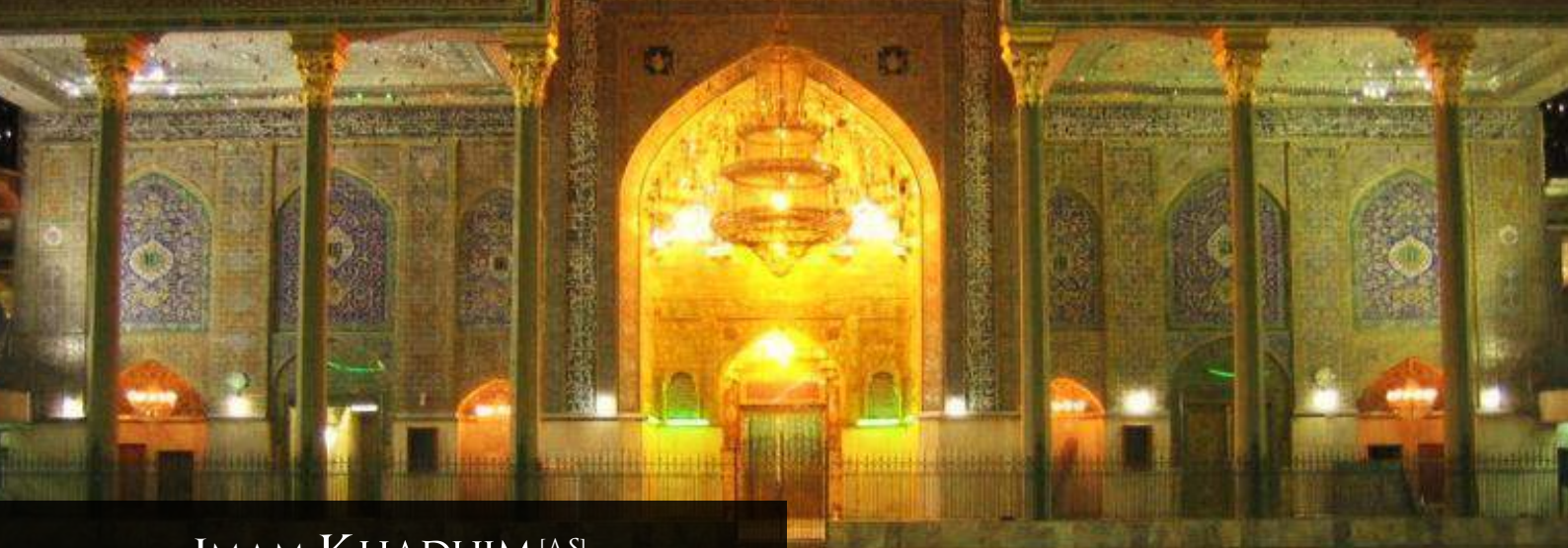
Q1. According to the saying of the Prophet, which of these is NOT a sign of humility?

- a. They always remember Allah (SWT) both in public or private
- b. They think deeply about the day of Judgement
- c. They believe that they are the most pious people

Q2. Which of these is NOT a benefit of being humble?

- a. You attract a lot of friends
- b. You easily accept advice from people
- c. You always argue when someone criticises you

² Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 74 p. 282



IMAM KHADHIM ^[A.S]

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

JUNIOR LEVEL

امام الكاظم (ع)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to Imam al-Kāḍim (as) as our 7th Imam
- Learn some basic biographical facts about the Imam
- Be introduced to the Imam's attribute of forbearance and suppressing his anger
- Learn some strategies to control anger
- Discuss the benefits of controlling one's anger including

Imam al-Kāḍim(as)



After the martyrdom of our sixth Imam, his son Imam Mūsā al-Kāḍim(as) became the next and seventh Imam.

The Imam (as) was born in Medina in the year 129 AH. His mother was called Ḥamidah, and she was the daughter of a noble man. Our seventh Imam took up his position of Imam at the age of 19 after his father Imam breathed his last. His period of Imam at lasted for 35 years.

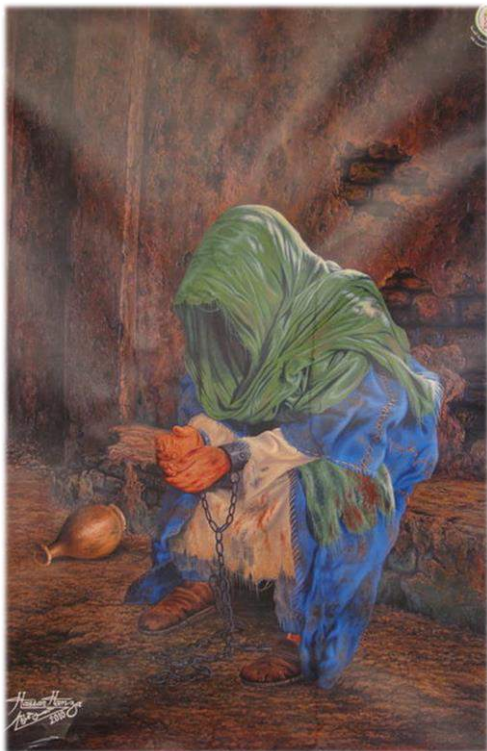
The time in which Imam al-Kāḍim (as) lived was one in which the Muslim world was ruled by vicious tyrants from the Abbasid family. The Imam lived through the rule of some of the most cruel leaders such as al-Manṣūr ad-Dawāniqi, al-Mahdi and Hārūn al-Rashīd. These were the leaders who used to bury innocent people alive in walls, and put them into horrible dark dungeons. The reason people were tortured and killed in such a cruel manner was because they were followers of the Ahlul Bayt (as). When the cruel Hārūn came into power, he arrested the Imam and threw him into the dungeons of a dark prison. This is where Imam (as) spent the last 19 years of his life – in a prison which was so small that the Imam could barely stand straight and his meal was a meagre two dry

slices of bread and a cup of water. The Imam was finally poisoned by this ruthless ruler in the prison in the year 183 AH, and he is buried in Baghdad in Iraq. The suburb in which he is buried is named al-Kāḍimiyah in honour of the Imam. He has a very large and beautiful shrine in his honour, one which is visited by millions upon millions of people every year.

THE IMAM'S CHARACTER

The Imam (as) was known for his patience and for his forbearance (giving people many chances without getting angry at them). It was because of these noble qualities that the Imam was given the title of al-Kāḍim (as), which means, 'one who suppresses his anger'. He was the symbol of virtue and generosity. He devoted his nights to the prayers of God and his days to fasting. He always forgave those who did wrong to him. His kind and generous attitude towards the people was such that he used to help the poor and needy people of Medina and provide them with money, food, clothes and other necessities without them knowing. These people receiving these gifts wondered who this gentle soul was but it was only after the Imam's death that they find out that it was he who helping them.

THE IMAM'S TIME IN PRISON



Our noble Imam was not only pious and generous, but he also treated everyone equally, even if it was the guards of the prison.

One of the prisons the Imam (as) was placed in was guarded by a man called Yaḥyā. During his stay in prison, the Imam was kind and always talked nicely to everyone, even the ruthless guard who kept him in prison. Soon this guard realised what a noble character the Imam had and felt guilty for keeping such a person in prison.

The king found out and decided to change the prison and so he took the Imam to another prison. Again here the kindness and politeness of the Imam made the guard love the Imam (as).

In the end, the cruel Abbasid Caliph, Hārūn, poisoned the food of the Imam in the prison of Baghdad, and the Imam (as) was martyred.

SUPPRESSION OF ANGER

Our Imam shows us during his life that no matter how horrible someone is to us, we should always be nice to them and soon they will realise that what they have been doing is wrong.

There are several moments in our life when we get angry or upset, and if anyone happens to talk to us at that point, we may either ignore them or take the other extreme of screaming and yelling at them. Anger is an emotional state that can vary from being mild to very aggressive. Anger can be caused by both internal things such as pain or tiredness and external issues such as a person or colleague who is treating us badly.

Every individual deals with anger issues in their own way. Our noble Imam al-Kāḍim (as) shows us how to deal with anger, and that is through patience and being merciful even to the most ruthless of people. Yes, it is easier said than done, but we can try and practise at least a little bit of what our Imams tell us.

Some ways in which we can deal with our anger and try and suppress it are:

- Take three deep breaths, slowly through nose and out through mouth.
- Count to 10.
- Stretch.
- Remind yourself of what is going well instead of wrong.

- Share that you are feeling frustrated/scared/angry or whatever by speaking calmly to the person around you
- Think of happy memories
- Remind yourself that your anger will make things worse
- Before you do what your anger is urging you to do, think about the consequences of the angry action you are about to take

Lastly, remember how our Imam used to deal with the guards of the prison, and try to emulate him.

BENEFITS OF SUPPRESSING ANGER

A person who is always angry is usually not liked by people. We have to try to avoid getting angry whether it is at home; at school or even just while playing a simple game. Every time we feel angry and want to take it out on someone else, we should ask ourselves ‘would i like it if this person got angry at me for no reason?’ The obvious answer is ‘no!’, therefore we should behave with others how we would like them to behave with us. Let us look at some of the benefits of suppressing our anger.

- Often the result of anger is hurting others and then regretting it. Think about times when you have been angry with your mother only because she asked you to help her with some house work and you were “busy” playing the Wii, and so you angrily told her ‘No!’ And then one day you realise what you did was wrong. This very feeling of regret bites hard and sometimes it may be too late to apologise. Always remember, it may be very easy to hurt someone through our words and actions, but it can be very hard to mend that action.
- We may knowingly or unknowingly cause damage and harm to ourselves and others. A good example of this can be seen in a game of soccer. A small argument can lead to a huge fight and this can result in someone getting seriously hurt or ending up in hospital. In order for us to avoid putting ourselves and others in trouble, we need to be strong and suppress any form of anger we may feel. Again we need to remind ourselves of how our dear Imam al-Kāḍim (as) would remain calm at all times.

- Another benefit of suppressing our anger is that we can have better communication with the other party. Often getting angry can lead to one saying things he or she does not mean and this can lead to misunderstandings. Suppression of anger can lead us to talk to one another politely and calmly coming up with solutions.
- A common problem we face in our community is swearing. Remember, swearing is ḥarām and is definitely not the practise of our Imam. Swearing comes as a result of being angry, hence controlling that anger will make one swear less too!

A TRULY STRONG PERSON

One day, the Prophet (saw) was walking and saw a group of boys trying to push a large rock from one part of the street to another. The Prophet (saw) asked them what they were doing. They said they were having a competition to see who was the strongest. The Prophet (saw) said to them: ‘the strongest is not the one who can push the rock the furthest. The strongest is the one who can control his anger the best!’.

If we want to show our real strength and toughness, we should show it by controlling our anger.

CLASS ACTIVITY

Each of you has a copy of the following questions. Answer them in the space below, and discuss the answers in groups with your teacher.

1. How do you know when you are angry?

2. What is the first sign of anger you notice? List your early warning signs that tell you when you are starting to become angry.

3. What makes you angry? List all the things you can think of... all the way from small annoyances to big problems.

4. Think about the last time you reacted in an unhealthy or negative way to anger. What happened right before you got angry?

5. How did you react?

6. How did you feel after you reacted?

7. What could you have done instead?

8. What would happen if you were to react in a more positive way?



IMAM Reḍā ^[A.S.]

امام الرضا (ع)

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

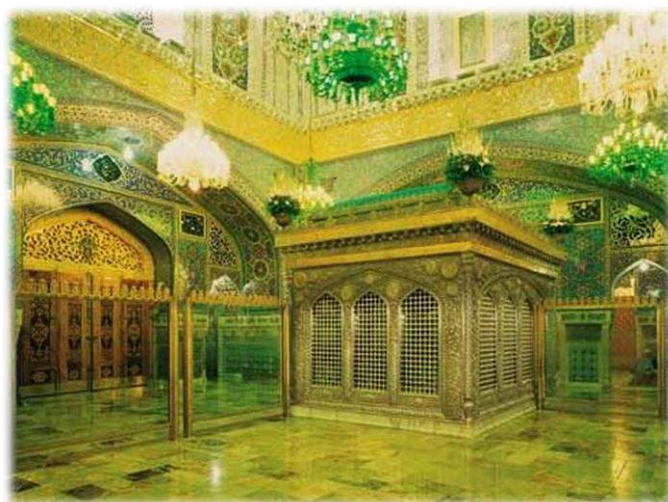
LEVEL 3

Imam al-Reḍā (as)

Imam al-Reḍā (as) is the eighth Imam and successor of the Holy Prophet, appointed by Allah (SWT). In previous years, we have learnt about his great personality and his virtues, and now we will look deeper into his beautiful life.

THE EIGHTH IMAM

- Imam 'Ali ibn Mūsā al-Reḍā
- The son of Imam Mūsā al-Kāḍim (as) and Lady Najmah
- Born in the holy city of Medina on the 11th Dhul Qa'dah 148 AH
- He lived on this earth for 55 years, and became Imam at the age of 35 after his father was martyred



THE PRINCE OF MASHHAD

During the time of Imam al-Reḍā (as), a big change occurred in the Muslim world. Hārūn al-Rashid, the tyrant Caliph from the Abbasid family died and was eventually replaced by his son al-Ma'mūn.

Al-Ma'mūn was a very cunning man who tried to confuse people by looking religious and by making himself seem close to the Imam. In fact, he went so far as to make Imam al-Reḍā (as) the heir who would inherit the leadership after him. The Imam (as) of course refused, but al-Ma'mūn forced him into this, and the Imam (as) became the King's heir.

AL-REDĀ – THE PLEASURE

Our eighth Imam was given the title of al-Reḍā (as) by Allah through his father. This was due to him always being pleased by Allah, always pleasing Allah, and because everyone, even his enemies, was pleased with him.

The son of Imam Redha (as), Imam al-Jawād (as) later explained this title, saying:

"Verily Allah, the blessed and most high, named him al-Reḍā (as), for he was the pleasure of Allah, The Exalted, The Great, in His Heaven, of his Messenger, and of the Imams, the blessings of Allah be upon them, after him."

Al-Bazantī asked Imam al-Jawād (as): "Weren't all your past forefathers, peace be on them, the pleasure of Allah (Reḍā Allah), the Exalted, the Great, of His Messenger, and of the Imams after him?"

"Yes," replied Imam al-Jawād, before explaining that his father specifically received this title:

"Because both his opposing enemies and obedient supporters were pleased with him, while this did not happen to any of his fathers, so only he was called al-Reḍā."

THE MOST PIOUS

After taking power, al-Ma'mūn ordered that Imam al-Reḍā (as) leave Medinah and come to live in Iran, close to the king. He did this so that he could keep a close eye on the Imam (as). Al-Ma'mūn ordered a particular minister of his to escort the Imam (as) to Iran. This man, who spent time observing the Imam finally said:

"By God! I never saw anyone neither more pious than him, nor more remembering of God at all times and nor more fearful of God, the Exalted. People approached him whenever they knew he was present in their area, asking him questions regarding their faith and its aspects, and he would answer them and narrate a great deal of hadith from his father who quoted his

forefathers till 'Ali (as) who quoted the Messenger of God (saw). When I arrived at al-Ma'mūn's court, the latter asked me about his behaviour during the trip and I told him what I observed about him during the night and during the day, while riding and while halting; so, he said: 'Yes... This is the best man on the face of earth, the most learned, and the most pious.'

HIS NOBLE MANNERS

One of the companions of the Imam (as) is quoted as saying:

"I never saw Imam al-Reḍā (as) angering anyone by something he said, nor did I ever see him interrupting anyone, nor refusing to do someone a favour he was able to do, nor did he ever stretch his legs before an audience, nor leaned upon something while his companion did not, nor did he ever call any of his servants or attendants a bad name, nor did I ever see him spit or burst into laughter; rather, his laughter was just a smile. When he was ready to eat and he sat to be served, he seated with him all his attendants, including the doorman..."

Class Activity

Discuss at least three of the above actions described about the Imam (as) by his companion. Discuss why these are good things that we should also try to do.

MIRACLES OF AL-REDĀ (AS)

One of the miracles of the Imam (as) was that he spoke many of the languages of the world. Whenever anyone came to him from anywhere in the world, the Imam (as) would speak to them and answer their questions in their own language.

The Imam (as) was also given knowledge of the future by Allah (SWT). For example, the Imam (as) knew that he was going to be forced to leave Medina and that he would live and die in Mash-had well before anything of the sort happened.

HIS MARTYRDOM

Imam al-Reḍā (as) was eventually poisoned by al-Ma'mūn, on the 30th of Ṣafar 20 (AH) in the city of Mashhad, Iran. His beautiful shrine stands there today and millions of Shi'ah from all over the world go there to visit the shrine every year.

BRIEF SAYINGS OF THE IMAM

“Cleanliness is from the morality and character of Prophets.”

(BIHAR UL ANWAR VOL 78, P 335)

“The weapon of the Prophets is essential for you. When asked “What is the weapon of the Prophets”, he said “supplication!”

(USOOL AL KAFI, VOL 1, P 468)

Review Questions

Q1. Imam al-Reḍā (as) was the son of:

- a. Imam Ali & Lady Fatima (as)
- b. Imam Mūsā al-Kāḍim (as) and Lady Najmah
- c. Imam Husayn (as) & Lady Shahrbanu

Q2. Imam al-Reḍā (as) is our:

- a) 4th Imam
- b) 6th Imam
- c) 8th Imam

Q3. His title al-Reḍā (as) was given to him because:

- a) He always pleased God and was always pleased with God.
- b) People, including his enemies, were pleased with him.
- c) Both (a) and (b)

Q4. Imam al-Reḍā (as) was martyred and is buried in:

- a) Mecca
- b) Medina
- c) Mashhad

ⁱ References:

eHawza Ahlul Bayt course, Imam Redha
<http://www.al-islam.org/al-Redha/>

http://en.rafed.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=176:the-life-of-imam-ridha&Itemid=965&layout=default



IMAM AL-JAWAD ^[A.S]

امام الجواد (ع)

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand that Imam al-Jawād (as) is our ninth Imam
- Learn some basic biographical facts about the Imam:
- Be introduced to the Imam's attribute of generosity
- Discuss generosity as a quality of the Ahlul Bayt
- Discuss the benefits of generosity including

Imam al-Jawād (as)

Imam al-Jawād (as) is the ninth divinely appointed Imam and successor of the Holy Prophet (saw). In this lesson, we will take a brief look at the life of Imam al-Jawād (as), focusing on some of the outstanding details of the Imam's life, such as becoming an Imam at a very young age, and the reason for his exemplary title of 'the generous one'.

IMAM AL-JAWĀD (AS)

Imam Muḥammad al-Jawād (as), also commonly known with the title of al-Taḳī (the God-Conscious one), is the son of our 8th holy Imam, Imam 'Alī ibn Mūsā al-Reḍā (as). The respected mother of Imam al-Jawād (as) was a very pious woman from North Africa. She was known by several names, one of which was Sawsan. Imam al-Jawād (as) was born in Medina on the 10th of Rajab 195 A.H. (April 8, 811 A.D.)

THE YOUNG IMAM

Imam al-Jawād (as) spent only the first five years of his life with his father. As a matter of fact, he was born many years after Imam al-Reḍā's marriage. Prior to his birth, Imam al-Reḍā's enemies used to taunt the Imam (as) for not having a son to succeed him despite the fact that the Imam (as) had told them that Allah (SWT) would soon grant him a son.

The Imam's friends and followers on the other hand, were worried that there was no one that will succeed him yet. The Imam assured them, too, that Allah would soon grant him a son who would be the next Imam.

The birth of Imam al-Jawād (as), therefore, was received with anger and disappointment by Imam al-Reḍā's enemies and with relief and happiness by the Imam's friends.

Because his mother was a Nubian and because the colour of his skin was dark, Imam al-Jawād (as) was called 'Aswad' (The Black one) by the enemies of Imam al-Reḍā (as). However, to others he was known as "al-Taḳī" (the God-Conscious one) and "al-Jawād" (The Generous one).

He was the first among the Imams from the House of the Prophet to have been separated from his father at a very young age. At the time of the martyrdom of Imam al-Reḍā (as), Imam al-Jawād (as) was only nine years old.

It was very important, therefore, that Imam al-Reḍā (as) should make his followers ready to accept Imam al-Jawād (as) as their next Imam, despite the fact that he was only a child by their standards.

One such instance of Imam al-Jawād (as) being introduced to the community by his father was this: when Ṣafwan ibn Yaḥyā asked Imam al-Reḍā (as) regarding his successor. The Imam named his son Muḥammad al-Jawād (a.s). Ṣafwan expressed his surprise saying: "But he is just a child, only three years old." The Imam replied that this should not really matter for hadn't Prophet Jesus (as) given testimony of his mission when he was less than three years old?

Imam al-Reḍā (as) was referring to the blessed event mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, when the new-born baby Jesus (as) told the people that surrounded, and were blaming, his blessed mother Mary (as):

"Verily, I am a slave of Allah. He has given me the Scripture and made me a Prophet. And He has made me blessed wheresoever I be, and has enjoined on me prayer and charity as long as I live."ⁱ

In other words, Prophet Jesus (as) began his mission when he was younger in age than Imam Muḥammad al-Jawād (as). Prophet Yaḥyā (as) similarly was chosen for his mission by God when he was a young boy.

GENEROSITY

One of the outstanding characteristics of Imam al-Jawād (as) was his generosity. We all somewhat know what generosity is.

For example, if a boy at school buys a really tasty chocolate bar during lunchtime at school, and gives one half to another boy whom he knows doesn't usually get pocket money from his parents because they are not so well-off, we would call the first boy's action an act of generosity.

Can you think of other acts of generosity?

So basically, being generous involves giving away things that belong to us (which in fact, really belong to Allah) to others, who might be in need of them.

The Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَى وَ اتَّقَى وَ صَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَى فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ
لِلْيُسْرَى

"Then as for him who gives away and guards (against evil), and accepts the best, We will facilitate for him the easy end"ⁱⁱ

Also, the Holy Prophet (saw) has said:

لَا يَصْلُحُ دِينُكُمْ إِلَّا السَّخَاءُ وَ حُسْنُ الْخُلُقِ

"Nothing shall ensure the welfare (and interests) of your religion except generosity and good disposition."ⁱⁱⁱ

THE AHLUL BAYT OF GENEROSITY

Generosity is one of the ethics of the Prophets and the Ahlul Bayt.

As we mentioned earlier, Imam al-Jawād (as) was given this title, which means: 'The Generous One'. His generosity knew no bounds. He was there for the needy as well as for anyone else who sought for his help. It is said that whenever he went out of his home he made sure that he had with him enough money as to enable him to meet the demands of those who went to him for help.

Following his father's advice, he would give to his relatives no less than 50 Dirhams at one time. Like his great-grandparents, he used to visit the needy in the darkness of the night and meet their demands without them knowing who had helped them.

For those whom the Imam (as) could not reach in person, he would meet their needs by sending other people to help them.

Those who visited Medina or Baghdad (depending upon where the Imam (as) was at that time, and who did not have a place to stay, would go to Imam's house.

On one such occasion a visitor paid the Imam (as) a visit late at night.

The Imam (as) welcomed him and asked him if he was hungry. The visitor replied that he was, indeed, hungry but he didn't wish to have any food as this would inconvenience the Imam (as)

The Imam's (a.s) reply was:

"No one sleeps hungry in my house."

The Imam (as) then awakened his maid requesting her to make dough for bread while he would himself heat the stove. The maid volunteered to do both the jobs herself but the Imam (as) insisted on making fire in the stove arguing that he too wanted to earn reward from Allah (SWT) for serving the guest.

Noticing the Imam's sincerity, the visitor burst into tears. He then said "How unfortunate it is that the world does not recognise and value such a personality as this one."

The Holy Prophet (saw) has said:

"Those close to Allah are inherently generous."

Hence, in order to acquire this attribute, we should try hard to be generous towards relatives, friends and anyone who is in need, so that we may gain the pleasure of Allah (SWT).

It is better that a person's generosity is associated with a thing that is dear to him - food, clothes, money, our belongings etc. - and that no obligation is placed upon the person towards whom generosity has been shown. We should get used to thinking of ourselves as trustees, whose responsibility is to pass on Allah's things to deserving and needy individuals. As such, we should stay away from greediness and refrain from withholding the God's trusts.

THE BENEFITS OF BEING GENEROUS

There are many benefits of being generous. Here, we will only mention a few:

1. Builds good relations with people:

When someone is generous with you- for example, when a boy at school shares his lunch money with you because you lost your money that day- you will naturally like this person more for helping you out in the time of need. Imagine if we all continuously try to help each other out, how many good relations would that build between all of us?

2. Allows people to help one another:

Imagine how much better this world would be if we were all very generous people. Do you think hunger and poverty would still exist for example?

3. God will be generous to me:

Imam 'Ali (as) has said:

"Stinginess is the cause of destitution (complete poverty)..."^{iv}

Generosity, which is the opposite of stinginess, leads to God being generous to us even more than He already is. This is because if one is stingy, it causes poverty, but if one is generous, the God's extra generosity will be shown to this person.

BRIEF SAYINGS OF THE IMAM (AS)

"Humbleness is treating the people the way you like to be treated."

"If all people chose a path to walk on, I would go to the path of the one who sincerely worships only: God."

Review Questions

Q1. Imam al-Jawād (as) was also known as:

- Sayyidul Sājidīn (the leader of those who prostrate)
- Al-Taqi (the God-Conscious one)
- Imam Taqi (The Kind One)

Q1. Who else was chosen by God for a Divine mission while very young in age:

- Prophet Moses
- Prophet Noah
- Prophet Jesus

Q3. What does it mean to be generous?

- To be satisfied by the Will of God
- To give away from your belongings to needy people, for the sake of God
- To make a lot of money while still being a good Muslim

ⁱ Holy Quran: 9: 27

ⁱⁱ Surat al-Layl: Ayah 5-7

ⁱⁱⁱ Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. 1, pg. 308

^{iv} Mishkatul Anwar- Chapter on Generosity

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[http://en.rafed.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4099%](http://en.rafed.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4099%3Abiography-of-imam-muhammad-bin-ali-as-al-taqi&catid=166&Itemid=967)

[3Abiography-of-imam-muhammad-bin-ali-as-al-taqi&catid=166&Itemid=967](http://en.rafed.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4099%3Abiography-of-imam-muhammad-bin-ali-as-al-taqi&catid=166&Itemid=967)



IMAM ALHADI [A.S]

امام الهادي (ع)

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Imam al-Hādi (as)

Imam ‘Ali al-Hādi (as) is the tenth divinely appointed Imam and successor of the Holy Prophet (saw). Unfortunately, little has been transmitted to us by historians about the lives of our 9th, 10th, and 11th Imams due to circumstances at those times, but we will take a look at what we have from his beautiful life and lessons that we can take from it.

THE TENTH IMAM

‘Ali al-Hādi (as) was born in the holy city of Medina on the 15th Dhil Ḥajj 212 AH. His father was Imam Muāammad al-Jawād (as), our 9th Imam, and his mother was Lady Sammānah. He lived on this earth for 42 years, and became Imam during the 8th year of his life after his father was martyred.

THE GUIDE – AL-HĀDĪ

Our 10th Imam is famous for his immense role as an important guide for all humanity, especially the people of his time, and so has been divinely given the name al-Hādi. He was always emphasising the role of the Holy Qur’an as being our main reference and guiding people away from referring to incorrect sources and narrations. He also guided his community as to the answer of whether we have freewill or if everything is already determined, and refuted other accusations spread against the Shi’ah. Furthermore, Imam al-Hādi (as) demonstrated to us the lofty status of our Ahlul Bayt through his famous visitation, al-Ziyārah al-Jāmi’ah al-Karbīrah.

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to Imam al-Hādi (as) as our tenth Imam
- Learn some basic biographical facts about the Imam
- Be introduced to the Imam’s attribute of being ‘the Guide’
- Discuss the fact that we cannot be guided unless we are willing to take advice
- Discuss some of the benefits of taking advice
- Discuss the harms of refusing to take advice
- Discuss the etiquette of taking advice

THE ROYAL GEM

There is a particularly story that demonstrates how the Imam guided his companions. One of the Imam's companions was a jewel designer, by the name of Yusuf. Yusuf was one of the best in his field, and he was given a very expensive and special gem by the king of that time, and ask to draw a design on it so that he could gift it to his daughter for her wedding. When Yusuf took the gem to his workshop, he accidentally broke it in half. He was petrified, and knew the king would punish him severely. In this desperate state, Yusuf could only think of one person to turn to, his Imam (as). He went to Imam al-Hādi (as) and explained his situation. The Imam advised him to remain calm and go home, and that he would take care of it. Yusuf wanted a solution now, but the Imam (as) told him that his problem would be solved if he simply went home and continued his work on the gem. The next day, the king called Yusuf to his castle. He told him that his two daughters were fighting over this gem, and that their fighting was upsetting him, and so now he wanted Yusuf to cut the gem in half! Yusuf was overjoyed that his problem had been miraculously solved, and he was sure it was due to the prayer of his holy Imam (as).

HOW CAN WE BE GUIDED?

Often in our life, we make mistakes in the decisions we take, or we go about doing things the wrong way. At other times, before we start a new project or new part of our life, we do not know what choices to make. For example, many of us may not know which subjects to choose in high school, or how to go about making friends when we move from primary school to high school. Sometimes, a person might be making mistakes in their daily prayers, or they might be doing their maths homework incorrectly.

In all these situations, it is very important to take advice. If our parents give us advice on what subjects to choose, or how to approach new friends, or if our teachers give us advice on how to pray correctly, or how to do our homework properly, we should be willing to take that advice. Sometimes, it is hard to take advice, because we might feel pride in ourselves and might not want to show we are wrong.

This pride is dangerous. A person who has this pride and does not admit their mistakes and take advice will never improve. They will continue to do things the wrong way, and remain off track always.

BENEFITS OF TAKING ADVICE



Imam 'Ali (as) has said that:

“There is no support greater than consultation (taking advice)”

When we take advice from the appropriate people (usually our parents and teachers), we can reap the following benefits:

- We learn from their experiences without having to go through the problems they did. For example, if the person advising did something the wrong way and got hurt, they can advise not to do it that way. If we take their advice, we will avoid getting hurt.
- We learn from their knowledge. Often our teachers and parents have a lot more knowledge than us. If we take their advice, we will have access to that knowledge without having to study it ourselves.
- We share their brain power. Two brains are always better than one, and by taking advice, we get the benefit of the ideas of other people, and can also check our ideas and how good they are.

HARMS OF REFUSING ADVICE

The person who does not take advice will make many mistakes in life. They would not be making use of the experiences of others and therefore making poor decisions. When it comes to our religion, refusing to take the advice that Allah (SWT) and the Prophets and Imams (as) give us will make us go astray.

ETIQUETTE OF TAKING ADVICE

Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) has told us as to how to take advice and from whom, saying:

“Seeking advice from others is a virtue. If you do not do it, you will face a great loss. However, there are conditions. The first is that the person you seek advice from should have intellect (i.e. be an expert). Secondly, he should also be religious and impartial. Thirdly, he should also be a friend. Fourthly, you must divulge all the details to him, so that he knows our affairs as much as you do. The counsellor should then keep this a secret and not divulge it.”

In this narration, the Imam (as) says we should take advice from people who:

- Are knowledgeable (not just any ordinary friend or random person)
- Are religious, especially when it comes from religious issues or issues of right and wrong, we should seek advice from practising Muslims.
- Are nice and kind to us, such as our parents, teachers, friends. We should not take advice from people who may dislike us or who have problems with us, as it will be harder to take their advice.

If we ask a person for advice, and they offer it to us, we should at least consider their advice. Even if we don't like what they say, or we think it might be wrong, we should consider it and see whether it really does apply to us. Most of the time, the advice of our parents and teachers is good advice, and we should take it.

Sometimes, we get advice without asking for it. For example, a teacher might see that a student is dressed inappropriately and they might advise them to try not to dress in that way again. Sometimes, advice can be hard to take and we might get upset and our pride might get

the better of us. In this situation, we need to remember that our pride is the most dangerous thing to us. We need to ignore our pride, and take the advice that is being given to us, no matter how hard it is to accept.

THE DEPARTURE OF OUR GUIDE

Our beloved Imam al-Hādi (as) departed this world at the age of 42, being poisoned by the Abbasid king al-Mu'tazz in the year 254 AH. His holy body is buried in Samarra', Baghdad, Iraq.

BRIEF SAYINGS OF THE IMAM (AS)

“In a friendly manner, advise your friend and say to him: When God intends goodness for somebody, He makes him accept the advice of the friends.”

“God has made this world for testing while He has made the life to come for receiving the result. He has also made the misfortunes of this world the cause of gaining the rewards of the life to come and made the rewards of the life to come the compensation for the misfortunes of this world.”

Review Questions

Q1. Imam 'Ali al-Hādi (as) is our:

- 6th Imam
- 8th Imam
- 10th Imam

Q2. His title 'al-Hādi' was divinely given to him because:

- The immense guidance he gave to his community as well as humanity across various issues.
- The people of his time liked to call him that.
- The rulers of his time chose that title for him.

Q3. Imam 'Ali al-Hādi (as) was martyred and is buried in:

- Mecca
- Medina
- Samarra'

References:

- eHawza Ahlul Bayt course, Imam Hadi
- <http://www.al-islam.org/imam-hadi/>



IMAM AL-'ASKARI ^[A.S]

امام العسكري (ع)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Biographical detail of Imam al-'Askari (as)
- The reason for the titles of al-'Askari and al-Zaki
- That the Imam (as) was kept under constant surveillance all the time
- Why we should fear none other than Allah (SWT)
- The importance and benefits of fearing God

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Imam al-'Askari (as)

Imam al-'Askari (as) is the eleventh divinely appointed Imam and successor of the Holy Prophet. He was born in Medina in the month of Rabi'ul Thāni 232 AH. He was the son of our 10th Holy Imam, Imam al-Hādi (as). Imam al-'Askari was 28 years of age at the time of his father's death and his Imamat lasted only six years.

The Imam (as) spent most of his life in the town of Samarrā', in the north of Iraq. This was the town where the kings of the time lived, and this town was like a military camp, because a great number of soldiers lived there. The soldiers protected the king and also kept people under surveillance. Among the people who the Imam's soldiers and spies continuously kept an eye on were the Imams (as)- Imam al-Hādi (as) and Imam al-'Askari. Because the Imam spent most of his life in this town, which was known as "al-'Askar" (meaning military camp, he was given the title al-'Askari.

Despite this the Holy Imam ensured that he delivered the true message of Allah (SWT) and the Holy Prophet (saw). He taught the Holy Qur'an and taught us a lot about the meaning of the verses of the Holy Qur'an.

There were also many times when Imam al-'Askari (as) was taken to Baghdad by the authorities of the time, where he was questioned and imprisoned. During his life, he spent much of his time with people who did not believe in God and taught them about God's Existence and Mercy. When he was imprisoned, he was given the most ruthless jailors to supervise him. Such was the piety and submission of the Imam to Allah (SWT) even the most ruthless of jailors could not bring themselves to harm him.

They saw him in constant worship and daily fasting – totally devoted to Allah (SWT). They wanted to be like him and worship Allah.

Imam al-'Askari was martyred when he was only 28 years of age. In fact if we look at the lives of our Imams under the later Abbasid Caliphs, we see that none of them lived for very long. The Caliphs were well aware that Imam al-'Askari was the 11th Imam and there were to be twelve. They knew that the 12th Imam, known as al-Mahdi, was to come and overthrow the oppressive tyrants, and this made them afraid of the Imams (as). They wanted to prevent al-Mahdi (as) from being born so they attempted on several occasions to kill him. Imam al-'Askari was eventually killed by poison which had been mixed in fruit. He eventually passed away in his own house. However, the tyrants could not stop the birth of his only son, Imam al-Mahdi (atfs).

He died on 8th Rabi'ul 'Awwal 260 AH and is buried where he lived in Samarra', besides the grave of his father. His son, our present Imam (as), performed the funeral prayer for his father before disappearing and beginning his Minor Occultation.

In this lesson we will learn about how Imam al-'Askari (as) was a true role model of "fearing none but Allah" and how we can learn from this to benefit us in our life.

IMAM AL-'ASKARI: THE GOD- FEARING IMAM

One day a man passed by Imam al-'Askari (as) who was a child at the time and saw him cry while he was with other children. The man thought that this child cried for the toys in the children's hands and that he could not participate in their playing. The man told the child that he would buy him what he might play with.

The Imam replied:

"No! We have not been created for play."

The man was astonished and said, 'Then, what have we been created for?'

The child said:

"For knowledge and worship"

The man was again astonished by this reply from such a small child, so he asked, 'Where have you got this from?'

The child said:

"From this saying of Allah: 'Did you then think that We had created you in vain and that you would not be brought back to Us?'"ⁱ

The man was astonished and confused. He said to the child: 'What has happened to you while you are still a guiltless little child? You still haven't told me why you are crying.

The Imam (as) said:

"I have seen my mother set fire to big pieces of firewood, but fire is not lit except with small pieces. I am young and small, so must be more prone to being deceived by the Satan and I fear that I shall be from the small pieces of the firewood of Hell."

WHY SHOULD WE FEAR ALLAH?

Fearing Allah (SWT) was one of the distinguishing features of Imam al-'Askari (as). He feared none but Allah and continued to do so right up to his death.

We need to follow the example of Imam al-'Askari and be "God fearing". We need to remind ourselves that Allah (SWT) will punish us for anything we do to disobey Him. Just the same as when we have done something wrong at home, there will be consequences for our behaviour.

A good reminder for us is from a narration from Imam al-Şadiq (as) when he says:

"Fear Allah as if you can see Him before you. If you cannot see Him before you, then surely He can see you. If you think He cannot see you then you disbelieve Him. If you realise He can see you and yet you commit acts of disobedience to Him, then you consider Him as the humblest among those who you can see."

We need to make sure that we never forget that Allah (SWT) is watching us and all our actions. We should fear the consequences that Allah (SWT) has set for sins, and this should stop us from committing sins.

THROUGH FEAR COMES HOPE

As a true believer, we need to fear Allah (SWT) and His punishment, but we also need to be hopeful for His forgiveness and rewards. We need to make sure we try very hard to stay away from things that cause us to sin and disobey Allah (SWT) and work hard at things that will make Him pleased with us.

Like everything in life, we need to have fear and hope in controlled amounts. Too much fear is bad for us. It causes us to lose hope and despair. This can lead us to commit more sin and turn further away from Allah (SWT). We need to have just enough fear that reminds us of what Allah (SWT) has commanded us to do.

FEARING ONLY ALLAH (SWT)

God always takes care of his creation. We only have to trust Him fully.

We have many examples set by Prophets who feared no one other than Allah (SWT). For example, Prophet Moses (as) was a poor shepherd when he faced up to the great tyrant of his time, Pharaoh. He stood up to the power and armies of Pharaoh while he only had a handful of supporters. Eventually, with the help of God, he overcame Pharaoh and completed his mission. He feared none but God, and because of this, God gave him success.

For this reason, we should never disobey God because we are scared of someone else. If we are afraid that our friends will tease us or make fun of us if we pray at lunchtime or eat only ḥalāl food, and this stops us from doing these things, then we are more fearful of our friends than we are of Allah (SWT). If we take this path, we will not be successful in our life.

Allah (SWT) has promised people who fear only Him that everything and everyone on Earth will fear those people. He has also promised those people who disobey Allah (SWT) and do not fear Him, that they will be hated by the creatures of Allah (SWT) and will not be successful.

Review Questions

Q1. Our 11th Holy Imam was known as al-'Askari (as) because:

- a. He was a soldier
- b. He lived in a town under military rule
- c. He was pious and God-fearing

Q2. We should fear Allah (SWT) because:

- a. We must obey Him otherwise He will punish us
- b. It nourishes our soul and keeps us on the straight path towards Allah (SWT)
- c. All of the above

Q3. Imam al-'Askari was kept under constant surveillance because:

- a. The Abbasid rulers wanted to prevent him from having a son who would become the 12th Imam
- b. He was plotting to overthrow the government
- c. Neither of the above

ⁱ Holy Quran 23:115



IMAM AL-MAHDI ^[AS]

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

امام المهدي (ع)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand that Imam al-Mahdi is our twelfth holy Imam
- Understand the fact that Imam Mahdi is the Living Imam, who is in hiding
- Understand that the Imam sees our actions and observes them, even though we cannot see him or recognise him
- Learn basic biographical facts about the Imam:
- Discuss the context of the Imam's birth and why it was kept secret
- Discuss issues related to the Imam's long life
- Understand the minor occultation and then the beginning of the major occultation
- Discuss two Qur'anic āyāt related to Imam al-Mahdi (atfs)
- Discuss two narrations related to Imam al-Mahdi (atfs)
- Discuss the concept of al-Intiḍār
- Explore the supplications related to Imam al-Mahdi (atfs)

The Present Imam

Imam Muḥammad al-Mahdi is our 12th Imam from the family of the Holy Prophet (saw). All Shi'ah believe that Imam al-Mahdi is currently alive and is in hiding. We also believe that the Imam will reappear from his hiding whenever Allah (SWT) decides so and when we, his followers, are ready for his arrival. So why is our Imam in hiding?

WHY IS THE IMAM IN HIDING?

Since all the previous Imams have been killed by sword or poisoned by their enemies, Allah (SWT) has kept the Imam in hiding to protect him from his enemies and to keep him safe. This way, the Imam will be able to reappear and remove all the injustice and oppression from this world.

Another reason why the Imam is in hiding is because he does not have many strong and sincere followers. He will therefore remain in hiding until he gets a good number of strong believers in his army. Are we doing anything in our lives to make ourselves ready to be part of his army?

However, with the Imam in hiding, this does not mean that we cannot benefit from him. Instead, the Imam benefits us in the same way as the sun benefits the world on a cloudy day. Even though the sun is not apparent, it still gives life and energy to everything.

CAN THE IMAM SEE US?

Although the Imam is in hiding and we cannot see him, he definitely can see us. He observes our actions and gets a weekly record of whatever good or bad we have done. He feels happy when his followers do good actions

such as praying on time and respecting parents, and gets very sad when his followers commit bad deeds such as lying and swearing.

The Imam is also present at Ḥajj every year and although we may see him there, we will not recognise him as the Imam.

“He attends the (Ḥajj) season, and sees them, but they do not see him”ⁱ

SOME FACTS ABOUT OUR IMAM

Name:	Muḥammad ibn al Ḥasan al Mahdi
Father’s name:	Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askari
Age at which he became Imam:	5 years old
Place and date of birth:	Samarra ¹ , Iraq. 15 th Sha’bān 255 AH

THE BIRTH OF THE IMAM

The birth of the Imam was kept very secret. The night before his birth, his father, Imam al-‘Askari asked his aunt Ḥakima to stay home to help deliver the baby, whose mother was Narjis. Ḥakima was surprised because Narjis did not show any signs of pregnancy. However, the Imam (as) explained that this was part of God’s wisdom to protect al-Mahdi (atfs), just as had happened with the mother of Prophet Moses. The Imam was born on Friday morning, just before Fajr time. Once the Imam was born, Imam al-‘Askari informed only a few of his closest family members and he asked them to keep this news very secret.

WHY WAS HIS BIRTH KEPT SECRET?

The reason why the Imam’s birth was kept secret was mainly to protect his life. Just as the tyrants at the time of Prophets Abraham and Moses knew about the birth of a child who would overcome them, the Abbasid tyrants at the time of Imam al-Mahdi knew of his birth and were on the lookout for such a child. These tyrants had fought and killed the three Imams before Imam al-Mahdi so that they could prevent or stop his birth.

Therefore, it was extremely important to keep the birth of the Imam a secret.

THE IMAM’S LONG LIFE

Many people, including Muslims, doubt whether the Imam is still alive. They say that it is not possible for a human being to live for so long. This is what we can argue:

a) Several Prophets in the past have lived for a long time

Prophet Noah was a Prophet for 950 years. His lifetime would have been even longer because 950 is only the period of his mission.

“And indeed We sent Nūḥ (Noah) to his people, and he stayed among them a thousand years less fifty years”
(Holy Qur’an, 29:14)

Similar to Prophet Noah, other Prophets such as Prophet Jesus and Khidr are still alive with the permission of God.

b) It is scientifically possible to live for a long period?

Science has shown us that a person can live for a long time if his organs such as the heart and the brain are given the right foods and a clean environment and are protected from the negative influences of the environment.

c) It is a miracle by God for the Imam to live a long life

We know that Allah (SWT) has the power to do anything. Therefore, if He wills that the Imam should live a long life, this can certainly happen.

Review Questions

Q1. Why was the Imam’s birth kept a secret?

- To keep him safe from his enemies
- To give a surprise to his family
- Because he was an Imam

Q2. Can the Imam see us even when we cannot see him?

- No, the Imam only gets a report of our actions
- Yes, the Imam can hear and see us and all our actions

- c. The Imam sees us but does not recognise us

Q3. Which of these is NOT true?

- a) There is no reason scientifically why a human cannot live more than 1500 years.
- b) Some Prophets in the past lived a very long life
- c) It is impossible for a person to live a life of 1000 years or more.

The Imam in Occultation

In the last lesson, we learnt a few things about the life of our 12th Imam. We discussed that the Imam is currently alive, in hiding, and will reappear whenever Allah (SWT) wills. In this lesson we will discuss how the Imam went into hiding and some āyāt of the Holy Qur'an that talk about the Imam

MINOR OCCULTATION

The word 'occultation' means to go into hiding. The Imam first went into hiding soon after he led the funeral prayers of his father, Imam al-'Askari. Since only an Imam can lead the funeral prayers of another Imam, the enemies were on the lookout for the Imam to lead the prayers so they could kill him. Despite the dangers, the Imam led the prayers and went into hiding immediately after that.

This was the first occultation and the shorter one. It lasted 69 years from 260 A.H. to 328 A.H. The enemies were always in search of the Imam during this time but they could not find him.

During the minor occultation, the three main things that the Imam did were:

- a) Introduced himself to his followers by meeting with some of them. He also performed several miracles and in this way he proved his existence.
- b) Selected four people to be his representatives in his absence so that they could answer the questions of the people based on the Imam's instructions. Besides this, the Imam also wrote letters to certain members of his community and constantly kept in touch with them.
- c) Protected his followers from the enemies. One such example is:

An Abbasid minister made a plot to find the representatives of the Imam. He sent an undercover spy to go to the representative and pretend he wanted to give him khums money to be delivered to the Imam. Allah (SWT) informed the Imam of this plot. The Imam instructed his representative not to take any money from anyone so that he would not be found.

The minor occultation was to prepare the followers of the Imam for the major occultation in which they would never see the Imam.

THE MAJOR OCCULTATION

Only six days before the death of the fourth representative, the Imam wrote a letter to him saying that he would now go into hiding for a long time (major occultation) and that he would no longer have any specific representatives through which he could communicate with people. He also instructed the community that anyone who claimed to be his specific representative during the Major Occultation is a liar. The major occultation began after the year 329 A.H and has lasted until today. Only Allah (SWT) knows when this occultation will end, however there are many signs that will appear before the coming of al-Mahdi.

AL-MAHDI IN THE HOLY QUR'AN

As should always be the case, whatever we believe in must have its roots in the Holy Qur'an and the words of the Prophet and Ahlul Bayt (as). The belief in having an Imam who is currently in hiding is also mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. We will briefly look at two such āyāt:

- a. Every community has an Imam

"On that Day we shall call together all human beings with their (respective) Imam"

يَوْمَ نَدْعُو كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمَامِهِمْ

The word 'imam' refers to a leader chosen by Allah (SWT) who is present in every community. Therefore, for this verse to apply to our community, it means we must have an Imam among us who is chosen by Allah (SWT). This can be none other than Imam al-Mahdi (atfs), because any other possible leader in our community is not one who is chosen by Allah (SWT).

b. Every community has a Witness

“And the Day when we shall raise up from every nation a witness against them from amongst themselves. And we shall bring you (O Muhammad) as a witness against these”

وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ ۚ
وَجِئْنَا بِكَ شَهِيدًا عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ

Here, the Qur'an clearly tells us that every community has someone in it who will be a witness against itself (that community) on the Day of Judgment. At the time of the Prophet's community the witness was Prophet Muḥammad (saw) himself and at our time, it is Imam al-Mahdi.

Can you think of reasons why a witness of a community cannot be an ordinary person like us, but has to be someone chosen by Allah (SWT)?

AL-MAHDI IN THE HOLY HADITH

Here we will briefly discuss two authentic narrations, narrated by both Shi'ah and Sunni sources. These narrations prove our belief in Imam al-Mahdi.

a. Imams from Quraysh

This narration is mentioned in the book of al-Bukhāri, the book considered most authentic by the Sunni school of thought:

“I heard the messenger of Allah saying that there will be twelve Emirs and they are all from Quraysh”

The above narration is mentioned by most Sunni narrators. It proves to us that there will be 12 Imams after the Holy Prophet, and they must all come from Quraysh. This ḥadith cannot apply to any other belief except our belief that one of the descendants of the Prophet, i.e. Imam al-Mahdi, is the current and twelfth Imam (as).

b. Recognising the Imam

“He who dies without recognising the Imam of his time dies the death of Ignorance”

The above narration tells us that every period in the world must have an Imam and whoever does not know the Imam of his time will be treated as an ignorant person by Allah (SWT) on the Day of Judgement. This indicates that there is an Imam appointed by God for every period, and the Imam of our period cannot be anyone other than Imam al-Mahdi (atfs).

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AL-MAHDI

Now that we have proven the existence of our 12th Imam through the Holy Qur'an and the holy words of the Ahlul Bayt, we want to learn about his characteristics. We once again get the answers from the Qur'an:

“And (remember) when the Lord of Abraham tried Him with (certain) Commands, which He fulfilled. He (Allah) said (to him), "Verily, I am going to make You an Imam of mankind." Abraham said, "And of My offspring (to make Imams?)." Allah said, "My Covenant (Prophethood, etc.) includes not Ḍalimīn (those who beliefs or actions are wrong or false)”

From the above āyah, we learn that:

- » The Imam is sinless because Allah does not make the wrong-doer an Imam
- » The Imam is from the offspring of Prophet Abraham, same as the Holy Prophet, because Allah (SWT) answered the prayer of Abraham in making the Imams from his progeny
- » The Imam is chosen by Allah because the āyah shows us that only Allah can make someone an Imam.

Review Questions

Q1. Why did Imam al-Mahdi go first into Minor Occultation?

- a. To prepare the community for the Major Occultation
- b. To remain safe from the plans of his enemies
- c. Both a & b

Q2. Why can't an ordinary person be a witness against his community on the Day of Judgement?

- a. He would not be able to remember all the actions of the people
- b. He does not have the wisdom and knowledge to understand people's actions
- c. An ordinary person can easily make mistakes
- d. All of the above

Al-Intidār

As we have already discussed in the previous lesson, Imam al-Mahdi is currently alive and in hiding. One of the reasons for his hiding is that his followers are not yet ready and prepared for him to appear. The Imam will only reappear when his followers are ready for him.

In this lesson we will discuss the concept of *al-Intidār*. If we understand this concept well, we can become better followers and therefore quicken the return of our beloved Imam.

AL-INTIDĀR: THE WAITING

The importance of The Waiting

al-Intidār literally means ‘the waiting’. When we relate it to Imam al-Mahdi, it refers to waiting desperately and anxiously for his reappearance and making all the preparations needed for his arrival. This kind of waiting is very important to the extent that it has been referred to as the best of worship:

“The greatest worship of a believing slave is waiting for the relief from Allah (return of Al Al-Mahdi)”¹

Waiting for the reappearance of the Imam prepares a person to be one of the companions of the Imam at the time of his reappearance. Even if he does not meet the time of the Imam, he will gain the reward of having been one of the Imam’s companions:

“Whoever dies while waiting for this affair (the reappearance), will be like the one who was in the tent of al-Qā’im”²

WHAT SHOULD ONE DO WHILST WAITING FOR THE IMAM?

On the Day of Judgement, if we want to be counted amongst those who were waiting for the Imam to reappear, we should do three things.

1) Increase our knowledge

¹ Biharul Anwar 52:13

² Kamalul Din 645

No one can claim to love somebody without knowing about that person. So, the first thing that we should do so that we can love our Imam is to try to read and listen to as much correct information about the Imam. The more knowledge we have about our Imam, the more we will be able to correctly prepare ourselves for his reappearance.

We should also learn more about our religion so that we can practice it better. Imam al-Mahdi would be very pleased with us if we would spend a few minutes every day trying to learn to recite the Holy Qur’an and understand its meaning.

Remember that when the Imam is choosing soldiers for his army, he will not choose those people who do not know how to pray or how to fast correctly.

2) Be careful of our deeds!

The next thing we must do whilst waiting for the Imam to reappear is to train ourselves to become better Muslims. We should try to do those things that please the heart of the Imam such as praying on time, respecting our parents, being truthful and polite to others and helping the poor people. We should also avoid doing those things that anger and sadden the Imam such as backbiting, lying, using inappropriate language and listening to impermissible music.

3) Build a strong emotional relationship with the Imam

Our Imam loves us very much. He cares deeply for us and is always praying for us. He feels happy when we are comfortable and he feels sad when we are in problems. We too should always remember our Imam wherever we are and always pray for his safety after every daily prayer. If we perform these small acts continuously, we will begin to feel true love for our Imam. There was once a scholar who used to put a few coins away in charity daily with the intention of sending the reward to Imam al-Mahdi.

AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE IMAM

Some people have had the blessing of meeting with the Imam. These people loved the Imam very much and did only those things that made him happy. They also prayed to Allah (SWT) sincerely to give them such an opportunity. Here is one such story:

One day a very confused person came to Sheikh al-Mufid, a very knowledgeable man, asking him to help him with his problem. The problem was that a pregnant woman had died but the baby in her womb was still alive.

The man did not know whether to bury the mother with her child or to take the child out and then bury the mother.

Sheikh al-Mufid had never come across such a situation before and he too was perplexed. He told the man to bury the woman with the baby.

On getting the reply, the man left for his village. On the way, a horse rider crossed his path. He asked the man to stop and said, Sheikh al-Mufid has said that the foetus should be removed from the womb through surgery and then the woman be buried alone.

The man accepted the command and acted on it.

After some time, Sheikh al-Mufid realised that the person who corrected his ruling was Imam al-Mahdi because no one else was aware of this incident. A few days later he received a letter from Imam al-Mahdi saying: 'You continue to give rulings; we will save you from mistakes and errors. We will not leave you alone to commit mistakes.'

Imam al-Mahdi protected Sheikh al-Mufid because he was very knowledgeable, lived a life which was free from sin and also he loved the Imam very much. We too should try to develop these qualities in ourselves so that we can meet with our Imam.

AN EXTRACT FROM DU'A NUDBAH

In, du'a al-nudba which is recommended to be recited every Friday, we complain to Allah (SWT) about the absence of our Imam. We complain to Allah about the injustice around the world and that we are helpless without our Imam. We are desperately asking Allah to hasten his reappearance. Below are couple of extracts from the du'a where we complain about not seeing our Imam.

"It is hard for me that I see every creature but I don't see you..."

...How I wonder! Where has farness taken you?

Or which land or soil is carrying you?

Is it on Mount Razwa or elsewhere on Mount Tuwa?

It is hard for me that problems come to you but not on me,

And neither cries nor complaints from me can help you!

Review Questions:

Q1. What does truly waiting for the Imam to reappear mean?

- a) To sit in the mosque the whole day and ask Allah to send the Imam
- b) To improve ourselves so that we are fit for Imam's army
- c) Both a & b

Q2. Is it possible to communicate with the Imam?

- a) Yes, but only if we are sincere and if the Imam is happy with us
- b) Yes, but we have to go to Mecca
- c) No, one can never communicate with the Imam.

ⁱ Al Kaafi 1:337

السَّلَامُ عَلَى آدَمَ صَفْوَةِ اللَّهِ

PROPHETS AND MESSENGERS:

ADAM [A.S]

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to the role of Prophets
- Discuss the creation of Prophet Adam (as)
- Discuss Iblīs's reaction to Prophet Adam's creation
- Discuss the creation of Eve (as)
- Understand the fact that Prophet Adam's mistake was not a sin.

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Lesson 1: Prophet Adam (as)

PROPHETS WERE SENT BY GOD

Prophets were sent by God to guide mankind. After being questioned by an atheist with regards to the logic behind sending prophets, Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) has been narrated to have said that, firstly there is a Maker and Creator who is also Wise and thus, if mankind cannot converse with Him, thus He will send Prophets as guides to communicate His laws to the people. It is also narrated that Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) has said that the Prophets were sent to be links between the people and God.

PROPHETS ARE SINLESS

Prophets had something called 'iṣma or divine protection so that they never sinned. It must be noted that the Prophets are ma'ṣūm or sinless, not because they could not sin, but chose not to, due to this 'iṣma. Thus they were protected all their lives from birth till their death, in all aspects of their life.

PROPHETS WERE ROLE MODELS

The Prophets had to be of flawless character so as to serve as role models. We have discussed this issue in previous lessons. This issue is proven in the following āyah:

“And when his Lord tried Abraham with certain words, he fulfilled them. He said: Surely I will make you an Imam of men. Abraham said: And of my offspring? My covenant does not include the unjust, said He.”

CREATION OF PROPHET ADAM (AS)

Prophet Adam was the first Prophet in Islam. He was created from dust and was given life by Allah (SWT).

“Surely the likeness of Jesus is with Allah as the likeness of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him, Be, and he was.” (3:59)

Allah told the angels that He intended to create man and put him on the earth as His representative. The angels had a question about this:

“And when your Lord said to the angels, I am going to place in the earth a khalif, they said: What! Will You place in it such as shall make mischief in it and shed blood, and we celebrate Your praise and extol Your Holiness? He said: Surely I know what you do not know.”

The angels could not understand why Allah (SWT) was choosing as His representative a creature with free will—a creature who would cause problems on Earth. However, Allah (SWT) assured them that He had special knowledge which the angels did not have.

THE REACTION OF SATAN

When Allah (SWT) introduced Prophet Adam to all His creation, He asked all His creatures to prostrate before Prophet Adam. All obeyed Allah (SWT), with the exception of Iblīs:

"And when We said to the angels: Prostrate yourselves before Adam., They all prostrated themselves except Iblīs; he refused and was full of pride, ..."

Allah (SWT) questioned Iblīs as to why he refused to prostrate:

"[And God] said: "What has kept you from prostrating yourself when I commanded you?" Iblī answered: "I am better than he: You have created me out of fire, whereas You created him from clay."

This clearly showed the arrogance of Satan and his defiance of Allah's command. This was all because of his pride.

This was a major turning point as from this point onwards Satan was now an open enemy and a rebel. He became arrogant and thus was expelled from Paradise.

He wanted to prove that he was superior to Prophet Adam (as) and thus behaved this way.

However, before being expelled from Allah's Kingdom, Satan asked for respite from Allah (SWT) and was granted this. Thus he remains trying to deceive people into disobeying Allah.

The important lesson from this story is that it was Satan's pride that led to his downfall. He confined himself to being damned and cursed by His Lord forever because of his pride. We must remember to never have pride in ourselves as this may cause our destruction.

THE CREATION OF EVE

After the creation of Prophet Adam (as) and the episode with Iblīs, Allah (SWT) created a woman by the name of Eve (Ḥawwā'). She was to be Adam's wife. There is a misconception that Eve was created from the rib of Adam. According to the teachings of the Ahlul Bayt (as), this is not true. Rather, Eve and Adam were both created from 'the human soul' and from the same clay. Imam al-Bāqir (as) says:

"The Almighty took a handful of dust and by His power created Adam and from the leftover of the same dust He created Eve".

Allah then ordered Prophet Adam (as) and his wife to dwell in a garden and to enjoy all the pleasures therein. They could live happily in that garden, as long as they stayed from one particular tree.

"And We said, O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the garden and eat from it a plenteous (food) wherever you wish and do not approach this tree or you will be of the unjust?"

THE MISTAKE OF PROPHET ADAM (AS)

Prophet Adam (as) and his wife were living quite peacefully and were successfully avoiding the forbidden tree. However, Satan wanted to deceive them, and he was successful in doing so. He told them that the reason God had forbidden them from that tree is because they might become angels and they might live forever. Prophet Adam and his wife listened to Satan and tasted from the fruit of the forbidden tree. At this point, Allah (SWT) admonished them:

"Did I not forbid that tree unto you and tell you, verily Satan in your open enemy?" (7:22).

MISTAKE OR SIN?

It is common for many to think that Prophet Adam (as) committed a sin. The commands given by Allah (SWT) are of two types, obligatory commands or guiding commands. Obligatory commands are those that we must follow. If we disobey them, we are sinning. Guiding commands are more like recommendations for how to best live our lives. If we disobey them, we are not sinning, but we are choosing the lesser option.

The command that Allah (SWT) gave to Adam and Eve to not eat from the tree was a guiding command. By disobeying the command of God they made a mistake and made their own lives harder. However, they did not commit a sin in doing this.

OBEDIENCE TO GOD

We clearly saw that giving into temptation can have consequences and the example of Prophet Adam (as) was that he had to give up his comfortable life for a life of full of difficulty and hard work. If Adam had not been tempted by Satan, he would have remained in the comfortable life in the garden of pleasures.

We should apply this lesson to our life. We should realise that if we obey Allah (SWT), He will help us to lead good and healthy lives. If, however, we give in to the temptations of Satan, we will have a hard life full of ⁱdifficulty.

Review Questions

Q1. Did Prophets ever commit a sin?

- Sometimes
- Never
- They couldn't

Q2. Why was Prophet Adam (as) created?

- To make Iblīs angry
- To be a link between mankind and Allah (SWT)
- To challenge the angels.

Q3. Prophet Adam's eating from the tree was a mistake and NOT a sin because:

- The commands from God to not eat from the tree was a guiding command
- Prophet Adam was tempted by Satan
- Prophet Adam did not understand God's command

ⁱReferences

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السَّلَامُ عَلَى نُوحٍ نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ

PROPHET NŪH^[A.S.]

نبي الله نوح (ع)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to Prophet Noah and review his position as one of the law-making prophets
- Review the details of the story of the mission of Prophet Noah
- Discuss the issue of Prophet Noah's son and its morals
- Discuss further Prophet Noah's quality of perseverance on the right path as above

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Prophet Nūḥ (Noah as)

In previous years we were introduced to Prophet Noah (as) and learnt that he is one of the five principal law-making (ulūl 'azm) prophets that Allah (SWT) has sent as a guide for humanity. In this lesson we will revisit the story of Prophet Noah and look at some lessons that we can learn from it.

THE STORY OF PROPHET NOAH

Noah was sent as a prophet and messenger to his people. He had the responsibility of guiding them to the right path. His people worshipped idols which they believed were gods. However, Noah taught them to worship Allah (SWT) and showed them the right path. He used many different ways and tried very hard to guide all of his people. He was teaching his people for almost 1000 years.

Despite the time Prophet Noah spent with his community, only 80 people believed in him. Most of his community called him a liar and mocked him. After doing everything he could to guide his people, Prophet Noah's mission was coming to an end. The disbelievers in his community asked Noah to bring on Allah's punishment if he was truthful. Allah ordered Noah to build an ark and take aboard all of the believers as well as a pair of each animal in his area. After they had all boarded, Allah sent a huge flood which drowned all the disbelievers of Noah's community, leaving only those on board the ark alive.

THE PROPHET'S SON

Imagine we have very blessed and religious parents who are of very high status in the eyes of Allah. Does this mean that we will automatically be sent to heaven no matter what our actions may be? The answer of this question can be discovered from the story of Prophet Noah's son.

His son refused to believe in Allah (SWT) and did not board the ark of his father even when the flood began. Allah (SWT) drowned Noah's son in the flood despite him being the son of a Prophet, showing us that our own actions are what matter and not who our family is. We are responsible for what we do and must be careful of our deeds.

PERSEVERANCE IN ALLAH'S CAUSE

Prophet Noah is a symbol of patience and perseverance from whom a lot can be learnt. Perseverance means staying on the path of a good cause and not giving up, despite facing pains and difficulties. Prophet Noah (as) preached the religion of Allah (SWT) to his people for 950 years despite only 80 people believing in him. He worked for the sake of Allah (SWT) through all the difficulties and pains that the disbelievers gave him for all these long years. Allah describes this in the Holy Qur'an:

"He said: O my Lord! Surely I have called my people by night and by day! And whenever I have called them that You may forgive them, they put their fingers in their ears, cover themselves with their garments, and persist and are puffed up with pride. Then surely I called to them aloud. Then surely I spoke to them in public and I spoke to them in secret..."ⁱ

We must learn from Prophet Noah to persevere in serving Allah and doing good deeds. Sometimes we may go through many difficulties while trying to follow our religion such as when our classmates mock us, but we must stay firm, ~~and~~ persevere and know that Allah will aid us.

When we make a decision to do something good, whether it is religious or not, we should not give up as soon as we face a hard obstacle. Instead, we should be patient and keep working hard. For example, if we decide we will wake up to pray Fajr prayer on time every morning, we should try to sleep early, set our alarms and overcome the sleepiness in the morning. If one night we are tempted to stay up, or one morning we feel extremely tired, we should not simply give up. We should remember our determination to pray on time and overcome the pain and difficulty.

Similarly, if a person decides, for example, to be a top-level sportsman, then they cannot sleep in, be lazy, eat

junk food and so on. Instead, that person has to be up early to train every morning, maintain a good diet and have a lot of motivation. If he faces difficulties or fails sometimes in his quest, he does not give up, instead coming back to try again and again.

The following story demonstrates the quality of perseverance very nicely. A great Muslim scholar narrates the following story: 'I have learnt firm determination from an insect called 'Bijju'. Once I was sitting near a clean and shining pillar in the Masjid when I observed that a tiny insect was attempting to climb the upright stone pillar to reach a lamp that was on the top. I kept sitting the whole night and observing until dawn how relentlessly that insect was struggling to climb up the slippery column. I counted 700 attempts when he was falling down from the middle of the path because the pillar was very smooth and glassy. His legs could not hold on. I was extremely astonished to see the extraordinary determination of that little worm. When it was time for Fajr Prayer, I got up from my place, made ablution and engaged myself in worship. After concluding my prayers I looked back toward the pillar and I found to my absolute astonishment that, as a result of its perseverance and untiring effort, the insect had achieved its aim and was sitting close to the burning light!"

Review Questions

Q1. Prophet Noah is one of the five:

- a. Principal law-making prophets
- b. Imams of Ahlul Bayt
- c. Messengers

Q2. Prophet Noah's son:

- a) Did not drown because he was the Prophet's son
- b) Drowned because of his disbelief in Allah
- c) Boarded the ark

Q3. Perseverance means:

- a) Doing good deeds
- b) Serving Allah
- c) Working hard to achieve something despite the pains and difficulties involved.

ⁱ Holy Quran, Surah Noah Verses 5-9

السَّلَامُ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلِ اللَّهِ

PROPHET IBRAHIM^[A.S]

نبي الله إبراهيم (ع)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand that Prophet Abraham was one of the Principal Prophets
- Should understand the concept of courage
- Should discuss the roots of courage
- Discuss the real examples of courage
- Discuss the Sacrifice of Prophet Abraham (as)
- Discuss the quality of Trust in God (Tawakkul)

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Lesson 1: Prophet Abraham (Ibrāhīm^{as})

Muslims honour and respect Prophet Ibrāhīm (as). The Holy Qur'an describes him as "a man of truth, a prophet".

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) is called the father of the Prophets because from his son Prophet Isma'il came the Arabic Prophet, including the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (as) and from his son Prophet Ishāq came the Prophets sent to the Jewish community, including Prophets Moses and Jesus (as).

The most famous title of Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was "Khalilullāh", which means "Friend of Allah".

The Quran repeatedly describes Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) as a man who believed in *One True God*, and was a righteous example for us all to follow:

"Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian. Rather he was a ḥanīf, a muslim, and he was not one of the polytheists." (3:67)

THE BIRTH OF PROPHET ABRAHAM

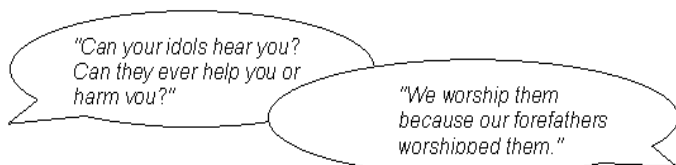
Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was born in ancient Babylonia at the time when Namrud was the king. Namrud was a proud man and forced the people to believe in him as a god. Since the people were idolaters, who already worshipped idols of wood and stone, they willingly accepted him as their god. After some time, Allah (SWT) decided to send Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) to these people so they may be guided.

Prophet Ibrāhīm's (as) mother had shown no signs of pregnancy when she carried him, so she knew that her baby was special. To protect him from Namrud's men, she nurtured him outside the main city, and Allah (SWT) assisted her in miraculous ways in caring for him as a baby.

PROPHET ABRAHAM'S YOUTH

Time went by, and Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) became a young man. He could not believe that his people were worshipping statues. He laughed whenever he saw them entering the temple, lowering their heads, silently offering the statues the best of their food, crying and asking forgiveness from them.

They could not be gods, they have no power. God is greater than all His creatures, He is their Creator! Thus a god cannot be something that humans themselves create! One could not find Him sitting on a table in a temple. Below is an example of one conversation Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) had with his people.



ABRAHAM DESTROYS THE IDOLS

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) vowed to destroy these statues, in order to help his community see the stupidity of their actions. He knew that a big celebration was coming soon, where everybody would leave town for a big feast on the riverbank. After making sure that nobody was left in town, Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) went towards the temple armed with an axe.

Statues of all shapes and sizes were sitting there adorned with decorations. Plates of food were offered to them, but the food was untouched. "Well, why don't you eat? The food is getting cold." He said to the statues, then with his axe he destroyed all the statues except one, the biggest of them. He hung the axe around its neck and left.

How big was the shock when people entered the temple! They gathered inside, looking at their 'gods', smashed into pieces now. They wondered who might

have done this? Then they remembered that Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) opposed the idols.

They brought him before the people and began to accuse him. Prophet Ibrāhīm (as), trying to make his people think, said that perhaps that big idol had destroyed the others, because the axe was on its shoulder. When his people replied to him that this was ridiculous, they began to understand what Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was trying to teach them. However, their pride, and their blind following of tradition, stopped from accepting the truth. They decided to throw Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) into a huge pit of fire.

THE MIRACLE OF THE COOL FIRE

A Huge pit was dug and a large quantity of wood was piled up. Then the biggest fire people ever witnessed was lit. The fire flames were so high up in the sky that the birds could not fly over it for fear of being burned. The prophet's hands and feet were chained, and he was put in a catapult to throw him into the fire. As this was happening, Angel Gabriel came to him and said; "O Ibrāhīm, Is there anything you wish for?"

Prophet Abraham could have asked to be saved from the fire, to be taken away. Instead, he said: "I only wish that Allah be pleased with me." The catapult was released, and Abraham was thrown in the heart of the fire. However, the Almighty and Merciful Allah would not allow His Prophet to be killed. He ordered the fire:

"O fire! Be cool and safe for Abraham!"

And the miracle happened. The fire obeyed and burned only his chains.

The prophet came out from the pit as if he was coming out from a garden, peaceful, his face illuminated, and not a trace of smoke on his clothes. People watched in shock. After this, Prophet Abraham decided to leave these people and move on to live in another land.

PROPHET ABRAHAM'S COURAGE

In another incident that happened during the youth of Prophet Ibrāhīm (as), he was involved in a debate with the king of the time. Namrud, the king, sent for Prophet Ibrāhīm (as). He wanted to debate with him and show

his people that he, the king, is indeed a god who had unlimited power. He asked Prophet Ibrāhīm (as): "What can your God do that I cannot?"

Pr Abraham: My Lord gives life and causes death

Namrud: I can give life and cause death

Pr Abraham: My Lord makes the sun rise from the east, and set in the west, can you make the sun rise from the west and set in the east?

Namrud: why don't you worship me?

Pr Abraham: I would. If you could tell me what is in my heart?

Namrud: why don't you worship fire?

Pr Abraham: I would. But why shouldn't I worship water, which puts out fire?

Namrud: then worship water?

Pr Abraham: why shouldn't I worship the clouds, which swallow up the water?

Namrud: then worship the clouds

Pr Abraham: why shouldn't I worship the wind, which blows the clouds about?

Namrud: then worship the wind?

Pr Abraham: why shouldn't I worship man, who can stand strong against the wind.

Namrud: then worship me, for I am a man.

Pr Abraham: but I have already shown you why I can't worship you.

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) left the king speechless and went back to his important mission, calling people to worship the one and only God, Allah.

COURAGE IN ISLAM

Courage, or bravery, is the virtue that arises as a result of faith, in those who fear no one but Allah, and who are deeply devoted to Him.

Those who believe in Allah show courage for the pleasure of Allah. They do not remain silent when evil acts are committed around them. They do what would please Allah, even if it displeases other people. They fear only Allah, and this makes them very brave.

Let us discuss an example. A person meets a poor man in the street who needs help. He wants to help, but those around him try to discourage him. "Leave him," they say, and, "Is it your job to help him?" mockingly to prevent

him from doing so. In such a situation, the person is faced with a choice.

Some will fear that if they help the poor man he might lose his friends but a true Muslim helps the person without fearing anyone because he knows that helping the needy person is the right thing to do.

WHAT IS NOT COURAGE?

In daily life a student who argues with the teacher may be regarded by his friends as very brave. Likewise, one who behaves rebelliously and breaks the rules is thought of as brave. For example, in a school that requires navy blue pants, a person who shows up with green pants has great courage, according to the other students. Cheating in an exam might also be thought of as a brave action. Getting into lots of fights or competitions about strength is another thing that is sometimes seen as bravery.

All these are not real examples of courage. Such people are acting with rebelliousness or stupidity, and it is mistaken for courage. Courage is to do the right thing, for the sake of Allah (SWT), even when there might be danger or fear involved.

THE COURAGE OF PROPHET ABRAHAM

The most important virtues of the Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) were the deep faith, which he possessed, his great devotion to Allah, and his great courage in doing battle against the unbelievers.

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) opposed himself to the entire tribe, and through logical dialogue, made them recognize that their idols were not God, but only manmade sculptures of wood. The unbelievers, who had not until then ever met anyone who denounced their idols, were angered by him and wanted to punish him.

In spite of their rage, Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) continued to speak of the existence and unity of Allah; carrying out his duty with courage. Knowing that all people, including the tribe who were so violently opposing him, are under the control of Allah, he behaved steadfastly, showing his boundless trust in Allah.

The leaders of the tribe wanted to throw him into a fire, but Allah saved him by a miracle. This is a proof of Allah's promise of help to all believers show bravery in pleasing Him.

Review Questions

Q1. Who was the king at the time of Prophet Abraham?

- a. Pharaoh
- b. Namrud
- c. Yazid

Q2. What punishment was given to Prophet Abraham?

- a. He was killed
- b. Thrown into a fire
- c. Put into prison

Q3. Why did Namrud want to debate with Prophet Abraham?

- a. To prove he was a god himself
- b. To prove Prophet Ibrahim right
- c. To learn from Abraham (as)

Lesson 2: The Children of Abraham (as)

Prophet Abraham (as) left his country of birth. He took his family and left for Palestine. He was married to Lady Sara. Unfortunately, he and Sara could not have any children. After being married for a long time, Sara suggested Prophet Abraham marry her maid, Hajar and have children with her.

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) and Hajar got married and Allah blessed them with a son, Prophet Ismā'il. Five years later, Sara miraculously gave birth despite being quite old. Her son's name was Ishāq.

ABRAHAM'S FAMILY IN MECCA

Allah (SWT) ordered Prophet Abraham (as) to take Hajar and her son to Mecca. This was part of Allah's (SWT) plan to bring people to Mecca and to rebuild the Ka'bah, so that people would resume making the pilgrimage (hajj) there.

They settled in a good place with hills and mountains on all sides to protect them. After a while Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) said that he should go back to see Sara and to get more food and water. Before he left he prayed to Allah to look after his wife and son because they did not have much food and water left.

A while after the prophet (as) left, the food and water soon began to run low. Hajar was very worried. Her son was getting hungry and she had nothing to feed him. She began to desperately search for water. During her search, she ran seven times from Şafā to Marwah, two small hills near the Ka'bah. While doing this, she was praying to Allah (SWT) to save her from her predicament. Eventually, Allah (SWT) miraculously caused water to flow for her from a well, and she and her son were never needy again. This well became known as Zamzam, and until today people benefit from its holy water. The actions of Hajar have a special symbolic meaning, and everyone who performs hajj does the seven laps between these two small hills till today.

THE SACRIFICE OF PROPHET ABRAHAM

One night Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) had a dream. He dreamt Allah told him to sacrifice his son Ismā'il, by slaughtering him (cutting his neck). Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was unsure of the significance of the dream so at first he ignored it. However, he had the same dream three nights in a row, and for a prophet, this is a sign that the dream was an order from Allah (SWT) to slaughter his son.

Even though he loved his son dearly, Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was willing to do whatever Allah (SWT) ordered him to do, even if it was as difficult as this.

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) told his son of his dream, and that he was ordered to slaughter him. His son, who was a great prophet himself, said: "I hope you will find me patient".

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) tied his son's hands and legs together and placed his face on the sand. He began to cut, but the knife would not cut, he kept trying, but nothing was happening, the knife would not cut! Suddenly, Allah (SWT) send a sheep down from heaven,

and ordered Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) to slaughter the sheep instead, and to let his son live.

All this was a test for Prophet Ibrāhīm (as), to see if he was willing to sacrifice the thing he loved most in this world for the sake of Allah (SWT). Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) passed this test with flying colours.

The lesson we learn from this story is that no matter how difficult it might seem to follow the orders of Allah (SWT), we must make every sacrifice to follow these orders. Once we do this, Allah (SWT) will make our task easier for us and will look after us.

THE BUILDING OF THE KA'BAH

The Well of Zamzam, where water first flowed to save the lives of Hajar and her son became a popular place for the caravans to stop. Some people liked the place so much they decided to stay there. This place became known as Mecca. This had always been a holy land, and now Allah (SWT) wanted a holy place to be built here, where people could come to worship Him.

Therefore, He ordered Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) to build the Ka'bah. The foundations of this holy house were sent from heaven to Prophet Ibrāhīm (as). The most holy part of the Ka'bah is a stone known as the Black Stone. Prophet Ibrāhīm (as), along with his son Ismā'īl, built the Ka'bah and placed the Black Stone there as well. They were the first people to perform the rites of ḥajj and to worship Allah in that holy place.

TAWAKKUL (TRUST IN GOD)

Allah, the Wise, has said:

“So when you have decided, then place your trust in Allah; surely Allah loves those who trust.”

Tawakkul means to place our trust in Allah (SWT), and to know and believe that everything we experience and everything we do takes place under Allah's control.

A person who does not trust Allah believes that anyone or anything may harm him. Such a person is always anxious or depressed.

Allah (SWT) may test a person through various ways. For instance, he may be tried by illness, loss of a close relative or friend, poverty, or family conflict.

A person who keeps their trust in Allah (SWT) in these situations, is guaranteeing themselves the help of Allah (SWT), which is never far away.

A person who trusts Allah knows that there is nothing but goodness in the tests and faces the situation with patience, just like Prophet Ibrāhīm (as), who was put to test by being asked to sacrifice his son.

Allah commands us in the Holy Qur'an:

“Put your trust in the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful”
(26:217)

Let us now listen to a story about trust in Allah (SWT).

During the time of Prophet Muḥammad (saw), there lived a trader who, in all affairs, always placed his trust in Allah.

He used to travel from Syria to Medina for trade and during one of his trips, he was confronted by a bandit who drew his sword and intended to kill him.

“If it is my wealth that you desire, come and take it and leave me alone,” pleaded the trader.

“Killing you is a must, for if I let you go free, you will identify me to the authorities,” said the bandit.

“In that case give me respite till I have offered a two-rak'ah prayer,” requested the trader.

The bandit agreed and the trader engaged himself in prayers. Having completed the prayers, he raised his hands and beseeched: “O Lord! I have heard from Your Prophet that whoever places his trust in You shall remain protected. I have no helper in this desert and Your Grace is my only hope.”

Having placed all his trust in Allah, he had hardly completed his supplication when a rider on a white horse loomed in the distance. When he came close, the rider confronted the bandit and killed him with one stroke of his sword. Then, turning to the trader, he said: “O You, who places your trust in Allah! I have killed the enemy of Allah and He has delivered you from him.”

“Who are you that you have come to my assistance in this desert?” the trader asked.

“I am your *tawakkul* (trust in Allah). Allah (SWT) brought me out in the form of an Angel to help fight your enemy.” Having said this, he disappeared out of sight.

The trader fell down in prostration of thanksgiving to Allah. On arrival in Medina, he approached the Noble Prophet (saw) and narrated what had transpired.

“Indeed! Tawakkul raises a person to the height of success and the rank of a person who possesses it, is equivalent to the ranks of the Prophets, the friends of Allah, the righteous ones and the martyrs,” said the ⁱProphet.

Review Questions

Q1. What is Tawakkul?

- a. Trust in Allah
- b. Trusting your heart
- c. Trusting other people

Q2. How many sons did Prophet Abraham (as) have?

- a. One
- b. Two
- c. None

Q3. What is the foundation stone of the Ka’bah known as?

- a. White Stone
- b. Black Stone
- c. Rock

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نبي الله يوسف (ع)

PROPHET YÛSUF [A.S]

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

The Story of Joseph (as)

In this lesson we shall be examining the life and struggles of Prophet Yûsuf (as).

In the Qur'an Allah (SWT) reveals that the life of this prophet contains important lessons:

“In Yûsuf and his brothers there are Signs for every one of those who want to ask.” (12: 7)

THE BEST OF THE QUR'ANIC STORIES

Allah (SWT) introduces the life of Prophet Yûsuf (as) to the people by saying:

“We will recount to you the best of narrative in what We have revealed to you of this Qur'ân, and indeed prior to it you were among those who are unaware [of it].” (12:3)

Almost all of Surah Yûsuf, one of the longest in the Qur'an, is devoted to his life and that of his family. It is also a very detailed story of the events of his life.

PROPHET YÛSUF IN CHILDHOOD

Prophet Yûsuf (as) was one of the twelve sons of Prophet Ya'qûb. His mother's name was Raḥîl. He had a younger sister and a brother named Benyâmin (Benjamin) from the same mother.

Prophet Yûsuf's (as) ten older brothers were his step brothers i.e. from Prophet Ya'qûb's first wife. Prophet Yûsuf's mother died when he was a very young boy, and this is one of the reasons why he was so dear to his father.

From his childhood Prophet Yûsuf (as) was a very handsome looking boy but in addition to that, he was also

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Discuss the story of Prophet Joseph (as)
- Understand that jealousy is an evil quality
- Understand that even if jealous feelings are present, we should never act on them
- Discuss al-ghibṭah
- Discuss the importance of love and strong relationships among family members
- Discuss the importance of forgiving family members

very intelligent and his personality and character were also very attractive. This made him a very likeable person to anyone who saw and met him. Thus Prophet Ya'qūb was very fond and affectionate of him.

This affection that Prophet Ya'qūb showed towards Prophet Yūsuf (as), made his older brothers jealous of him. This jealousy became so strong and deep in the hearts of the brothers, that they made a plan to take Joseph away from their father, permanently.

THE STATUS OF PROPHET YŪSUF (AS)

When Prophet Yūsuf (as) was about eight years old, he had a dream that there were eleven stars with the moon and the sun prostrating in front of him and he reported this dream to his father:

"Yūsuf said to his father: o' my father! I have indeed seen in a dream eleven stars and the sun and moon prostrating to me." (12: 4)



On hearing about this dream, Prophet Ya'qūb advised his son not to tell it to his brothers in case their jealousy should be excited. The Holy Qur'an relates:

"He (Ya'qūb) said: O my dear son! Tell not your brethren of your vision lest they should plot against you because surely Satan is the manifest enemy of man" (12:5)

THE PLOT AGAINST PROPHET YŪSUF

The brothers of Prophet Yūsuf (as) did not like that he should become the only centre of their dad's love and attention. By this time their jealousy had become so deep and dangerous, that they decided to get rid of Prophet Yūsuf (as) by killing him. But Allah (SWT) protected Yūsuf from being killed and the brothers agreed on another plan of throwing Prophet Yūsuf (as) into a well. The Holy Qur'an describes how this happened:

"One said: Slay Yūsuf or drive him some other land so that your father's favours may be exclusively for you and after that you shall live as upright persons. One among them said: Kill not Yūsuf but cast him down into the bottom of a pit if you must do it so that some wayfarers may pick him up." (12: 7-10)

The brothers asked their father to allow Yūsuf to accompany them while they grazed the sheep outside town. Although Prophet Ya'qūb feared that the jealous brothers should harm Prophet Yūsuf (as), he accepted their request.

The brothers now got an opportunity to carry out their evil plan of throwing him into the pit. The Holy Qur'an says:

"They said: O our father! Why do you not entrust us with Yūsuf though we, indeed, mean him well. Send him with us tomorrow that he may enjoy himself and sport and surely we shall take good care of him. He said: It grieves me that the wolf should devour him while you are heedless of him. They said: Surely if the wolf should devour him notwithstanding we are so strong a band, then we shall be in that case justly blamed for losing him." (12: 11-15)

When they left the city with Prophet Yūsuf (as), they first began to tease and beat him. After some time, when Prophet Yūsuf (as) was hurt and weak, they took him to a well and threw him down. He was now all alone in the dark well with no food or water.

After this they went home and took his shirt, stained in sheep's blood to their father. They put up a false scene upon entering their home, wailing and crying. They lied to their father that a wolf had eaten their young brother, and that they were unable to save him from the terrible fate.ⁱ

Ya'qūb was so grieved at the story and was so saddened by the apparent loss of his son that he cried very often. It is said that he lost his eye sight due to how much he cried.

THE EVIL OF JEALOUSY

Prophet Yūsuf's (as) brothers were suffering from a very bad sickness of the soul, called destructive jealousy. This type of jealousy is among the most destructive emotions or feelings which a person may have towards his fellow human beings. It causes him to wish evil for others and to

be happy when misfortune befalls them. Jealousy of this type then leads to anger and rage which we saw in the brothers of Prophet Yūsuf (as).

The jealousy the brothers had led them to do things which are unimaginable for the children of a Prophet, such as beating up their younger brother, throwing him into a well to be left to die, letting a trade caravan find him and sell him into slavery which led him to be taken hundreds of kilometres away to Egypt. On top of all this, they even lied to their father.

Imam 'Ali (as) has said:

"Jealousy destroys good deeds like a fire consumes wood."



We know the way in which dry wood is burnt and consumed by a hot raging fire. That is what jealousy does to our deeds and our happiness.

Some of the evil effects of jealousy are that we see from the story of Prophet Yūsuf (as) are:

- Jealousy hurts the jealous person himself most of all.
- It makes the jealous person unhappy
- It makes the jealous person ungrateful and selfish.
- Jealousy can end up breaking relations – if family relations in a Prophet's family can be destroyed – no one is safe from this evil.
- The jealous person is constantly occupied with the jealousy and always planning and thinking evil things
- Jealousy leads to hurting others including our loved ones
- The jealous person never has a good ending

HOW TO AVOID JEALOUSY

The solution to jealousy is simple but needs practice. Sometimes, a person may get jealous of another person, but it is important that we **DO NOT** act upon those feelings, like the way the brothers of Prophet Yūsuf (as) did. If we act on those feelings, the jealousy grows in our hearts and it leads us to commit huge sins that can put us in more trouble.

We should remember what Allah (SWT) has said in the Qur'an – which can help us avoid jealousy:

"And do not covet those things which Allah has given as gifts more freely on some of you than on others; for men shall have of what they earn, and women will have of what they earn: But ask Allah for his bounty. For Allah has full knowledge over all things." (4:32)

JEALOUSY VS AL-GHIBṬAH

Sometimes, we see something that our friend has, and we wish we had the same thing. For example, we may wish that we could play soccer as well as our friend could. However, we do not want this blessing to be taken away from our friend, we just wish that we had it too. This is called al-ghibṭah in Arabic. It is not jealousy, it is simply wanting something good for ourselves as well. There is nothing wrong with this feeling.

If on the other hand, we wish that our friend loses his skills or gets injured or something bad happens to him such that he loses that blessing, then this jealousy, and this is great sin.

Review Questions

Q1. How old was Prophet Yūsuf (as) when he got the dream about the sun, moon and stars:

- 22 years
- 8 years
- 2 years

Q2. Why did Prophet Yūsuf's brothers get jealous of him?

- He believed in Allah (SWT)
- He was handsome, intelligent and lovable
- He was always favoured unfairly by his father

Q3. What is the most important lesson we learn from Prophet Yūsuf's (as) life?

- That we should spoil the good things other people have if we can't have them
- That we should avoid jealousy and be happy with what Allah (SWT) has given us
- That we should pray to Allah to punish the bad people immediately

Life after Rescue from the Well

In this lesson we continue studying the life of Prophet Yūsuf (as) and what happened to him after he was thrown into the well. Through this we will see the patience Prophet Yūsuf (as) showed throughout his hardship, and the importance of love and forgiveness, especially towards family members.

JOSEPH'S RELEASE FROM THE WELL

A caravan happened to pass by the well. Some men needed water to quench their thirst. One of them lowered his bucket and into the well and when he lifted it, to their surprise, Prophet Yūsuf (as) emerged. Prophet Yūsuf (as) was then taken to Egypt where he was sold as a slave.



The Holy Qur'an states:

"And there came a wayfarer and they sent down a water drawer. He let down his pail into the pit. He said: What good luck, here is a youth. And they kept his case secret to make merchandise of him and Allah knew what they did, and they sold him for a petty price, a few dirhams and they attached little value to him." (12:19- 20)

As can be seen from this āyah, the group that found Prophet Yūsuf (as) in the well and rescued him thought that they would be able to sell him, and regarded him as property. That was because the system of slavery was then still there in Egypt and the surrounding area. People actively engaged in the trade, buying and selling children in particular. That was why the people who found him had such cause to celebrate at the prospect of making money out of him.

When the caravan reached Egypt, an Egyptian noble man bought Prophet Yūsuf (as). The Qur'an continues so:

"The man from Egypt who had bought him said to his wife, 'Give him an honourable place [in the household]. Maybe he will be useful to us, or we may adopt him as a son.'" (12:21)

Prophet Yūsuf (as) was given a good place to live, and was treated very well by his master. He was very diligent in the work he was given, he was obedient, polite and very respectful. In addition to all this, he was very intelligent and the master of the house was very impressed with his

knowledge and morals. Thus, he became very dear to them also.

However, as Prophet Yūsuf (as) became more mature, he was faced with greater challenges to his faith and devotion to Allah (SWT).

PROPHET YŪSUF OVERPOWERS TEMPTATION

Prophet Yūsuf (as) was a handsome and an attractive young man. As time passed, the lady of the house who was the wife of the nobleman that bought him as a slave put Prophet Yūsuf (as) in a very difficult situation because she had fallen in love with him.

The Qur'an tells us:

"The woman in whose house he was solicited him. She closed the doors and said, 'Come!!' He said, 'God forbid! Indeed He is my Lord; He has given me a good abode. Indeed the wrongdoers are not felicitous. They raced to the door, and she tore his shirt from behind, and they ran into her husband at the door. She said, 'What is to be the requital of him who has evil intentions for your wife except imprisonment or a painful punishment?'" (Surah 12:23-24)

Prophet Yūsuf (as) did not even looking at her. He tried to get rid of her but she chased him. She grabbed the back of his shirt and pulled thus tearing it. Just at that time the master appeared at the scene. One of the servants bore witness by saying: "Look at the shirt. If it is torn at the back, Yusuf will be quite innocent. He should not be blamed. In case it is torn from the front the woman is guilty". When the shirt was examined it was torn at the back and the Prophet Yūsuf (as) was found truthful.

This story spread and the women of Egypt began speaking about the wife of the nobleman. The Qur'an tells us what happened after this:

"When she heard of their conspiracies, she sent for them and arranged a feast, and gave each of them a knife, and said [to Yūsuf], 'Come out before them.' So when they saw him, they marvelled at him and cut their hands [absent-mindedly], and they said, 'Good heavens! This is not a human being! This is but a noble angel! She said, 'He is the one on whose account you blamed me. Certainly I did solicit him, but he was continent, and if he does not do what I bid him, surely he shall be imprisoned and be among the abased.'" (Surah 12:31-32)

The wife of the nobleman continued with her desire to tempt Prophet Yūsuf (as) to commit sin, and the ladies that were there were also influencing him to do what his master's wife told him to, but Prophet Yūsuf (as) was a strong, moral and decent person who did not accept any threat or influence from the women.

The Qur'an tells us his reaction to the threat of being imprisoned when the wife of the master threatened him:

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

Because of Prophet Yūsuf (as) disobedience towards her order, the master's wife imprisoned him. Allah (SWT) then accepted Prophet Yūsuf's prayer and turned the evil inclinations of the women away from him.

JOSEPH (AS) IN PRISON

In the prison Prophet Yūsuf (as) was in the company of two prisoners. One night, both prisoners saw strange dreams. The Holy Qur'an tells us what Prophet Yūsuf (as) said about the dreams:

"O my prison mates! As for one of you he shall pour out wine for his lord to drink and as for the other, he shall be executed and the birds shall eat from off his head. The matter is decreed concerning which you inquired."
(12:41)

Soon after, the interpretations of those dreams turned out to be true. When the first man was about to leave the prison, Prophet Yūsuf (as) asked this man to remember and ask the king to release him. However, this man completely forgot, until an incident occurred.

One day, the king of Egypt had a strange dream that no one could explain. Prophet Yūsuf (as) was then called to explain the dream and his explanation satisfied the king. He was finally released from prison and his innocence was made clear. The king was much impressed with his goodness and intelligence. He therefore offered him an important position in the government. He was selected to be the director of the store houses in Egypt. From this position, Prophet Yūsuf (as) was in control of all the food stores in Egypt and he made all the rules and policies about how to store food and who was to store it.

PROPHET YŪSUF (AS) MEETS HIS BROTHERS

After some time, the king's dream came true and Egypt and the surrounding areas went through a severe drought. This famine also affected Kan'an, where Prophet Ya'qūb and his family were living. The king, under the advice of Prophet Yūsuf (as), had stored food and was now distributing to people affected by the drought. So Prophet Yūsuf's (as) brothers came to take their share of the rations.

When they reached Egypt, Prophet Yūsuf (as) immediately recognized his brothers, but they did not know who he was, and Prophet Yūsuf (as) did not tell them who he was. He gave them their rations and looked after them. However, he asked them to bring Benjamin with them the next time they came to get rations.

The next time they went to Egypt with Prophet Yūsuf's (as) younger brother, they were welcomed and Prophet Yūsuf (as) then told only his younger brother who he was. The Qur'an says:

"And when they came into Yūsuf's presence, he took his own brother aside with him saying: Lo I am your brother. Therefore grieve not at what they do." (12:69)

Prophet Yusuf (as) then hatched a plan to keep his brother with him, and to bring his father to Egypt as well. He planted a silver cup of the king in his bag as an excuse to keep him behind. When the news came out that the king's silver cup was missing, they checked the bags of Prophet Yūsuf's (as) brothers, and found it in his Benjamin's bag. As a result of this, he kept his brother Benjamin with him and told the other brothers to leave. However, the oldest brother stayed back in Egypt because he could not face his father again, until he came with his brother.

When they went back and told Prophet Ya'qūb the story, he only said that patience is best for me, and Allah knows best.

After a few weeks, the brothers went back to Egypt to get more food and they had very little money. They finally made it to Egypt in a very bad state. Their clothes were rags and they were very tired. The Qur'an tells us what they did next

"And when they came back into the presence of Yūsuf, they said: O' chief! Misfortune has afflicted us and our family and we have brought a small amount, so give us full measure and be charitable to us; Surely Allah will recompense the charitable." (12: 88)

PROPHET YŪSUF REVEALS HIS IDENTITY

Prophet Yūsuf (as) was well known for his generosity. He had a tender and sympathetic heart. He took pity on them. Soon after, he disclosed his identity to his brothers. The Holy Qur'an affirms:

"He (Yūsuf) said: I am Yūsuf and this is my brother. Allah has shown us favour. Surely who fears Allah and endures, is rewarded for surely Allah does not waste the reward of those who do good." (12:90)

Everyone now wished to go immediately to their father to inform him of the happy news that Prophet Yūsuf (as) was alive. At the time of departure Prophet Yūsuf (as) gave them his shirt and said:

"Cast it on my father's face and he will recover his sight and come to me with all your family." (12: 93)

The brothers came home with happy spirit. They put the shirt of Prophet Yūsuf (as) on the face of Prophet Ya'qūb. He regained his eye sight immediately. When the brothers came back with their father, Prophet Yūsuf (as) forgave them and did not hold their past actions against them.

IMPORTANCE OF STRONG FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

The above part of the story of Prophet Yūsuf (as) shows how important it is to have a deep sense of love and affection for our family members.

We learn from Prophet Yūsuf (as) that even when our family members sometimes hurt us, we have to be different and act towards them with love and affection. This is important because being loving and affectionate towards our family increases their love for us too – especially after they have wronged us in any way. It makes the family stronger and happier in the end.

If the grudge and revenge was to continue, the pain and suffering would also continue. This would not give the people who did wrong a chance to change and ask for forgiveness which in turn would also not be fair.

From this kind of love, there results a sense of forgiveness and goodwill among the family members. We look at the example of Prophet Ya'qūb (as) who was caused so much pain by his sons, for so many years he lived separated from his son Prophet Yūsuf (as). Even after so much, when he got the news that Prophet Yūsuf (as) was well, he immediately forgave all his sons very sincerely – and this forgiveness changed them and brought them back to the right path. It also made their family much stronger.

It also pleases Allah (SWT) very much to see us able to forgive those who have wronged us, and it gives us a chance to be forgiven by Allah (SWT) too – which is what we all want in the end.

Class Activity

- Draw a timeline of the life of Prophet Yūsuf (as) showing the good times of his life and the difficult times in his life.
- Make a list of the lessons we can learn from his behaviour in the good times of his life and the lessons we can learn from his behaviour in the difficult times of his life.

Review Questions

Q1. Prophet Yūsuf (as) ended up living in which country after being rescued from the well?

- a. Palestine
- b. Kan'an
- c. Egypt

Q2. Prophet Yūsuf (as) ended up:

- a. Using his power to take revenge on his brothers
- b. Using his power to separate his brothers
- c. Forgiving his brothers despite being in a position of power

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وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ

37:181

ANCIENT PROPHETS

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as)

Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as) was sent to an Arab tribe called *thamūd*. His tribe lived in a valley called *al-Ḥijr* in the north of Arabia. It was a fertile land where plenty of vegetation grew, and so the people lived very comfortable lives. Unfortunately, they slowly strayed from the path of worshipping Allah (SWT), their Sustainer, and began to worshipped idols which they considered to be holy.

Allah (SWT) sent Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as) to guide them back to the right path of worshipping Allah (SWT) alone.

Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as) told the people to remember Allah but a lot of people just laughed at him and would not listen. He tried to teach them how useless it was to worship an idol, which could not harm or help anyone.

He said: "You are all my brothers. I am not saying anything that will harm you. Come and seek the forgiveness of Allah and He will answer your prayers and grant your wishes."

However, the people of *Thamud* turned a deaf ear to him. They said: "O Ṣāleḥ, we thought you were a sensible man. We saw in you signs of goodness and wisdom, and wanted to rely on your advice in difficult times. Why have you started talking this nonsense now? Do you want us to stop worshipping what our ancestors worshipped for a long time? We will never listen to you!"

His words were accepted by only a few people. Most of the people of *Thamūd* called him names, saying he was a madman or a liar.

Objectives >>>

Students should know:

- The story of Prophet Ṣāleḥ
- The message of Prophet Ṣāleḥ to his people
- That the signs of Allah should be respected
- The story of Prophet Hūd (as)
- The approach Prophet Hūd used to guide his people and the end result of their stubbornness

The leaders of Thamūd stood against Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as) because they were afraid that he might become powerful and they would lose their positions in the community. They wanted to embarrass Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as) so they asked him to produce a miracle.

They said: "If you're Allah's Messenger, can you bring a pregnant she-camel out of the centre of this rock?"

HIS MIRACLE

Therefore, they challenged him to prove his words by bringing out a female camel from the side of their holy mountain. Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as), with the permission of Allah (SWT), made this miracle happen.



The people were amazed by this miraculous act. However, because of the hardness of their heart, some of them still did not want to believe in Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as) and submit to him.

This camel was very special. The people had never seen such a camel in their lives. On one day, it would drink all the water in the town and on the next it would allow the people to drink the water. On the day that the she-camel drank all the water, it would give the people as much milk as they wanted.

"And to (the people of) Thamūd, (we sent) their brother Ṣāleḥ. He said, "O my people, worship Allah. You have no God but Him. Indeed a clear proof from your Lord came to you. This she-camel of Allah is a Sign for you. Leave it free to graze on Allah's earth and do not harm it, otherwise you will be overtaken by a painful punishment." (7: 73)

THE CRIME

This powerful miracle made a lot of people believe the words of Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as) and they embraced his faith. It also made the leaders of the tribe worried because they knew that as long as the people could see the she-camel, they would listen to Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as).

The cruel leaders decided to kill the animal, although Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as) had warned them that the punishment of Allah would certainly come if they harmed the she-camel.

A few wicked men ambushed the she-camel when it was returning after drinking the water, and one particularly evil person killed this special camel. Then they came to Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as) and proudly said: "O Ṣāleḥ, bring us the punishment if you really are a Prophet."

Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as) told them that they had committed a great sin and asked them to return to their homes for three days and beg for Allah's forgiveness. But the people only laughed at him.

ALLAH'S PUNISHMENT

After three days, Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as) received a command from Allah to leave the town with his followers. Then the punishment of Allah came down on the people of Thamūd.

A great thunderbolt came from the sky and a powerful earthquake shook the town and totally destroyed the buildings and houses. The people fell down dead in their homes.

When Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as) saw the tragic end of the people of his own tribe, he turned to their remains and said,

"O People, I delivered to you the message of Allah and guided you to the right way, but you always thought I was your enemy."

The Holy Prophet (saw) has said:

"The most wicked person from the ancient times is the one who killed the innocent she-camel of Prophet Ṣāleḥ (as) and the most wicked person in these times is the one who will murder Imam 'Alī (as)."

RESPECTING THE SIGNS OF ALLAH

"And He shows you His signs: Which then of Allah's signs will you deny?" (40:81)

Allah, the Almighty has referred to the 'signs' of Allah several times in the Holy Qur'an. The 'signs' have been places, events, personalities, and many other things. The important thing to note is that each of these 'signs' are meant to remind people of Allah, His Bounties, His Mercy, His Wrath, and His other attributes.

Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an:

"and whoever respects the signs of Allah, this surely is of the piety of hearts." (22:32)

It is natural that if you love someone/something then you will show similar respect to any symbol associated with your loved one. For example, if you are a teacher and you love teaching and education then you will respect your books and the blackboard and anything else associated with knowledge.

The signs of Allah (SWT) are unlimited and we should respect all of them. However, there are some things that Allah (SWT) has bestowed special significance to. It is part of being pious to show respect to these things. Some examples are:

- The Holy Qur'an
- The Holy Ka'bah
- The shrines of the Prophet and holy Imams
- Some mosques with special significance, such as Masjid Kufah

We must understand that we don't worship the sign itself but what it represents. When we walk around the Ka'bah we are showing our submission to Allah (SWT).

History has shown us that whenever the signs of Allah have been disrespected a punishment has come down. One of the clearest examples of this was in the story of Prophet Şāleḥ (as), where the she-camel, which God has given special significance to, was killed. Hence, it is our responsibility and obligation as Muslims to defend and preserve the signs of Allah at all times.

Review Questions

Q1. What was the name of the tribe Prophet Şāleḥ (as) was sent to?

- a. 'Ād
- b. Thamūd
- c. Quraysh

Q2. Why should we respect the signs of Allah?

- a. This increases piety
- b. We don't need to respect them
- c. Because we worship the signs

Q3. What was the punishment sent down to the people who disrespected the she-camel?

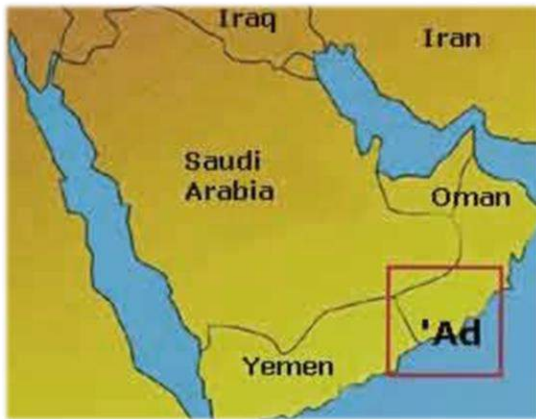
- a. Plague
- b. Thunder and Earthquake
- c. Tsunami

Prophet Hūd (as)

In this lesson, we will learn about one of the ancient Prophets who was sent to a community of pagans and idol worshippers to guide them to the right path. It is important to understand that the even though this is a story about a Prophet and people who lived a long time ago, the lessons are still useful today. This is because many of the mistakes in belief and action that people made even thousands of years ago, are the same mistakes people make today. Let's now have a look at who Prophet Hūd (as) was and what community he was sent to – so we can learn not to make the same mistakes they did.

THE PEOPLE OF 'ĀD

A very long time ago, there was an Arab tribe called 'Ād, who were related to and ancestors of another Arab tribe known as Thamūd. Both tribes were reported to be descendants of the Prophet Noah (as). 'Ād were a powerful nation in their day, mainly because of their location at the southern end of the African/Arabian trade routes. The tribes of 'Ād lived in a green grassy area. It rained during the different seasons. So the earth became fertile. Brooklets and small streams were full of water, and their fields were pretty



The people of 'Ād were particularly tall, handsome, and strong. They were excellent architects and skilled builders. They liked to build castles and magnificent buildings which they used to carve out of rocks in the mountains and hills of the area. They also planted beautiful gardens and orchards. But they didn't realize that their abilities and the natural resources around them were gifts. In spite of all these gifts from Allah (SWT), they denied His power.



Even though the people of 'Ād were great builders, they had no morals and many false beliefs. They worshipped many idols each of whom they believed fulfilled one of their needs. There were idols that they thanked for giving them rain, preserving them from danger, providing food, and restoring them to health after sickness. When this became their way of life, Allah (SWT) sent guidance to these people by through a Prophet who would teach them to believe in the One and True God, who gave them all their needs. Allah (SWT) sent to the people of 'Ad, a Prophet by the name of Hūd (as).

وَالِىَ عَادِ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ
مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ

“And to 'Ād (We sent) their brother Hūd. He said: O my people! Serve Allah, you have no god other than Him; will you not then guard (against evil)?”

PROPHET HŪD AND HIS MISSION

Prophet Hūd (as) was a righteous person who had a good heart and loved goodness. He tried to call his people to the worship of One God, to whom they should give thanks for all their bounties and blessings. He criticized his people for their arrogance and tyranny, and called upon them to give up the worship of false gods which were only useless stones.



They challenged him to bring the anger of God upon them. The people of 'Ād suffered through many years of famine, but rather than take that as a warning, they considered themselves unconquerable and they remained stubborn against the teachings of Prophet Hūd (as). The strong and wealthy people mocked the prophet and his message and said that Hūd was foolish and mad. They hurt and threatened him.

The many years of famine destroyed most of their green and rich fields, their animals died and food ran short. The land was slowly becoming a dry desert.

Prophet Hūd (as) went on inviting his people to believe in Allah. He always preached to them. He reminded them of Allah's blessings and favours, but all his efforts were in vain.

وَيَا قَوْمِ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ
مِدْرَارًا وَيَزِدْكُمْ قُوَّةً إِلَى قُوَّتِكُمْ وَلَا تَتَوَلَّوْا مُجْرِمِينَ

“And, O my people! ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him; He will send on you clouds pouring down abundance of rain and add strength to your strength, and do not turn back guilty” (11:52)

THE PEOPLE OF 'ĀD REJECT GUIDANCE

Most of the people of 'Ād rejected Prophet Hūd's (as) message. However, he continued to tell his people that only Allah, the Glorified, is able to create rain and enliven the dry land. Allah, the Most High, is able to create plants in the valleys and plains. These Idols are useless stones that cannot control anything.

Yet they continued to ignore him stubbornly, saying:

قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ إِنَّا لَنَرَاكَ فِي سَفَاهَةٍ وَإِنَّا
لَنُظُنُّكَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ

“The chiefs of those who disbelieved from among his people said: Most surely we see you in folly, and most surely we think you to be of the liars.”

After many years of preaching and guiding his people, Prophet Hūd (as) asked Allah (SWT) to deliver him from this community of people who were so stubborn and arrogant. Allah (SWT) accepted his prayers and the promise which He had asked Prophet Hūd (as) to deliver to his community was now going to come true – the promise of punishment.

ALLAH (SWT) SENDS HIS PUNISHMENT

One day, a huge cloud advanced toward their valley, which they thought was a rain cloud coming to bless their land with fresh water. Instead, it was a devastating sandstorm which ravaged the land and destroyed everything.



Prophet Hūd (as) and the believers sought protection in the mountain. The punishment was close at hand. The pagans were gazing at the black clouds waiting for rain. However, there was no rain. A cold wind blew. Then a destructive storm started.

The wind was strong, cold, and dry and did not carry clouds nor did it carry rain, rather it carried cold and thick sand.

The people of 'Ād were proud of their strength. They thought that they would overcome the drought, dryness, and the storm. They thought that the storm would stop at night or in the morning of the next day, but the destructive wind went on blowing for seven nights and eight days and in the end it had filled the fertile valley with sand.

The wind buried the wonderful city of the people of 'Ād under the sand. It had destroyed its houses and their strong marble pillars. It had also knocked down the people who disbelieved in the message of Prophet Hūd (as). Those people fell on the sand. They were tall, so they looked like dry date-palms.

وَأَمَّا عَادُ فَأُهْلِكُوا بِرِيحٍ صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ
سَخَّرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيَالٍ وَثَمَانِيَةَ أَيَّامٍ حُسُومًا فَتَرَى الْقَوْمَ
فِيهَا صَرَغَى كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ خَاوِيَةٍ

“And as for 'Ād, they were destroyed by a roaring, violent blast. Which He made to prevail against them for seven nights and eight days unremittingly, so that you might have seen the people therein prostrate as if they were the trunks of hollow palms.” (69:6-7)

The idols fell on their faces and broke into pieces. The pagan temples became ruins.

For this reason, Allah destroyed the people of 'Ād. He saved Prophet Hūd (as) and the believers from them.

DO NOT BE STUBBORN AGAINST THE TRUTH

From the story of the people of 'Ād, we can see that even today it is possible to behave like them. Today we see scientists and intelligent people who reject God and His blessings thinking that they don't need God and science explains everything! This is the same attitude of the people of 'Ād who rejected God because of a different type of blessing that God had given them which was wealth and physical strength and natural resources.

Today we see people building huge and tall sky scraper buildings and making cities on the sea. Sometimes, people think they are too strong, too smart or too wealthy to be punished by God. They take God's promises lightly.

We must be careful never to make that mistake. Allah (SWT) is All-Powerful, and He can take whatever blessings He has bestowed on us whenever He wills. Therefore, we must be humble to Him and to His creatures, no matter how strong, rich or smart we may be.



Today Allah (SWT) has provided mankind with all sorts of blessings and gifts of knowledge through which we have been able to advance so much with technology and science. However we *must* remember that all these things are blessings from God. Today, if Allah (SWT) decided to take away from people the blessing of electricity – the whole world would just stop working and people’s lives would come to a standstill!

ⁱⁱTherefore, we must be grateful that Allah (SWT) has provided us with all these gifts and we must remember to use them to worship Him and to achieve the goals and purpose He has intended for us to achieve through these blessings. We should not think that we are responsible for our success – otherwise we will become losers and Allah (SWT) will have to punish us to make us know that this way of thinking and action is wrong.

Lastly, we should learn to accept the truth when we learn it or know it no matter how we do that. If we knowingly reject the truth, we will not be fair to ourselves or to anyone else and especially to Allah (SWT) who has blessed us with so much goodness.

Review Questions

Q1. Which community of people was Prophet Hūd (as) sent to?

- a. Thamūd
- b. ‘Ād
- c. India

Q2. What Punishment did Allah (SWT) use to destroy the people of ‘Ād?

- A. Water
- B. Fire
- C. Cold violent wind

Q3. Why did Allah (SWT) destroy the people of ‘Ād?

- a. Because they disbelieved in Allah and were proud of their own strength and blessings
- b. Because they did not thank Allah (SWT) for the blessings that they had
- c. All of the above

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السَّلَامُ عَلَى مُوسَى كَلِيمِ اللَّهِ

PROPHET MUSA^[A.S]

نبي الله موسى (ع)

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Lesson 1: Prophet Mūsā

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Discuss the events in the early parts of the life of Prophet Mūsā (as)
- Understand that Prophet Mūsā (as) was ma'sūm or sinless
- Discuss the event of the first revelation to Prophet Mūsā (as)
- Discuss the story of Prophet Mūsā's (as) meeting with Khidr (as)

Towards the end of his life, Prophet Yūsuf (as) invited his family to Egypt to live with him and to settle there. Slowly, they grew into a big tribe of people, who came to be known as the Bani Israel (the Children of Israel, which was another name for Prophet Ya'qūb)

After several centuries, a man called Fir'awn (also known as Pharaoh) came to power in Egypt. When he saw that the Bani Israel had become so many he was fearful that they might become powerful and be a threat to him so he made life very difficult for them.

A royal astrologer once informed Pharaoh that soon a boy would be born from Bani Israel who will destroy Pharaoh's kingdom. On hearing this, Pharaoh ordered that every male child born to Bani Israel should be killed.

HIS SECRET BIRTH

Prophet Mūsā's (as) mother became pregnant. Fearing her son would be killed, she kept this a secret, and when her son was born, Allah (SWT) inspired Moses' mother to put her baby in a box and place him into the river of the Nile. He assured her that Allah Himself would look after Prophet Mūsā (as). As hard as it was for a mother to place her baby in a river, she put her trust in Allah (SWT) and did this.

"And We inspired the mother of Moses, (saying): "Suckle him, but when you fear for him, then cast him into the river and fear not, nor grieve. Verily! We shall bring him back to you, and shall make him one of (Our) Messengers." (28:7)



FOUND BY PHARAOH

The box floated towards the palace of Pharaoh, where his men fished it out and brought the baby to him.



Pharaoh wanted to kill the boy immediately fearing it might be a child of Bani Israel, but his wife Āsiyah, who was a pious woman, stopped him and asked him to adopt the child as their own.

“And the wife of Pharaoh said: "A comfort of the eye for me and for you. Kill him not, perhaps he may be of benefit to us, or we may adopt him as a son..."(28:9)

Pharaoh agreed to his wife's request and then summoned some women to breastfeed the crying child. However, the baby refused milk from all the women who came to feed him. At this point, the sister of Prophet Mūsā (as), who worked as a servant in Pharaoh's palace, suggested she could take him to a woman who would feed him. Of course, she knew this was her little brother, and so she

took him to their mother. Prophet Mūsā's (as) mother now had her baby back in her arms, and she could breast-feed him and look after him. She was rewarded for her trust in Allah (SWT).

“...until she (his sister came up and) said: "Shall I direct you to a household who will rear him for you, and sincerely they will look after him in a good manner?" So did We restore him to his mother, that she might be delighted, and that she might not grieve, and that she might know that the Promise of Allah is true. But most of them know not.” (28:12-13)

THE INCIDENT WITH THE SOLDIER

As years passed Prophet Mūsā (as) grew strong and healthy in the palace of Pharaoh.

Once Prophet Mūsā (as) saw two men fighting. One was a soldier working for the Pharaoh, while other was one of the oppressed people of Bani Israel. Prophet Mūsā (as) attempted to stop the soldier from hurting the other person by striking him. However, when Prophet Mūsā (as) struck the soldier, the soldier died, even though Prophet Mūsā (as) had not meant to kill him.

This story is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. When this happened, Prophet Mūsā (as) asks for forgiveness from Allah (SWT). Some people think this is because killing that soldier was a sin.

“And he entered the city at a time of unawareness of its people, and he found there two men fighting, - one of his tribe, and the other of his foes. The man of his (own) tribe asked him for help against his foe, so Moses struck him with his fist and killed him. He said: "This is of Satan's doing, verily, he is a plain misleading enemy. He said: "My Lord! Verily, I have wronged myself, so forgive me." Then He forgave him. Verily, He is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.”

However, it is important to understand that what Prophet Moses (as) did was not a sin. There are many reasons for this why it was not a sin:

Prophet Mūsā (as) had not meant to kill the soldier, he simply wanted to stop him from unfairly hurting another person

The soldier was an evil person who perhaps deserved to be killed, but Prophet Mūsā (as) asked for forgiveness because it was not the right time to have attacked the soldier

Once news got out that Prophet Mūsā (as) had killed a soldier of Pharaoh, his life was in danger. He quickly fled Egypt and travelled through the desert to another country. His journey to leave Egypt was very difficult, and he reached a place called Madyan exhausted and with absolutely nothing.

IN MADYAN

When Prophet Mūsā (as) reached Madyan, he decided to rest near a well. Soon he noticed shepherds had gathered to water their sheep, but there were two ladies who could not push through the men to water their sheep.

Prophet Mūsā (as) decided to help these ladies. He took the sheep and took them to drink water. He then handed the sheep back to the ladies, who went home and informed their father of what had happened. Their father happened to be another great prophet- Prophet Shu'ayb, who we will learn about in future years.

Prophet Shu'ayb sent one of his daughters to bring Prophet Mūsā (as) to him. She went back to the well and asked Prophet Mūsā (as) to follow her to father's house. When telling this part of the story, the Holy Qur'an says that she approached Prophet Mūsā (as) shyly, as a lady should. In turn, Prophet Mūsā (as) did not walk behind her. Instead, he walked in front of her and asked her to give him directions towards her house.

“Then there came to him one of the two women, walking shyly. She said: "Verily, my father calls you that he may reward you for having watered (our flocks) for us."(28:25)

Prophet Mūsā (as) met Prophet Shu'ayb. Eventually, he ended up marrying one of the daughters of Prophet Shu'ayb, and he worked for his father-in-law for ten years.

During this period, Prophet Mūsā (as) learnt a lot from this older prophet. After this time, he felt ready to go back to Egypt and help his people.

THE FIRST REVELATION

Prophet Mūsā (as) took his wife and family and headed back to Egypt. In the desert, he lost his way, and he and his family were in some distress. Suddenly, he saw a fire in the distance. He asked his wife to remain where she was and headed towards the fire thinking maybe he could bring some back to relieve his family from the cold.

When he reached towards the fire he saw that the fire was coming out from a tree but was not actually burning the tree. He then suddenly heard a voice saying:

“And when he came to it (the fire), he was called by name: "O Mūsā (Moses)! Verily! I am your Lord! So take off your shoes, you are in the sacred valley, Ṭuwa. And I have chosen you. So listen to that which is inspired to you. Verily! I am Allah, there is no Lord but Me, so worship Me, and establish Ṣalāt for My Remembrance.”(20:11-14)

Allah (SWT) was speaking to Moses (as) through this tree, by making sound to come from that tree. Next, Allah (SWT) showed Moses (as) a couple of miracles:

"And what is that in your right hand, O Moses? He said: "This is my stick, whereon I lean, and wherewith I beat down branches for my sheep, and wherein I find other uses. (Allah) said: "Cast it down, O Moses! He cast it down, and behold! It was a snake, moving quickly. Allah said: "Grasp it, and fear not, We shall return it to its former state, And press your (right) hand to your (left) side, it will come forth white (and shining), without any disease as another sign.” (20:17-22)

Having been shown these miracles, Prophet Moses (as) was now given his mission. His mission, which we will learn more about in the next lesson, was to go back Pharaoh and urge him to obey Allah (SWT) and stop treating the Bani Israel badly.

"Go you and your brother with My *āyāt* (signs) and do not, you both, slacken and become weak in My Remembrance. Go, both of you, to Pharaoh, verily, he has transgressed.” (20:42-44)

Review Questions

Q1. What miracles was Prophet Mūsā (as) given?

- a. His Staff would change to a snake
- b. Bright light would shine from his hand
- c. Both of the above

Q2. How long did Prophet Mūsā (as) stay with Prophet Shu'ayb?

- a. Eight years
- b. Ten years
- c. Five years

Q3. Where did Prophet Mūsā (as) end up after leaving Egypt?

- a. Iraq
- b. Palestine
- c. Madyan

Lesson 2: Return to Egypt

When Prophet Musa returned to Egypt from Madyan he informed his brother Aaron (Hārūn) that his mission had begun and they prepared themselves to go to the court of Pharaoh.

Prophet Mūsā (as) and his brother entered the court of Pharaoh. They were wearing the clothes of shepherds and look poor. They walked into the extravagant palace of Pharaoh and started their mission. Their mission had two main parts:

Teach Pharaoh and the people of Egypt about the Oneness of Allah (SWT)

Free the Bani Israel from the oppression of Pharaoh

"So go you both to him, and say: 'Verily, we are Messengers of your Lord, so let the Children of Israel go with us, and torment them not; indeed, we have come with a sign from your Lord! And peace will be upon him who follows the guidance! 'Truly, it has been revealed to us that the torment will be for him who denies and turns away.' Pharaoh said: 'Who then, O MOses is the Lord of you two? (Moses) said: 'Our Lord is He Who gave to each thing its form and nature, then guided it aright.'" (20:47-50)

Unfortunately, Pharaoh acted arrogantly and stubbornly. He denied the existence of Allah (SWT), and declared himself as god. He also refused to let the Bani Israel go free, or even to treat them better.

At this point, Moses (as) showed the Pharaoh and his people his two miracles. Even after having seen the miracles of the staff and the bright hand, the people refused to believe. They accused Moses (as) of being a magician, and asked him to meet to challenge the magicians on a day of celebration in Egypt.

MEETING THE MAGICIANS

The festival day came and the magicians came to challenge Prophet Moses (as) in return for some reward. All the people of Egypt were gathered, in anticipation of this event.

Prophet Moses (as) asked them to begin the challenge. The magicians used their tricks to create illusions for people- it seemed to people like the sticks had turned into live snakes. Then it came the turn of Prophet Moses (as) to strike his staff against the Earth. As soon as he did this, his stick turned into a real live snake. It ate the illusions the magicians had created. Everyone, including the magicians and the audience, were mesmerised by this.

The magicians realised this was not magic, but a true miracle from God. They immediately believed in Moses (as) and prostrated to Allah (SWT). Even though Pharaoh threatened and eventually killed them, they did not give up this faith they now had.

"And throw that which is in your right hand! It will swallow up that which they have made. That which they have made is only a magician's trick, and the magician will never be successful, no matter whatever amount (of skill) he may attain. So the magicians fell down prostrate. They said: 'We believe in the Lord of Aaron and Moses. Pharaoh said: 'Believe you in Moses before I give you permission? Verily! He is your chief who taught you magic. So I will surely cut off your hands and feet on opposite sides, and I will surely crucify you on the trunks of date-palms, and you shall surely know which of us can give the severe and more lasting torment. They said: 'We prefer you not over the clear signs that have come to us, and to Him (Allah) Who created us. So decree whatever you desire to decree, for you can only decree (regarding) this life of the world.'" (20:69-72)

THE PLAGUES

After this event, Pharaoh became even angrier and treated the Bani Israel worse even than he had before. Now Allah's punishments started coming towards Pharaoh, giving him more chances to repent. Yet Pharaoh remained stubborn and refused to submit to Allah, despite all the warning. Eventually, the order came from Allah (SWT) to Moses (as) to take his people and leave Egypt.

Prophet Mūsā (as) gathered the Bani Israel and they headed out of the city and towards the River Nile. Soon, the soldiers of Pharaoh were right behind them. Suddenly, they found themselves stuck between the vicious army of Pharaoh and the huge river Nile. They thought they were surely finished.

However, Moses (as) kept his trust in Allah (SWT), and said:

“surely, my Lord will guide me”

At this point, Allah (SWT) inspired Moses (as) to strike his stick against the water. Suddenly, a dry path appeared in the middle of the sea. The Children of Israel all crossed the sea.

When Pharaoh and his people tried to cross it, the miraculous path sank and they all drowned and died. Pharaoh himself began to shout that he now believed in Allah (SWT), but at this stage it was too late.

“And indeed We inspired Moses) (saying): "Travel by night with my slaves and strike a dry path for them in the sea, fearing neither to be overtaken nor being afraid. Then Pharaoh pursued them with his hosts, but the sea-water completely overwhelmed them and covered them up. And Pharaoh led his people astray, and he did not guide them. O Children of Israel! We delivered you from your enemy..." (20:77-80)

Review Questions

Q1. What did the magicians do upon seeing the miracle of Allah (SWT)

- They ignored it
- They tried to fight it
- They immediately submitted

Q2. The mission of Prophet Moses (as) was to:

- Save the Bani Israel from Pharaoh
- To teach the people about Allah (SWT)
- Both of the above

Lesson 3: The Contemporaries of Prophet Moses (as)

The Holy Qur'an mentions a number of people who lived at the same time as Prophet Mūsā (as). The Qur'an discusses these other people so that we can learn lessons from their lives. In this lesson, we will have a look at Prophet Mūsā's (as) interactions with these people.

QĀRŪN

Qārūn was a very wealthy man who lived at the time of Prophet Moses (as). Even though some narrations say he was related to Moses (as), Qārūn was an evil person, who did not use his wealth for the right reasons.

Instead, he boasted about his wealth and would often show it off in front of people. He refused to pay any charity or to help his people. Instead he helped the Pharaoh in oppressing the poor Bani Israel.

The Holy Qur'an recalls the story of Qārūn.

“Verily, Qārūn, was of Moses' people, but he behaved arrogantly towards them. And We gave him of the treasures, that of which the keys would have been a burden to a body of strong men. When his people said to him: "Do not be glad (with ungratefulness to Allah's Favours). Verily! Allah likes not those who are glad (with ungratefulness to Allah's Favours). But seek, with that (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on you, the home of the Hereafter, and forget not your portion of legal enjoyment in this world, and do good as Allah has been good to you, and seek not mischief in the land. Verily, Allah likes not the sinners. He said: "This has been given to me only because of knowledge I possess." (28:76-78)

Qārūn refused to take the good advice given to him. Instead, he claimed he was attained his wealth because of his own knowledge, and he went out in front of the people, showing off his great wealth. Some people were envious, wishing they had what Qārūn had. However,

others were wiser, knowing that the ending of such a person could only be evil. Sure enough, Qārūn's arrogance reached such an extent that Allah (SWT) finally punished Him by causing the earth to open up and swallow him. Now, those who wanted to have what Qārūn had were glad they were not like him.

“So he went forth before his people in his pomp. Those who were desirous of the life of the world, said: "Ah, would that we had the like of what Qārūn has been given? Verily! He is the owner of a great fortune. But those who had been given knowledge said: "Woe to you! The Reward of Allah (in the Hereafter) is better for those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and this none shall attain except those who are patient. So We caused the earth to swallow him and his dwelling place. Then he had no group or party to help him against Allah, nor was he one of those who could save themselves.” (28:79-81)

The lessons that we can learn from the story of Qārūn are:

- Do not boast or act arrogantly
- Do not take blessings for granted. We have not earned the blessings we have, rather they are a gift from Allah (SWT)
- No matter how wealth or powerful a person is, they remain completely under the control of Allah (SWT), who can overpower them any time he wishes
- Do not look at the supposed comforts and riches of other people with longing. Often there is deep unhappiness and a bad ending if we look deeper into the lives of such people. Instead, we should be happy with whatever Allah (SWT) has destined for us.

THE MEETING WITH AL-KHIDR

The story of the meeting of Prophet Mūsā (as) with Khidr (as) is one of the most interesting stories in the Holy Qur'an. According to some narrations, Allah (SWT) told Prophet Mūsā (as) that there was someone on earth with more knowledge than even Prophet Mūsā (as). This interested Moses (as) and he went in search of this person.

He finally found Khidr at the junction of two seas and this was the conversation that took place between the two of them. Khidr was a person who was given special knowledge by Allah (SWT). Most of our scholars agree

that he was not a prophet. However, he still had this special knowledge and would be given special instructions by Allah (SWT) to help people in this world through his special knowledge.

Prophet Mūsā (as): May I follow you on the condition that you teach me from your wisdom?

Khidr (as): You will not have patience with me and you will not understand the knowledge of my actions...

Prophet Mūsā (as): if Allah pleases, you will find me patient and I shall not disobey you in any matter.

Khidr (as): if you follow me then do not question me about anything until I myself speak to you about it. If you agree to this then come on to the ship with me.

The two boarded a boat which was used by a group of poor fishermen to make their livelihood. Suddenly, Khidr made a hole in this boat.

Prophet Mūsā (as): have you made a hole in the ship to drown its passengers? Certainly you have done a grievous thing

Khidr (as): did I not say that you will not be able to have patience with me?

Prophet Mūsā (as): forgive me, for I forgot.

Then the two left the ship and were walking through a town. Again suddenly, Khidr attacks a young boy and kills him.

Prophet Mūsā (as): you have murdered an innocent person. Certainly you have done an evil thing.

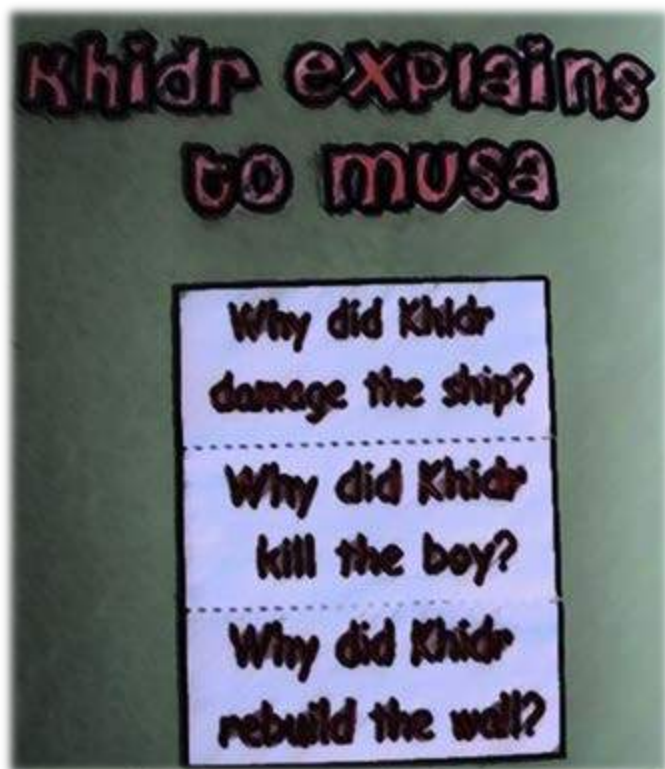
Khidr (as): did I not say, you will not be able to have patience with me?

Prophet Mūsā (as): Forgive me, if I ask you anything after this you may leave me.

The two then moved on to another town. When they arrived, they were hungry and had no money. They asked the people there for food, but those people were stingy and refused food them. They continued their journey through the town, until they passed by a wall that was falling down. Khidr decided to repair the wall without asking for any wages in return.

Prophet Mūsā (as): Why do you not ask for wages to mend this wall?

Khiḍr (as): O Mūsā it is time for us to part, before you go let me explain my actions to you.



As for the boat, it belonged to a poor man. I damaged it because the king was going to seize all the good boats. By making a hole in the boat, I stopped it from being taken by the king, so the poor man could keep the boat and repair this minor damage and be able to maintain his livelihood.

As for the boy, he was so disobedient that he would have even made his good parents disbelievers. Instead, Allah will now bless them with a better child.

As for the wall, it belonged to two young orphans. Their parents had hidden for them a treasure under it. If the wall fell completely, the treasure would become apparent, and the people of that town, who were stingy, would take that money from the orphans. So I repaired it in order that they might grow up before finding the treasure and be able to protect it.

ⁱWe learn a number of lessons from the story of Prophet Mūsā (as) and Khiḍr (as)

- We should be humble in seeking knowledge, just as Moses (as), who was a great prophet, was willing to search for a teacher and follow him in order to learn.
- That most of the mishaps/disasters that occur on earth are concealed blessings from Allah. Surely Allah is the Most Merciful.
- We should trust Allah as we do not know the reason behind everything that happens to us and we should have patience and not lose hope.
- We should not judge a situation until we have the whole story.
- Things that seem bad often turn out good and vice versa:

“It may be that you hate something and it is good for you, and it may be that you like something but it is not good for, and Allah surely knows but you do not know”
(2: 216)

Review Questions

Q1. Qārūn was punished because:

- a. He was arrogant and used his wealth for the wrong purposes
- b. He was wealthy and worked too hard
- c. He killed an innocent boy

Q2. Khiḍr was:

- a. A person given special knowledge by Allah (SWT)
- b. A prophet
- c. An ordinary person who was smart

ⁱReferences:

- The Holy Qur'an
- SML lectures on prophet Musa
- <http://www.madressa.net/tareekh/class9/343-prophet-musa-a-part-1-3>
- <http://www.madressa.net/plays/192-prophet-musa-2>
- <http://www.madressa.net/plays/191-prophet-musa>
- [http://www.alim.org/library/biography/stories/content/SOP/7/17/Musa%20\(Moses\)/The%20Story%20Moses%20and%20Al-Khidr%20](http://www.alim.org/library/biography/stories/content/SOP/7/17/Musa%20(Moses)/The%20Story%20Moses%20and%20Al-Khidr%20)
- <http://www.al-islam.org/gallery/kids/books/stories/part11.htm>

السَّلَامُ عَلَى دَاوُدَ نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ

PROPHET DAWŪD (DAVID^{AS})

نبي الله داود (ع)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to Prophet Dāwūd (as) as a sinless prophet of Allah (SWT)
- Discuss the story of David and Goliath
- Discuss example of Prophet Dāwūd's (as) wise judgment
- Discuss the importance of judging fairly between people
- Discuss some of the narrations regarding the humility of Prophet Dāwūd (as)

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

JUNIOR LEVEL

Prophet Dawūd (David as)

As we have previously learnt, Allah (SWT) has sent many Prophets to mankind in order to guide us and show us the right path. One of our sinless prophets who faced many challenges in his time was Prophet Dāwūd (as).

PROPHET DĀWŪD

Prophet Dāwūd (as) lived around 3000 years ago in the current land of Palestine. He was both the King and the Prophet of the Israelites. The Israelites are the same people that Prophet Moses (as) rescued from the Pharaoh in Egypt and brought to Palestine.

Prophet Dāwūd (as) had a holy book, called al-Zabūr, or the Psalms of David.

DĀWŪD & GOLIATH



Prophet Dāwūd (as) was from a tribe called the Israelites. This was the same tribe that Prophet Moses (as) had rescued from the Pharaoh in Egypt. The Israelites now lived in the land of Palestine. However, they were constantly fighting with a group of disbelievers who were trying to remove them from their land. After a long period of living in fear from the

disbelievers, the Israelites asked the Prophet of the time to appoint a leader for them who would give them victory against the disbelievers.

“...when they said to a Prophet of theirs, "Appoint for us a king and we will fight in Allah's Way."(2:246)

On the command of Allah (SWT), their Prophet appointed Ṭālūt as their king. When they heard who had been appointed, the Israelites were not happy that a poor and unknown man was now their king. They had wanted someone rich and famous.

However, Prophet Samuel informed them that Ṭālūt was chosen for his wisdom & knowledge and that he would lead them to victory.

“And their Prophet said to them, "Indeed Allah has appointed Ṭālūt as a king over you." They said, "How can he be a king over us when we are better fitted than him for the kingdom, and he has not been given enough wealth." He said: "Verily, Allah has chosen him above you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature. And Allah grants His Kingdom to whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower."(2:247)

Ṭālūt proved his knowledge and physical power to his people. Yet even then, most people still refused to help him or join his army. Only a small group went with him. Even for this small group, Allah (SWT) had another tough test waiting.

On the way to the battlefield, with the army thirsty and tired, they reached a river. Ṭālūt wanted to test his soldiers so he said to them: ‘whoever drinks more than a handful of water from the river must leave the army’. Most of the soldiers could not tolerate this. They drank water to their fill and they left the army.

Now, the army of the believers was so small, in comparison to the large army of the disbelievers. The important thing though was that this group had faith in Allah (SWT) .

“So when he (Ṭālūt) had crossed the river, he and those who believed with him, they said: We have today no power against Jālūt (the leader of the enemy) and his forces. Those who were sure that they would meet their Lord said: How often has a small party beaten a large army by Allah's permission, and Allah is with the patient.” (2:249)

By the time the army of Ṭālūt reached the battlefield, they had been joined by Prophet Dāwūd (as). Some narrations say that he was a young boy, who was not even there to fight. However, he showed his bravery and strength, and went to face the leader of the enemy Jālūt (Goliath). He fought Goliath and killed him, with the help of Allah (SWT).

After this, Prophet Dāwūd (as) became a leader for his people. Eventually, he became not only their Prophet, but also their king.

THE JUSTICE OF DAWUD

When Prophet Dāwūd (as) became the king, he was known for his justice. There is one particular story that shows his justice and wisdom.

There was a shepherd who owned a flock of sheep. One day, he neglected his sheep and they went into his neighbour's fields and destroyed all his plants and fruit. These two men came to Prophet Dāwūd (as) to judge between them.

Allah (SWT) had given Prophet Dāwūd (as) great wisdom and fair judgement. Based on this wisdom and fair judgement, Prophet Dāwūd (as) made the following decision: the shepherd's sheep would be given to the farmer who would use their milk and wool for one year. The land of the farmer would be given to the shepherd for one year so he can re-plant it and benefit from its plants and fruits.



Both men were happy with this just and fair decision. Neither man was disadvantaged or unfairly punished. They both managed to keep their livelihood.

FAIR JUDGEMENT

It is very important in Islam that we treat each and every person fairly and that we do not take the rights of one another. Allah (SWT) loves those who are fair and just.



“...if you do judge, judge between them justly. Allah loves the just.” (5: 42)

As we can see in the above āyah, Allah (SWT) has commanded us to judge between people with justice and fairness when we are in a situation where we have to make a judgement. This is very important because we are responsible to uphold the rights of every single human being and we are not allowed to be cruel or unfair to anyone. But how can we be fair in our judgements? Here are some basic guidelines.

1. First listen to both sides of the story, allowing both people to say their version of exactly what has happened. This is important because we tend to describe situations in the way that would benefit ourselves, and both sides should have the equal opportunity to give their own account of the event.
2. Make sure that you do not make a judgement based on your relationship with one of the two people involved, favouring them because you know them. It is important that you be a neutral referee when presented with a dispute.
3. Base your judgement on only the facts and separate the facts from opinion and emotions.

FEAR & HUMILITY OF DĀWŪD

Even though Prophet Dāwūd (as) was a great prophet and a king and had such an elevated status in Allah’s sight, he was very humble and had immense fear of the majesty of Allah (SWT).

It is narrated that once the people thought that Prophet Dāwūd (as) was sick and visited him, only to find out that he was well but was displaying distress simply out of his fear for Allah (SWT). This was because he was not of the arrogant who were proud of their actions and was very

humble, and understood how great the Majesty of Allah (SWT) is compared to him.

This is a very important lesson for our lives as no matter how good we are or how many good deeds we do, we should never become arrogant and think that we are righteous or that we are granted heaven. We should consider ourselves and our acts as very small in front of Allah (SWT), and continue performing all our good deeds with the hope that Allah (SWT) accepts them from us.

Review Questions

Q1. What is an important lesson from the battle of David & Goliath?

- a. That those who place their trust in Allah (SWT) and fight for the truth will be successful despite their size.
- b. That we should be scared of fighting for the sake of Allah (SWT)
- c. That we should fear the enemies of Allah (SWT).

Q2. When judging between people we should:

- a. Listen to only one side of the story.
- b. Always rule in favour of our friends.
- c. Be neutral and listen to both sides of the story.

Q3. After performing good deeds we should:

- a. Be certain that they are accepted and that we are going to heaven.
- b. Go and show off about them to all our friends.
- c. Hope that Allah (SWT) accepts them from us and continue performing them.

السَّلَامُ عَلَى سُلَيْمَانَ نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ

PROPHET SULAYMĀN (AS)

(ع) سليمان نبي الله

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

PROPHET SULAYMĀN (AS)

One of the Prophets of Allah (SWT) mentioned in the Quran is Prophet Sulaymān (as), who was the son and the heir of Prophet Dāwūd (as).

In the Quran in Surah Naml (The Ants) Allah (SWT) says:

“We gave knowledge to David and Solomon, who said: ‘Praise be to God, Who has favoured us over many of His servants who are believers’; Solomon was David’s heir...” (27:15-16)

PROPHET SULTAMĀN AND THE PEOPLE OF SABA’

During the reign of Prophet Sulaymān (as), there was another kingdom, called Saba’. It was ruled by a woman named Bilqīs.



Prophet Sulaymān (as) had the power to understand the speech of birds and was informed of this through one his hoopoe bird.

“And [one day] he looked in vain for [a particular one of] the birds; and so he said: How is it that I do not see the hoopoe? Or could he be among the absent? [If so,] I will punish him most severely or will kill him unless he brings me a convincing excuse!” (27: 20-21)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to Prophet Sulaymān (as) as a sinless Prophet of Allah (SWT)
- Discuss the story of Prophet Sulaymān (as) and the people of Saba’
- Discuss the great powers given by Allah (SWT) to Prophet Sulaymān (as)

“But [the hoopoe] tarried but a short while; and [when it came] it said: “I have encompassed [with my knowledge] something that you has never yet encompassed [with thine] - for I have come to you from Saba’ with certain news. Behold, I found there a woman ruling over them; and she has been given [abundance] of all [good] things, and hers is a mighty throne, and I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of God. Satan has made their actions seem good to them...” (27:22-24)

It is very clear according to these verses that when the hoopoe narrated the situation in the kingdom of Sheba that it had complete understanding that Allah (SWT) was the Creator of the world, and the only one fit to be worshipped. This bird understood this Truth more than the humans of the people of Saba’.

THE LETTER TO BILQĪS

After the hoopoe related this to Prophet Sulaymān (as), the Prophet decided to send a letter to the Queen and see her response.

“...Go with this my letter and convey it to them; and thereafter withdraw from them and see what [answer] they return.” (27:28)

The letter began with the name of Allah (SWT):

“In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Dispenser of Grace: [God says:] Exalt not yourselves against Me, but come unto Me in willing surrender!” (27:30-31)

On receiving the letter from Prophet Sulaymān (as), Bilqīs decided to consult her people before making her decision of replying with precious gifts to Prophet Sulaymān (as).

This is the point where she does not submit straight away but instead asks her noblemen to make the decision for her thus showing her hesitation. She then shows her pride by discussing the power of her kingdom and the fact that it may be ruined by Sulaymān (as).

When the gifts reached Sulaymān (as), he said:

“Do you people mean to add to my wealth? But that which God has given me is [so much] better than all that He has given you! Nay, it is [only such as] you that would rejoice in this gift of yours...” (27:36-37)

THE POWERS GIVEN TO SULAYMĀN (AS)

When news reached Bilqīs that the Prophet was not happy with her actions, she agreed to come to the land of Sulaymān (as). Prophet Sulaymān (as) wanted to show her a miracle, so he asked his ministers:



“O you nobles! Which of you can bring me her throne before she and her followers come unto me in willing surrender to God? Said a bold one of the Jinn: “I shall bring it to you before you stand from your seat, for, behold, I am powerful enough to do it, [and] worthy of trust!”. (Yet) the one who had knowledge of the Book said: “as for me - I shall bring it to you before you blink.” And when he saw it truly before him, he exclaimed: “This is [an outcome] of my Lord’s bounty, to test me as to whether I am grateful or ungrateful!” (27:38-40)

This being who submitted to Allah (SWT) and His will, was able to perform this miracle of bringing the throne of Bilqīs clearly shows us that Allah (SWT) can give great power to those who submit to His will. It is also important to note that despite the amazing power Prophet Sulaymān (as) had, he remained grateful and humble towards Allah (SWT).

If his ministers could perform many miracles, imagine what he could do. In fact, the Qur’an says that all animals, and even the wind, and the Jinn, were all under the control of this great prophet. Yet he never became arrogant or unjust.

BILQĪ SUBMITS

When the Queen reached the land of Prophet Sulaymān (as), she saw her throne before her. She was amazed that her heavy and large throne could be transported so quickly from one land to another far-away land. She began to submit to Allah (SWT).

Later on, she walks through the castle of Prophet Sulaymān (as), and when she reaches a certain place, she thinks there is water on the floor and so she lifts her clothes. However, she then realises it is glass, which was made to seem like flowing water. No ordinary person had the ability to build something like this at that time, and so she submitted completely to Allah (SWT)ⁱ:

“She said: ‘My Lord! Verily I have been unjust to myself, and I surrender with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds’.” (27:44)

Review Questions

Q1. Prophet Sulaymān (as) was the son of which Prophet?

- a. Prophet Job
- b. Prophet David
- c. Prophet Jacob

Q2. What were the Queen of Saba and her people worshipping before being guided to the right path?

- a. Animals
- b. The Sun
- c. The Water

Q3. What best describe the powers that Prophet Sulaymān (as) had?

- a. He could interpret dreams and had the knowledge of everything.
- b. He had the inward knowledge and the interpretation of all things.
- c. He had the control of the wind, the jinn and could speak the language of the birds.

ⁱ Sources:
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السَّلَامُ عَلَى عِيسَى نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ

PROPHET 'ĪSĀ [JESUS A.S.] AND OTHER STORIES

نبي الله (ع) عيسى

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to Prophet 'Īsā (as)
- Be introduced to Maryam, the mother of Prophet 'Īsā (as)
- Discuss the virtues of Maryam (as)
- Briefly discuss the story of the birth of Prophet 'Īsā (as)
- Discuss the other miracles of Prophet 'Īsā (as)
- Discuss the main messages of Prophet 'Īsā (as)
- Discuss the false belief of Jesus as God and how this can be proven to be false
- Understand that Prophet 'Īsā (as) did not die on the cross, but was raised to heaven and will return one day to earth
- Discuss the story of the 'Companions of the Cave' (Ashābul Kahf)
- Understand that God helps those who are pious and adhere to his teachings
- Understand that if we show faith in Allah (SWT), He will give us strength and success

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

JUNIOR LEVEL

Lesson 1

There are two main sources for the life of Prophet 'Īsā (as) in Islam. The Holy Qur'an gives a history of his life, whilst the ḥadith help us understand his role and responsibilities as a Prophet. We must look at the Islamic version of the story of Prophet 'Īsā (as) because it is the most authentic and reliable source we have. The Bible we have today is not the true word of God, because it has been changed from its original form, and so cannot be relied on as a reliable resource.

Prophet 'Īsā (as), or Prophet Jesus (as), is introduced in the Holy Qur'an as one of the greatest messengers of Allah (SWT). He was not only a prophet and a messenger, but one of the 'Ulul 'Azm messengers. The message he taught his people was that of submission to Allah. He asked them to leave everything else they obeyed and to truly worship Allah (SWT).

Prophet 'Īsā (as) was one of the major prophets, and thus he had a book revealed to him by Allah (SWT). This book is called the Injil. Unfortunately, this book is no longer available to us. It was destroyed after Prophet 'Īsā (as) was raised to heaven.



THE BIOGRAPHY OF ‘ĪSĀ (AS)

Maryam (as) is a very holy and special woman. She is the mother of Prophet ‘Īsā (as). The story of Maryam (as) is very interesting.

Maryam’s father’s name was ‘Imran, and her mother’s name was Ḥanna. Ḥanna had a sister called Elizabeth, who was married to Prophet Zachariah (as). Both of these sisters could not have children. Ḥanna and ‘Imran both prayed for a child sincerely and Ḥanna vowed that if she had the child, she would give him to the service of Allah. Her husband had had a dream that a boy would be born into his family, and so they assumed that this was the boy. However, before the baby was born, ‘Imran passed away.

When Ḥanna gave birth, she had a girl, Maryam (as), and not a boy as she had expected. She was shocked, but decided to go on with her vow, and asked someone to look after Maryam (as). The priests picked lots about who should look after Maryam, and it turned that Prophet Zachariah (as) would look after her. This Maryam (as) was later to become the mother of Prophet ‘Īsā (as).

THE VIRTUES OF MARYAM (AS)

Maryam (as) was a very pious and beloved servant of Allah (SWT), who dedicated her whole life to serving Allah. She is respected by Muslims and Christians alike. Some of her virtues include

- She is one of the four best women in history.
- She is the only lady whose name is explicitly mentioned in the Qur’an.
- She is the first woman to be ‘chosen’ by Allah (SWT)
- She is the first infallible woman
- She was a woman who was spoken to by angels.
- She has the right of intercession



One of the miracles in the life of Maryam (as) is that Allah (SWT) would send her food and drink miraculously and she would have the fruits of winter in summer and vice-versa.

Maryam (as) dedicated herself to the worship of Allah (SWT) for her entire life. She would live in the place of worship and spend her time maintaining it and praying to Allah (SWT). One day, Allah (SWT) sent angels to her to tell her that she was going to have a baby boy who would be a very special person. When she gave birth to Prophet ‘Īsā (as), her people did not believe her. In order to make them believe, Allah (SWT) gave Prophet ‘Īsā (as) his first miracle. This miracle was that he spoke to people while he was still a baby in his cradle.

“He said: I am the devotee of Allah. He has given me the Scripture and has made a prophet, and made me blessed wherever I am...” (19:30)

This was the beginning of the mission of Prophet ‘Īsā (as).

PROPHET ‘ĪSĀ’S (AS) MISSION

Prophet ‘Īsā (as) was sent to the Jewish community. At the time, the Jews were living in Palestine and were ruled by the Roman Empire. This had a big influence on Judaism and it was becoming corrupt. At the same time, the Jewish rabbis were abusing their power and corrupting the religion. Therefore, internally and externally Judaism was being corrupted.



The Christians say that Prophet ‘Īsā’s (as) only mission was to give his life as a sacrifice for our sins. However, Muslims believe that Prophet ‘Īsā’s (as) mission was similar to the missions of all other prophets, which was to guide and teach the people to worship only Allah (SWT).

HIS MISSION

Prophet 'Īsā's (as) first mission was to confirm the teachings of Prophet Moses (as) in general but to introduce some changes to them. Some Christians claim that Prophet 'Īsā's (as) denied all the rules of Judaism and the Torah, while others say he confirmed all the rules of the Torah. However, neither is true, and the Qur'an says that Prophet 'Īsā (as) confirmed some of the rules, but changed others. The rules he changed were rules that were imposed as a special punishment for the Jews.

Another mission of Prophet 'Īsā's (as) was to unify the Jewish community, who used to have disagreements within themselves. However, after his arrival, people became even more disunited and split into more groups and sects. Some of them were jealous of Prophet 'Īsā (as) while others were after their own selfish interests like greed for power and fame.

Prophet 'Īsā (as) also used to teach people to live a simple life, believe in God and do good to others. He himself lived a very humble and simple life, and taught his followers to do the same.

His final and most important mission was to tell people of the coming of the Final Messenger after him, who was Prophet Muḥammad (saw).

Review Questions

Q1. Which is one of the honours of Maryam (as):

- a) She was one of the four best women of the world
- b) She was sinless
- c) Both a & b

Q2. Which book did Prophet 'Īsā (as) have revealed to him?

- a) The Holy Qur'an
- b) The Torah
- c) The Injil

Lesson 2

In the previous lesson we learnt a little about the birth and life of Maryam (as) and her son Prophet 'Īsā (as). In this lesson we will look at the miracles of Prophet 'Īsā (as). We will discuss some of the Christian beliefs about this great prophet and see why they are false.

THE MIRACLES OF PROPHET 'ĪSĀ (AS)

A miracle is a sign from Allah (SWT) given to his prophet to show that he is the messenger of Allah. This is so that the people of the time believe in this prophet and see obvious proof that this person is sent by God. Prophet 'Īsā (as) performed many miracles, all by the leave of Allah (SWT). Some of his miracles include:

- Speaking as a baby
- Healing the blind
- Bringing the dead back to life
- Bringing inanimate objects into life (e.g. he could turn the clay state of a bird into a real living bird)

Unfortunately, partly because of these miracles, some Christians began to believe that Jesus is God. This is absolutely not true. Jesus is a servant and a creature of God. He was created by God. He is not God. The miracles he performed were all amazing, but he could only do them by the permission of Allah (SWT), who allowed him to do these things.

“Then will Allah say: "O Jesus the son of Mary! Recount My favour to thee and to thy mother. Behold! I strengthened you with the holy spirit, so you didst speak to the people in childhood and in maturity. Behold! I taught you the Book and Wisdom, the Law and the Gospel and behold! You made out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, by My permission, and you breathed into it and it became a bird by My permission, and you heal the blind and the leper, by My permission. And you bring the dead back to life, by My permission..." (5:110)

IS JESUS GOD?

Christians have a belief called 'Trinity'. They believe that there is one god, and at the same time 'three gods'. They also believe that Jesus is the 'son of God' but that Jesus is also 'God'.

This belief does not make sense for a number of reasons:

1. Jesus (as) himself never claimed to be in God, even in today's Bible. In fact, Jesus never let people call him 'good', let alone 'god'
- Jesus ate and drank like other human beings. Why would God need food and drink to survive?
 - Jesus was created and born. God has always been Existing, so he cannot be 'born' or 'created'.
 - Christians believe Jesus died. How can God die?
 - How can there be one god and three gods at the same time?

So it is obvious that believing in Jesus as God does not make any sense and is false belief. Christians originally thought of Jesus as a prophet of Allah (SWT). However later people corrupted the religion and began to claim Jesus was God.

DID JESUS REALLY DIE?

Christians believed that Jesus (as) was captured by the Roman soldiers with the help of the Jewish leaders of the time. They also believe he was tortured on the cross and died. They believe that then God brought him back to life three days later. This belief is also not true.

The Holy Qur'an makes it very clear that Prophet 'Īsā (as) was not tortured or killed. Instead, one of the companions of Prophet 'Īsā (as) was made to look like him by Allah (SWT). Prophet 'Īsā (as) asked his companions if any of them would agree to be made to look like him and in doing so die, but that that person would be guaranteed paradise. One of them agreed and he was made to look like Jesus (as). The Roman soldiers captured this companion and tortured and killed him instead.

So what happened to Prophet 'Īsā (as)? He was raised to heaven by Allah (SWT) without dying. He remains in heaven and will be brought back to life at the end of times together with Imam Mahdi (as) when he reappears.

CONCLUSION

The main conclusions we draw from these lessons are:

- Prophet 'Īsā (as) was one of the great prophets and messengers of Allah (SWT)

- His mother was an honourable and sinless woman, by the name of Maryam (as)
- Prophet 'Īsā (as) performed many amazing miracles by the permission of Allah (SWT)
- Prophet 'Īsā (as) is not God. Rather, he is the servant of God
- Prophet 'Īsā (as) was not tortured or killed. Rather, he was raised to heaven by Allah (SWT).

Review Questions

Q1. Prophet 'Īsā (as) came to:

- a) Teach the people to worship one God
- b) Die for the sins of people

Q2. Jesus (as):

- a) Died on the cross
- b) Was raised to heaven Allah (SWT) before his enemies could capture him
- c) Went missing and was never found again

Lesson 3: Ashābul Kahf

COMPANIONS OF THE CAVE

In the Quran, a whole chapter, SuraT al-Kahf is named after a group of people called 'the Companions of the Cave'. We will discuss the story of these special believers in this lesson.

أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ ءَايَاتِنَا
عَجَبًا

إِذْ أَوَى الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا ءَاتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ
رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا

"Or do you think that the people of the Cave and of the inscription were of Our wonderful signs? When the youths sought refuge unto the cave, then they said: 'our lord! Grant us mercy from your presence, and provide for us in our affair a right course.'" (18:9-10)

Allah (SWT) introduces the people of the cave and we learn about how these people sought protection and mercy from Allah (SWT) because the ruler at their time would force his people to worship idols and if they did not, they would be killed. However, these people were believers in One God.

This group of youths who were living in comfort, decided to leave those comforts and seek refuge in a cave in order to escape the illegitimate ruler of the time. This allowed them to protect themselves from being killed and to keep their faith.

The youths left their city in secret, fearful of what would happen to them if they got caught. Soon after leaving, they reached a cave, and decided to rest there.

GOD'S MIRACLE- THE DEEP SLEEP

فَضَرَبْنَا عَلَىٰ آذَانِهِمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِنَعْلَمَ أَيُّ الْحِزْبَيْنِ أَحْصَىٰ لِمَا لَبِثُوا أَمَدًا

...نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُم بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ ءَامَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ

وَزِدْنَاهُمْ هُدًى

"Then We set over their ears (a curtain of sleep) in the Cave for a number of years. Afterwards we raised them up in order to test which of the two parties would better calculate the time they had tarried. We relate to you their story with the truth; verily they were youths who believed in their Lord and We increased them in guidance." (18:11-13)

It was in this cave that a great miracle occurred. The youth had reached the cave in a state of fear. They were not sure where to go from there and what would happen to them next. They asked Allah (SWT) to guide them.

Allah (SWT) sent His Mercy upon them by causing them to sleep for 309 years.

ALLAH HAS POWER OVER ALL THINGS

This miracle demonstrates Allah (SWT) great power of how he can allow someone to stay asleep for such a long time without any harm coming to them.

وَتَرَى الشَّمْسَ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَزَاوَرُ عَنْ كَهْفِهِمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ

وَإِذَا غَرَبَتْ تَقَرَّبُ إِلَيْهِمْ ذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ وَهُمْ فِي فَجْوَةٍ مِّنْهُ

ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ ءَايَاتِ اللَّهِ مَن يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَبُهِتَ فَهَؤُلَاءِ السَّاعِدُونَ

يُضِلُّ لَن يَضِلَّ فَلَئِنْ تَجَدَّ لَهُ وَلِيٌّ مُّرْشِدًا

"And (had you been there) you might have seen the sun when it rose, declining from their Cave towards the right, and when it set, leaving them away unto the left, and they were in a wide space thereof. This is of the Signs of Allah, whomever Allah guides, he is rightly guided, and whomever He leaves to stray, you shall never find for him any guiding friend." (18:18-19)

Allah (SWT) made them choose the perfect spot in the cave whereby direct sunlight never reached them as well as being in a wide enough space to allow them to stay there as well. In addition, Allah (SWT) made them look as if they were awake, especially because he was able to move them from side to side with their dog also stretching his paws to show that it's protecting them. This apparent situation shows the power of God and how He can easily create miraculous situations especially for those who seek His help and mercy.

HOW LONG DID THEY SLEEP FOR?

After such a long sleep, the youth woke up, not realising what had happened. They thought they had slept for a few hours or for a day. They were out of food and supplies. They decided that one of them should disguise himself and re-enter the city to get supplies.

وَكَذَٰلِكَ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِّيَتَسَاءَلُوا بَيْنَهُمْ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ كَمْ

لَبِثْتُمْ قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالُوا رُبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا

لَبِثْتُمْ فَأَبْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَٰذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ

أَيُّهَا أَزْكَى طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِّنْهُ وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ وَلَا يُشْعِرَنَّ

بِكُمْ أَحَدًا

"And in like manner We did raise them that they might question among themselves. One of them said: 'How long have you tarried?' They said: 'We have tarried a day, or part of a day'. (Finally) they said: 'Your Lord knows best how long you have tarried. Therefore send one of you with this money of yours to the city and let him see which of them has purest food, and bring you provision from it, and let him behave with (care and) gentleness, and let him not inform any one about you.' (18:19)

So one of the group went into the city to get supplies. Slowly, he began to notice some amazing changes. The

city had changed completely. The currency was different, and the people were all different as well. The most important change he noted though was that people now believed in Allah (SWT). He had left a city full of people who worshipped idols and disbelieved in God. Now, the city was full of believers, believing in One God.

ⁱⁱThis completed the miracle of Allah (SWT). He had saved this group of youth from the disbelievers, and then showed them His Power and Authority by showing them that their city became a city of believers over time.

The people of this new city realised the miracle that had happened, and they honoured the Companions of the Cave by building a mosque at the site of the cave in honour of them.

MORALS

The main moral of the story is that if we put our trust and faith in Allah (SWT), He will protect us, give us strength and give us success. Sometimes, Allah (SWT) will even create a miraculous situation in order to protect a believer who puts his or her trust in Allah (SWT) and asks Him for guidance out of a difficult situation.

The second moral is to understand that Allah's Power is Limitless. This was shown through the miracle of the long and deep sleep, as well as the gradual change of the city from that of disbelievers to believers.

Review Questions

Q1. Why did these righteous people seek refuge in the cave?

- a. They were looking for an adventure.
- b. They were looking for shelter.
- c. They wanted to be able to worship Allah (SWT) without being killed

Q2. Which of the following demonstrates Allah's (SWT) miracle?

- a. They found a cave that had appropriate space
- b. They slept for many years without being harmed
- c. The sun never reached them directly
- d. They were guarded by their dog
- e. All of the above

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السَّلَامُ عَلَى نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ أَيُّوبَ

PROPHET AYYŪB (JOB ^{AS})

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

JUNIOR LEVEL

Prophet Ayyūb (Job) (as)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Learn and discuss the story of Prophet Ayyūb (as)
- Discuss the morals of this story

They say patience is virtue and to describe someone's patience, they will say, 'as patient as Job'. Rightfully so, because Prophet Ayyūb (as) was one of the great examples of patience.

Our Imams have explained that initially Prophet Ayyūb (as) enjoyed great bounties from Allah (SWT). Despite being wealthy, having a great family, and being well-respected, he continued to remain humble towards Allah (SWT) and completely pious. Satan was very jealous of this and decided to ask Allah (SWT) to test His servant by allowing him to take away all bounties Prophet Ayyūb (as) had i.e. children, wealth and health.

THE TEST OF WEALTH

The first test was that of wealth, whereby Satan slowly took away all his worldly possessions like his money, cattle, servants and every worldly possession. This did not affect Prophet Ayyūb (as). He still continued to thank Allah (SWT) as per usual, being patient in this calamity.



THE TEST OF CHILDREN

His next calamity was that of losing all his children. All his children died, though his wife remained with him.

This can be very difficult because something like money and business can be recovered, but losing children is very difficult. However, he still did not complain to Allah (SWT) and continued to thank Him and bear the calamity patiently.



THE TEST OF HEALTH

This time, Allah (SWT)'s final test was of health. Prophet Ayyūb (as) became very sick and weak. He was bed-ridden for many years. This was the biggest test and still he did not complain. He still thanked Allah (SWT). His wife tried to look for all ways and means to cure him. Satan came to her as a human and asked his wife that he would cure Prophet Ayyūb (as) only if Prophet Ayyūb (as) would acknowledge that he and not, Allah (SWT) who cured him. She accepted and so, was tricked by Satan. However, when Prophet Ayyūb (as) heard this, he became angry at his wife, and promised to punish her.

THE HUMILIATION

After all of Satan's failed plans, some rabbis came to the house of Prophet Ayyūb (as) and tried to humiliate him by saying that God had abandoned him. At this point, Prophet Ayyūb (as) still did not complain but in the most polite way, he said the following

وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

“And (remember) Job when he called unto his Lord (saying :) ‘Verily distress has touched me, and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful ones’.”

HIS PRAYERS ANSWERED

After having suffered all these losses and defeating Satan, Allah (SWT) answered his prayers:

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِ مِنْ ضُرِّهِ أَتَيْنَاهُ أَهْلَهُ وَمِثْلَهُم

مَعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْعَابِدِينَ

“So we responded to him (his prayer) and we removed the distress that was upon him, and we restored his family to him, and the like of them with them; a mercy from us and a reminder for the worshippers.”

All that he lost, he gained back by the miracle of Allah (SWT) due to continuous thankfulness, contentment and patience that he showed.

MORALS OF THE STORY

1. EVERY PERSON HAS THEIR OWN TRIALS

This is a clear example of all the tests one can face in life be they of wealth, children or health. We in our day to day life will face at least one if not all three of these categories of tests. Thus, we must exercise patience in these trials so as to develop piety and faith in Allah (SWT) as these are ways to purify ourselves.

2. EVERY CALAMITY IS SURROUNDED BY BLESSINGS

Many a times we will face difficulties in our daily lives and we start thinking negatively i.e. Allah (SWT) does not love us and is not being fair etc...This is not a good attitude. We must remember that as human beings, our knowledge is limited and we can never know the true meaning and purpose behind many things that happen to us and in the world in general.

3. PATIENCE DURING AFFLICTIONS

We must always exercise patience during testing times as this will allow us to increase our faith in Allah (SWT) and be more thankful and grateful to Him. It will also help us deal with the affliction and overcome it. This was evident in Prophet Ayyūb's (as) story because with each affliction he showed perseverance and patience. Thus, after bearing all the hardships, he was rewarded.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

“O you who have faith! Do persevere and outdo (all others) in endurance, and be ready (to guard the bounds), and be in awe of Allah that you may be prosperous.”

(3:200)

This verse tells us to be patient in all hardships and thus, we will be prosperous in the end. This is a clear emphasis on patience and the fruits it can bear for us.

Review Questions

Q1. During difficult times we should:

- a. Blame Allah (SWT) for everything.
- b. Be angry and blame everyone else.
- c. Be steadfast and bear the hardships with patience by keeping faith in Allah (SWT)

Q2. Having patience can be beneficial because:

- a. We can increase our faith in Allah (SWT)
- b. Allah (SWT) will reward us with blessings in this and the next world.
- c. Both a and b.

السَّلامُ عَلَى لُقْمَانَ

LUQMĀN (AS)

لقمان (ع)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to Luqmān (as) as a wise man introduced to us in the Qur'an
- Discuss some of the advice Luqmān gave to his son

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

JUNIOR LEVEL

Luqmān (as)

We have previously learnt many valuable lessons from the lives of the Prophets and Imams. We will now look at what we can learn from a wise man introduced to us in the Holy Qur'an.

LUQMĀN (AS)

Luqmān (as) was a wise man who lived many years ago. He has a very high status in the sight of Allah (SWT), and a whole Surah (number 31) is named after him in the Holy Qur'an. His wisdom was granted to him by Allah, and he taught his son many great lessons which Allah has related in the Holy Qur'an in order that we too benefit from this wisdom.

GRATEFULNESS TO PARENTS



In Surah Luqmān, Allah (SWT) says:

"And We have enjoined man to be good to his parents—his mother bears him with weakness upon weakness and his weaning takes two years— saying: Be grateful to Me and to both your parents; to Me is the eventual coming."

(31:14)

This is a very important lesson that we must learn: our parents go through immense hardships for our sake and we should appreciate them and be very much grateful to

them, similar to the way that we should be grateful to Allah.

ESTABLISHING DAILY PRAYERS

“O my son! Establish ṣalāt and enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and bear patiently that which befalls you; surely these acts require courage” (31:17)



A very important piece of advice that Luqmān (as) gave his son was that he should ‘establish’ the daily prayers. Sometimes we think that we should rush our prayers and quickly get them over and done with – but this is not *establishing* prayer, it is simply performing it. To establish prayer means that we should take a lot of care while praying, knowing that we are speaking to Allah (SWT). We must stand humbly, praying without any rush and not worrying about what we will be doing after we finish the prayers.

PATIENCE

In the above āyah, Luqmān (as) also warns his son to be patient during hardship, letting him know that being patient is a great act which requires courage. Imagine that we are hungry and the food isn’t ready yet. A lot of us would become quite grumpy and start upsetting those around us, especially our mothers. Or imagine that somebody hits us or says something bad to us. A lot of us would become quite angry and hurt the person back. In both these cases, as well as other such situations, we are taught in Islam to bravely remain patient, and to repel evil with goodness.

ARROGANCE AND RUDENESS

“And do not turn your face away from people in disrespect, nor go about in the land exulting overmuch; surely Allah does not love any arrogant boaster.” (31:18)

This is another valuable lesson which Luqmān (as) gives his son. Imagine that we have been blessed with certain talents by Allah (SWT). For example, we could be better than our class mates at soccer or netball, or smarter

than them in maths. Does this mean that we should be rude and make fun of others, and boast that we are better than everyone else? No, certainly not. As we have previously learnt, Islam teaches us to be humble, and to thank Allah (SWT) for our blessings, and try to share them with others.

EVERY BIT COUNTS

“O my son! Surely if it is the very weight of the grain of a mustard-seed, even though it is in (the heart of) rock, or (high above) in the heaven or (deep down) in the earth, Allah will bring it (to light); surely Allah is Knower of subtleties, Aware!” (31: 16)

This verse mentions another valuable lesson which Luqmān (as) gives his son. It means that Allah (SWT) sees every single thing and is aware of even the tiniest of details. Imagine that you only have a 5 cents coin with you (at the time) and the charity basket is going around. Some people might think that 5 cents is too little and may be too embarrassed to donate it. However, even donating a 5 cent coin sincerely for the sake of Allah (SWT) is a beautiful deed and Allah (SWT) will see it and be pleased with you.



NONE OTHER THAN ALLAH (SWT)

“And when Luqmān said to his son while he admonished him: O my son! do not associate anything with Allah; most surely polytheism is a grievous iniquity.” (31: 13)

The final lesson we will look at from Luqmān’s instructions to his son is regarding polytheism. Luqmān warns his son to make sure that he does not worship anyone other than Allah (SWT) or think that Allah (SWT) has any partners. This is important because a lot of people, especially in the olden days, would take statues and animals as God and worship them. Islam teaches us that there is only one unique God, Allah (SWT), who alone we worship and rely upon.

Review Questions

Q1. Who was Luqmān (as)?

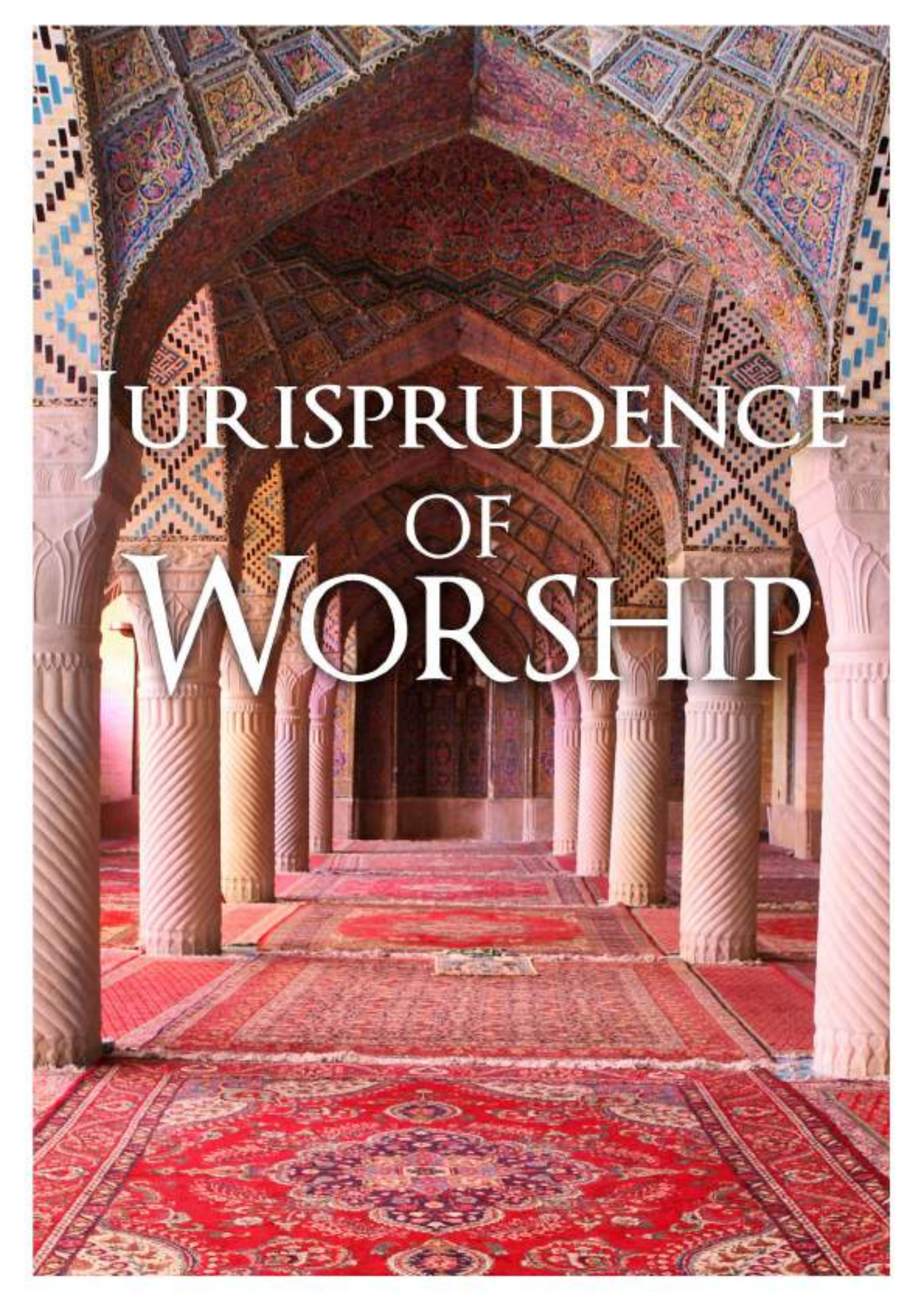
- a. A wise man introduced to us in the Qur'an.
- b. A prophet of Allah (SWT).
- c. An angel of Allah (SWT).

Q2. Luqmān's wisdom was granted to him:

- a. By himself through deep thinking.
- b. By himself through prolonged studying.
- c. By Allah (SWT)

Q3. In the Quran, Luqmān advises his son to:

- a. Establish ṣalāt, be patient during afflictions, be humble and polite, and associate nothing with Allah (SWT).
- b. Establish ṣalāt, be patient during afflictions, be arrogant and rude, and associate others with Allah (SWT).
- c. Perform ṣalāt, be patient during afflictions, be humble and polite, and associate nothing with Allah (SWT).

The image shows the interior of a mosque, featuring a series of pointed arches supported by columns. The ceiling and upper walls are covered in intricate, colorful geometric and floral tilework. The floor is covered with large, ornate red and gold patterned carpets. The perspective is looking down a long aisle between the columns.

JURISPRUDENCE OF WORSHIP



FURTHER RULES OF PRAYERS

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to the foundational obligations of prayer

Further Prayer Rules

In our last few lessons, we have learnt many of the rules of prayer, and by now, we should all be able to pray correctly. In this lesson, we will learn a few more rules related to prayer.

WĀJIB RUKNI

There are five actions within prayer that are called Wājib Rukni. This means they are foundational obligations. The special thing about these five actions is that if we make a mistake in them we have to repeat our prayer. Even if we make a mistake accidentally, then we must repeat our prayer. Here is a table of these five actions.

Wajib Rukni:

- Intention
- Takbiratul Iḥrām
- Qiyām
- Rukū'
- Sujūd (2 sajdahs within the same Rak'ah)

Let us look at examples of mistakes in these five actions. These are only examples, and there are many other situations related to these five actions which we will learn about in later years:

1. **Intention:** an example of a problem with the intention is this: it is time for Ḍuhr prayer, but a person stands up to pray without making the intention of whether this is Ḍuhr or 'Asr prayer, and they do not make a specific intention till the end of their prayer. This makes the prayer invalid.
2. **Takbiratul Iḥrām:** a person may forget this action altogether. This would make the prayer invalid. In fact, the prayer would not really start without this action.
3. **Qiyām:** this refers to standing upright and still, in two particular situations
 - a. When reciting Takbiratul Iḥrām
 - b. Just before going into Rukū'

So if a person is not steady while reciting Takbiratul Iḥrām or they say it before they are standing completely upright, the prayer is invalid.

Similarly, if the person is not standing steady before they go into Rukū', the prayer is invalid. This means that after reciting Qunūt, we should put our hands down and keep our body still and upright for a couple of seconds, before going into Rukū'.

4. **Rukū':** a person may add an extra rak'ah or miss a rak'ah during prayer, the prayer is invalid. This

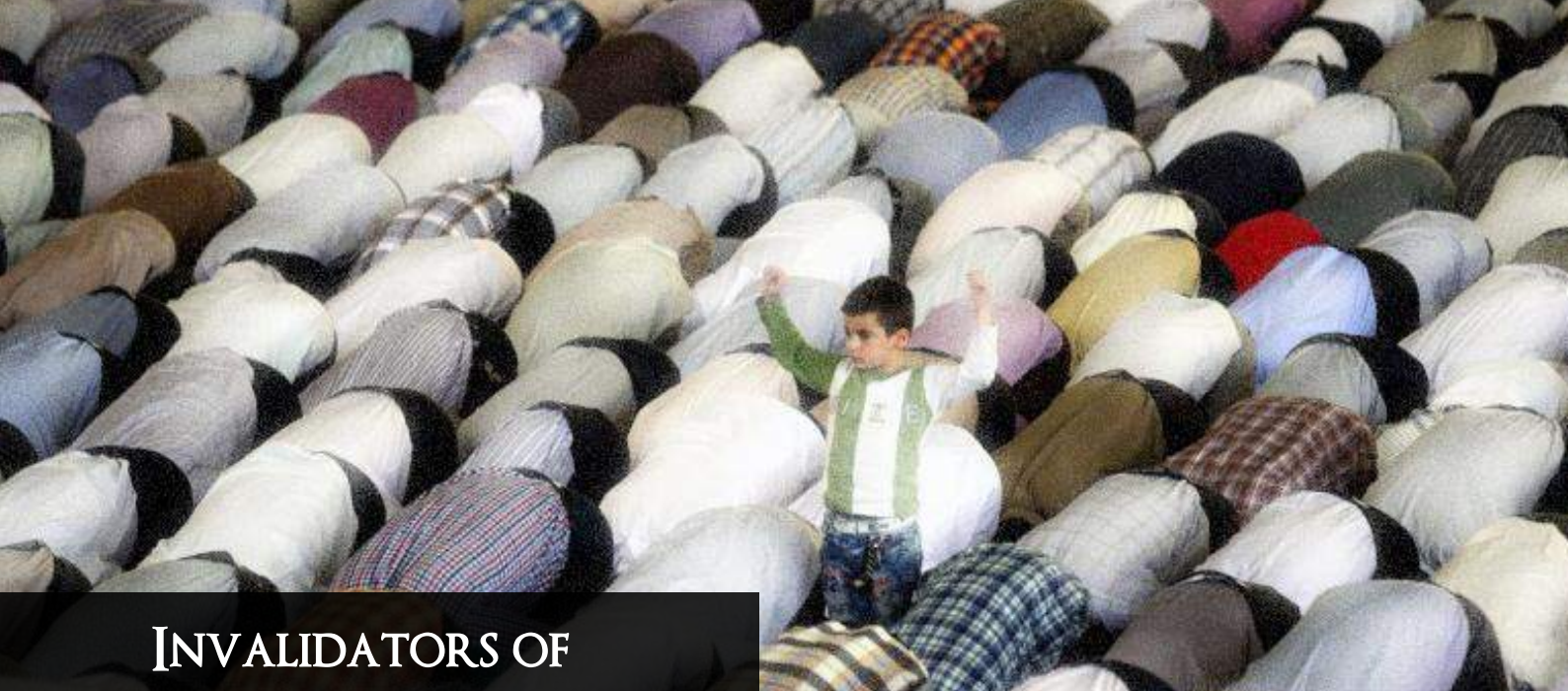
is a general rule, and in later years we will look at more detailed rules in relation to this.

5. **Sujūd**: a person may miss both sajdahs within the same rak'ah. This would make the prayer invalid.

In the cases above where the prayer is invalid, the person has to repeat their prayer.

Review Questions

1. Which of the following is NOT a foundational obligation?
 - a. Qiyām
 - b. Intention
 - c. Tashahhud
2. Not making an intention of whether one is praying Ḍuhr or 'Asr:
 - a. Does not affect the prayer
 - b. Makes the prayer invalid
 - c. Is makrūh



INVALIDATORS OF PRAYER

مبطلات الصلاة

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Review the invalidators of prayer learnt in previous years
- Discuss the most common invalidators of prayer
- Understand some of the disliked (makrūh) acts in prayer

Invalidators of Prayer

In previous years, we have learnt some of the things that cause our prayer to become invalid (no longer correct). If these things occur, we need to stop our prayer, get ourselves ready to pray again and repeat our prayer. We learnt about some of these things last year. Let's have a short quiz to review them.

Class Activity: Revision Quiz

Answer true or false:

- 1- Laughing during prayer breaks the prayer
- 2- Smiling during prayer breaks the prayer

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

- 3- Speaking normal words during prayer breaks the prayer
- 4- Turning the face completely away from the Qiblah breaks the prayer
- 5- Turning the face slightly away from the Qiblah breaks the prayer
- 6- Crying out of fear or love for Allah (SWT) breaks the prayer
- 7- Crying because of a problem a person is having in this world breaks the prayer (for example, mum and dad are fighting and you are very upset about this)
- 8- Eating during prayer breaks the prayer
- 9- Swallowing some food left in the mouth during prayer breaks the prayer

WHAT DO I DO IN THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS?

- 1- While a person is praying, they pass wind. What should they do?
 - a. They need to stop their prayer, renew their Wuḍū', and repeat the prayer from the beginning

- 2- After praying, a person realises they have prayed two rak'āt instead of three for Maghreb prayer. What should they do?
 - a. They need to repeat their prayer
- 3- I am praying at a picnic in the park, when a wet dog comes close to me and touches my pants. My pants are now wet because of the dog. What should I do?
 - a. I need to make my clothes Ṭāhir then repeat my prayer.

INVALIDATORS OF PRAYER

Besides the things we have learnt about in previous years, there are others that break the prayer. You might have seen students your age doing some of the following things during prayer:

- Laughing
- Turning away to look at someone or looking to the side
- Whispering to each other
- Disturbing others by nudging them
- Checking their phones during prayer



All of these things make our prayer invalid, and if we do these things, we need to repeat our prayer. Therefore, while we are praying, we need to make sure that we avoid these things. We need to stand respectfully and stand still with absolute humility in front of Allah, the Almighty. We need to face the Qiblah and not turn away from it. We need to avoid looking away, speaking to others or laughing.

It is also important not to pray very quickly. Praying so quickly that a person looks like they are just

jumping up and down or pecking the ground like a bird means that we are not really showing any interest in our prayer and so we may not get any reward for our prayer.

One day, the Prophet (saw) was sitting at the mosque when a man walked in and began to pray. This man was praying very quickly. His rukū' and sujūd were very fast and he was not performing them properly. The Prophet (saw) said:

“It is as if he is a crow pecking the ground. If he dies while his prayer is like this, he will die on a religion other than mine” (*Wasa'ilul Shia, chapter 3 from the chapters on ruku'*).

The Prophet (saw) was so upset by this man's quick prayer that he said that if this man were to keep praying like this till he died; he would die as a non-Muslim.

Review Questions

- 1- If a person passes wind while they are praying:**
 - a. They can continue to pray
 - b. They need to repeat their prayer after renewing Wuḍū'
 - c. Neither of the above
- 2- When praying:**
 - a. It is okay to turn away from the Qiblah and look to the side
 - b. It is not okay to turn away from the Qiblah and look to the side
 - c. It is okay to turn away, but only very quickly
- 3- During prayer:**
 - a. It is okay to check the SMS we just received
 - b. It is okay to play a game on our phone
 - c. It is not okay to use our phone, we need to concentrate on prayer



CONGREGATIONAL PRAYERS

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

صلاة الجماعة

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be reminded of the importance of Jamā'ah prayers briefly.
- Understand that Jamā'ah prayers is very rewarding
- Be encouraged to recite Jamā'ah prayers whenever possible introducing them to the minimum number of people required
- Learn some of the general rules of Jamā'ah prayer

Congregational Prayers

In previous years, we have learnt about Jamā'ah prayer, which means when we pray together in a congregation behind a person called the Imam. There are many benefits when we pray in Jamā'ah which includes discipline and unity. The reward for the person who joins in Jamā'ah prayer is very high. In this lesson we will focus on some basic rules of Jamā'ah prayers.

ONE OF THE MOST RECOMMENDED ACTS

Ṣalāt is the most important act of worship in Islam, and if it is accepted by Allah (SWT), then all other acts of worship are accepted as well. However, if the Ṣalāt is not accepted, then all other actions also will not be accepted. It has been narrated from Imam Ja'far (as) quoting his forefathers up to the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, that he said:

“If there was a stream at the house of any one of you in which he washes himself five times a day, will there remain any dirt on your body? Ṣalāt is like that stream. The person who looks after his Ṣalāt, purifies himself from his sins with this Ṣalāt.”ⁱ

THE IMPORTANCE OF JAMĀ'AH PRAYER

In Islam, perhaps there is no other act as rewarding as Jamā'ah prayer. As for the importance of it, we quote one narration in which the Prophet (saw) says:

"The rows of my followers in the congregational prayer on the earth are like the rows of angels in the sky; and a rak'ah of prayer in congregation is equivalent with twenty-four rak'āt, and every rak'ah with Allah, Almighty and Glorious, is more beloved than forty years of worship. Therefore, on the Day of Justice, when Allah gathers all human beings from the beginning to the end for Reckoning, there will be no believer who has attended the congregational prayer but for whom Allah will decrease the grievousness of the Day of Reckoning and after that the one will be told to enter Heaven."ⁱⁱ

It is recommended to perform all the five prayers in Jamā'ah as much as possible. It is even more recommended to pray Jamā'ah at the mosque if we live close to the mosque.

RULES OF CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

We have already learnt some basic rules we have to follow when performing Jamā'ah prayers. Some key rules include the following:

- There is always a person to lead Jamā'ah prayer who is called *Imam*
- The people who follow the Imam should stand behind the Imam in rows
- When performing Jamā'ah prayer, it is important to listen to the Imam when he is

reciting any sūrah. Therefore, when we are standing in the first two rak'āt of each prayer, we should not recite the sūrah. Instead, we should just listen to the Imam.

- There should not be any gap in the lines of the followers. Everyone should be connected somehow.
- Children (who are not yet Muballigh) always should stand between two adults while performing congregational prayers.
- If we arrive to the mosque late and the Jamā'ah prayer has already started, we can still join the prayer and follow the Imam in his actions. Once the Jamā'ah prayer finishes, we should continue and make up the rak'āt we missed at the beginning. We will learn more details about this next year.

Review Questions

1. If we arrive at the mosque late:

- a. We should not join the Jamā'ah prayer
- b. We should join the Jamā'ah prayer and make up what we missed at the end
- c. We should join the Jamā'ah prayer and finish with everyone else

2. When the Imam is reciting the sūrah in the first two rak'āt, we should:

- a. Recite as well
- b. Listen to the Imam only
- c. Listen to the Imam and recite

ⁱ (Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 82, Pg. 236)

ⁱⁱ Bihar-ul-Anwar, vol. 88, p. 6



TRAVELLER'S PRAYER

صلاة المسافر

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to the fact that when we travel under certain conditions, we must shorten our prayer
- Learn the main conditions of a journey that requires us to shorten our prayer
- Understand that a journey that requires us to shorten the prayer, also requires us to break the fast

Traveller's Prayer

In this lesson, we will learn about the rules of prayer when we are on a journey. Under certain conditions, we must shorten our prayer when we are travelling. We call the shortened prayer 'qasr prayer'. We will learn some of these conditions in this lesson.

WHICH PRAYERS ARE SHORTENED?

The following prayers are shortened when we travel:

- Ḍuhr prayer is shortened from 4 rak'āt to 2 rak'āt
- 'Aṣr prayer is shortened from 4 rak'āt to 2 rak'āt
- 'Ishā' prayer is shortened from 4 rak'āt to 2 rak'āt

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

The Fajr and Maghrib prayers remain the same.

WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS FOR SHORTENING THE PRAYER?

If the journey we are taking meets the following conditions, then we need to shorten our prayer:

- Our journey must be longer than 44 kilometres going and coming back. So if the journey is 23 kilometres away from our city and 23 kilometres back, then we must shorten our prayer as described above. We do not necessarily have to come back on the same day or the next day. As long as we are not intending to stay at the place we are travelling to for ten days, we should shorten our prayer. For example, if I am travelling from Sydney to Newcastle, staying in Newcastle overnight and coming back the next day, I should shorten my prayers.
- We must leave the borders of our home city. This means that if we travel more than 44 kilometres, but within Sydney, or Melbourne or any other large city, then we pray normally and do not shorten our prayer, because we have not left the borders of our town. From this rule, you can see that we count the 44 kilometres from the border of our city and not from the door of our house.
- We must not have the intention of staying at the place where we are going to for ten days

or more. If we are staying at the place we are travelling to for ten or more days, then we should pray the full prayer like we normally do. For example, if I am travelling from Sydney to Melbourne and staying in Melbourne for two weeks, then coming back, I should pray normally in Melbourne.

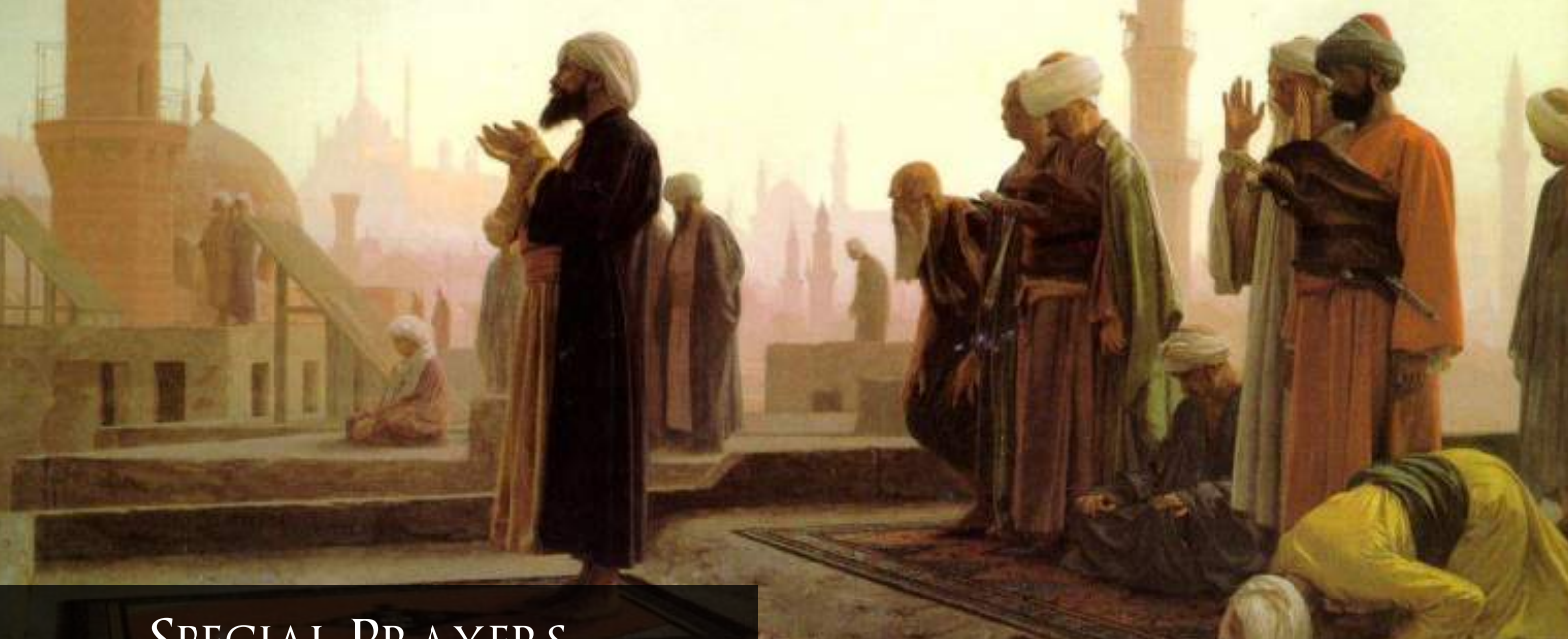
- Our journey must not be ḥarām or for a ḥarām purpose.
 - An example of a ḥarām journey is a journey that our parents have said we are not allowed to make.
 - An example of a journey for ḥarām purposes is to go another city to gamble
- We should not be people who travel regularly. For example, a person who lives in one city but works or studies at another and travels there every day or a few times a week, should pray normally, even if the distance between the two cities is more than the limit for shortening the prayer.

TRAVELLING WHILE FASTING

Very soon we will be learning about fasting and its rules. The rules we learnt about travelling and prayer also apply to fasting. Whenever we are supposed to shorten our prayer, we are not allowed to fast. So if the above conditions apply to our journey, then we are not allowed to fast on that journey and we must break our fast.

Review Questions

- 1. When measuring the distance we are travelling we should start counting from:**
 - a. The door of our house
 - b. The border of our city
 - c. The border of our suburb
- 2. If a person travels to another city and intends to stay there for nine days, he should:**
 - a. Pray normally
 - b. Shorten his prayer
 - c. He does not need to pray
- 3. If a person travels to do something ḥaram in another city, he should:**
 - a. Pray normally
 - b. Shorten his prayer
 - c. Not pray at all



SPECIAL PRAYERS

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be reminded about *Ṣalātul Ayāt* and that it is *Wājib* and understand the basic conditions of when it is to be offered
- Learn how to pray *Ṣalātul Ayāt*
- Be reminded about *Ṣalātul ʿĪd* and that it is *Mustaḥab* now but will become *Wājib* when our present Imam (atfs) reappears
- Understand the significance of ʿĪd
- Understand the importance of socializing with Muslims on ʿĪd day and visiting them

Special Prayers

In this lesson we will introduce an obligatory special prayer known as *Ṣalātul ayāt* and we will also discuss *Ṣalātul ʿĪd*.

SALĀTUL AYĀT

Ṣalātul ayāt is special set of prayers which are obligatory to perform under following four situations:



- Solareclipse
- Lunareclipse
- Earthquake
- Heavy thunder or lightning, cyclone, or similar natural incidents if they cause fear

The first two situations of solar and lunar eclipse make *Ṣalātul ayāt* obligatory whether the eclipse is partial or full and whether it makes one afraid or not. *Ṣalātul ayāt* means that we are praising God for His special and unique signs.

Ṣalātul ayāt becomes *wājib* in case of any earthquake whether it causes fear or not. In case of lightning, thunder, cyclone or similar things, *Ṣalātul ayāt* becomes *wājib* only if it causes fear in someone.

RULES OF SALĀTUL AYĀT

We need to offer *Ṣalātul ayāt* if we are living in the town where any of the events we mentioned earlier happen. It is best to pray it as soon as that event begins.

If we did not know about an event and found out later, we should pray *Qaḍā'* in most cases.

HOW TO PERFORM SALĀTUL AYĀT

Ṣalātul ayāt consists of two sets of five Rak'at.

There is a long and a short method of offering this prayer. Here, we will discuss the short method only:

After making the intention to offer *Ṣalātul ayāt*, a person is allowed to say takbīr and recite *Sūrat al-Ḥamd* and then divide the verses of the other Surah into five parts, and recite one verse or more, and thereafter perform the Rukū'. He should then stand up and recite another part of the Surah (without reciting *Sūrat al-Ḥamd*) and then perform another Rukū'. He should repeat this action, and finish that Surah before performing the fifth Rukū'.

Practical Activity

The class should perform a demonstration of the short version of *Ṣalātul ayāt* with the teacher leading the prayer.

SALĀTUL 'ĪD

In previous years, we have discussed *Ṣalātul 'Īd*, which is an important kind of prayer. We know that this prayer is offered for:

- 'Īdul Aīḥā
- 'Īdul Fiṭr

We must remember that *Ṣalātul 'Īd* is a *Mustaḥab* or recommended prayer. *Ṣalātul 'Īd* will become *wājib* or compulsory when our present Imam (atfs) reappears.

THINGS TO REMEMBER ON THE DAY OF EID

'Īd is the day of happiness and celebration for all Muslims. It is important that we celebrate 'Īd in the way which makes our Imam happy. We should not do anything haram or commit any sins. 'Īd is never an excuse to do something wrong.

There are many recommended things one can do on the day of 'Īd, which include:

- Visiting friends and family
- Socializing with Muslims
- Helping the poor and giving them gifts

Review Questions

Q1. *Ṣalātul Ayat* needs to be prayed:

- Only when there is an eclipse of the moon
- Only when there is an eclipse of the sun
- When there is an eclipse of either the moon or the sun

Q2. *Ṣalātul 'Īd* is:

- Mustaḥab* until our present Imam reappears
- Wājib*
- Mustaḥab* even when our Imam reappears

Q3. Which of the following is recommended on the day of 'Īd:

- Going to the beach
- Going to the city
- Visiting Muslim friends in their homes and at the mosque



FASTING

الصوم

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand the obligation of fasting and the rewards of fasting
- Learn the following invalidators of fasting:
 - eating
 - drinking
 - immersing the head under water
 - intentional vomiting
 - inhaling thick dust
 - masturbation
 - remaining in Janabah or Hayḍ
- Know that if a person's health is being harmed by fasting, they should not fast
- Be introduced to the rule that fasts missed in one Ramaḍan must be made up before the next Ramaḍan comes around if possible
- Know the categories of people who are exempt from fasting
- Revise the Islamic months highlighting the Ash-hurul Ḥurum
- Be introduced to the very basic rules of moon-sighting
- Be introduced to the categories of people who are exempt from fasting

Fasting: Part I

Fasting is one of the most important acts of worship in Islam. It is obligatory during the month of Ramaḍan. It is one of the best ways of coming closer to Allah (SWT). As we will see, fasting is not just keeping away from food and drink; rather it is the most sincere acts of worship which has degrees and levels.

FASTING: AN OBLIGATION UPON THE BELIEVERS

“O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you that you may attain self-restraint.”(2:183)

Fasting has been made Wājib on the believing men and women. This means that as soon as we have reached the age of responsibility we must fast. Fasting is an act of worship done **for the sake of God**, where we need to keep away from anything that breaks the fastⁱ (food, water etc.) from the time of Fajr until Maghrib. Fasting has such an importance in Islam that Imam Al-Bāqir (as) refers to it as one of the five pillars of Islam.ⁱⁱ

One of the most important prerequisites for the acceptance of the fast is that one makes the intention. One should make the intention of fasting to be completely for the sake of Allah (SWT). This means it should not be done for the sake of others acknowledging that you are fasting, or for your parents to be pleased with you. Your fast should be done to seek the pleasure of the Creator.

THE INTENTION TO FAST

The time for the intention of the obligatory fast is specific. One can make the intention either:

- 1- Before the beginning of Fajr for every morning that you are fasting.
- 2- At the beginning of the month of Ramaḍān where we can make the intention to fast for every single day of the month.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INTENTION

The act of fasting is almost completely based on the intention. This is because fasting could be described as the most sincere act of worshipping. When we compare fasting with other acts of worship we begin to see the sincerity within it. Look at prayer. When we pray, there could be some other motives- for example to impress the people around us (God forbid). However, when someone is fasting, no one knows if you are in fact fasting. Especially when living in a Non-Muslim country, someone can pretend to be fasting, while secretly eating. However, the one who fasts and completes it has a special status in the eyes of Allah (SWT), because he is doing it completely for the sake of God.

It is for this reason that in a Ḥadīth narrated from Imam al-Ṣādiq (as), that Allah (SWT) says:

“For every good deed that you do there is an allocated reward, as for fasting, I am the reward for it.”

The reward with Allah (SWT) is something that we cannot even begin to imagine.

BENEFITS OF FASTING:

TAQWA [SELF-RESTRAINT]

One of the main benefits of fasting according to the verse that we began with, is that it helps us learn self-restraint. When we are fasting, we are controlling some of our biggest desires, such as food and water. Usually, we cannot live without these, but on these special days we train ourselves to keep away from that which we love.



Through keeping away from the basic necessity of life, food, we can then train our souls to keep away from what is forbidden to us. Thus, if someone fasts, yet does not witness any improvements in his actions, then there is a serious question as to whether his fasts were accepted by Allah (SWT).

BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION:

When someone has a bad habit, it is very difficult to stop this bad habit, to the extent that Imam Ṣādiq (as) refers to this change as a miracle. The month of Ramaḍān, for this reason, is a month filled with miracles.

Automatically our behaviour is modified, as something as basic as our eating habits change. In particular there is one behaviour which we can develop in ourselves during the month of Ramaḍān, and that is patience.

Unfortunately, a lot of us fail when it comes to this critical test. When we become angry, we seem to forget our self-control. Patience is certainly a character which is honoured and placed in such a high place in Islam.

So, if we want to truly take advantage of the month of Ramaḍān, we should take this trait of patience. Some of us might find that we are automatically more patient in the month of Ramaḍān. This means that we are benefiting from this month.

HEALTH BENEFITS:

The Prophet (saw) says:

“Fast, you will be healthy.”

There are more than 500 medical journals on therapeutic fasting; that argue that so many diseases may be cured through fasting. When we refrain from eating and drinking, there is a decomposition of damaged cells and tissues throughout the day.

SHARING AND CARING

For what reason did Allah (SWT) make fasting compulsory?

Imam Ḥassan Al-‘Askari explains:

“So that the rich shall experience the pangs of hunger and they have mercy upon the poor.”

We know that starvation and its related diseases cause one person per second to die on this planet, 75% of them being infants and children under the age of 5. The reason that there are hungry people is because there are people with stuffed bellies. Australians are throwing more than 3 million tonnes of food a year mostly because of over shopping and waste at the table. Meanwhile, more than half of American adults (20+) are overweight. Nearly ¼ of American adults are obese. Americans spend \$33 billion annually on weight loss products & services.

Through fasting we begin to be aware of the extravagance in our consumption and feel the suffering of others, that we may be aware and change our spending habits.

Review Questions

Q1. The intention to fast:

- a. Must be made every morning before Fajr
- b. Can be made at the beginning of the month of Ramadan to fast the whole month
- c. Does not need to be made

Q2. During the month of Ramaḍān:

- a. We should not change anything in our life
- b. We should try to change our bad habits to good ones
- c. It is impossible to change habits

Q3. Fasting:

- a. Is unhealthy
- b. Has many health benefits
- c. Is neither healthy nor unhealthy

Fasting: Part II

In our last lesson, we learnt about the importance of fasting and how we can benefit from fasting. In this lesson, we will discuss the main rules of fasting and learn about which things break our fast.

WHAT BREAKS THE FAST?

There are nine things that can break a person's fast. However, in this lesson, we will talk about the main ones that you might come across. When a person is fasting, they cannot do these things between dawn (fajr) and Maghreb. If they do these things, their fast is not counted, except in certain situations that we will discuss later.

EATING AND DRINKING

As we know by now, we are not allowed to eat or drink while we are fasting. If a person eats or drinks on purpose then their fast is not counted.

CAN I BRUSH MY TEETH?

Yes you can brush when you're fasting as long as you don't swallow the toothpaste or the water. Remember also that if you swallow the bits of food left between your teeth on purpose then this also breaks the fast.

IMMERSING THE HEAD UNDER WATER

When a person is fasting, they are not allowed to duck their whole head under water. However, they are allowed to go under the shower.

If you plan on swimming in the month of Ramaḍān, be very careful about this rule and make sure you do not duck your head under water. If you think that you will not be able to avoid this, then you should not go swimming.

INHALING THICK DUST

If there is thick dust around and a person breathes this dust in, then their fast is broken. An example of thick dust is if a strong wind blows thick particles of soil towards a person, or if a person is sweeping or dusting and thick dust is blown towards them. Other examples include cigarette smoke or the smoke from the exhaust of a truck.

INTENTIONAL VOMITING

If a person vomits on purpose, this breaks their fast. However, if a person vomits without meaning to (for example if they are ill) then their fast is not broken.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

There are some special situations where things they usually break the fast do not do so:

- If a person does something forgetfully. For example, if a person takes a bite of food or drinks a glass of water because they forgot they were fasting, their fast is still okay. They need to stop as soon as they remember and continue fasting.
- If a person's health is harmed because of fasting, or a person is reasonably scared that their health would be harmed by fasting, then they have to break their fast and eat and drink until they are safe from that

harm. However, later, when they feel better, they need to make up that fast.



Review Questions

Q1. Breathing in thick dust on purpose:

- Breaks the fast
- Does not affect the fast
- Sometimes breaks the fast

Q2. Vomiting:

- Always breaks the fast
- Only breaks the fast if it is done on purpose
- Never breaks the fast

Q3. Taking a shower:

- Is not allowed while fasting
- Is okay as long as one does not duck their whole head under water at the same time

Fasting: Part III

In previous lessons, we have learnt some of the rules of fasting. In this lesson, we will learn some further rules regarding fasting. Firstly, we will discuss which people are excused from fasting during the month of Ramaḍān, and then we will discuss some of the rules of moon-sighting.

MAKING UP MISSED FASTS

The first important thing to remember is that if a person misses a fast during the month of Ramaḍān, they need to make it up by fasting another day during the year. Even if they had a valid excuse for not fasting (e.g. important travel or illness), they still need to make it up later if they become able to do so. It is important to make up the missed fasts from the previous month of Ramaḍān before the next month of Ramaḍān comes around.

PEOPLE WHO ARE EXCUSED FROM FASTING

As we have learnt so far, the rules of Islam are very merciful and do not mean to cause hardship for anyone. Another example of the merciful nature of the laws of Islam is that certain people are excused from fasting because this would cause them too much hardship. The following people are excused:

- A person who is ill and whose illness makes fasting very difficult or whose illness may become more severe because of fasting
- A person who cannot fast because of old age
- A person who cannot fast because it would cause them great hardship.
- A person who has a disease causing excessive thirst
- A woman who is in the late stages of her pregnancy, or who might be harmed or harm her child by fasting
- A woman who is breastfeeding and would not be able to breastfeed adequately if she was fasting

So you can see that Allah (SWT) does not want any of His creatures to be harmed or go through great hardship because of any act of worship. This is a rule that you should always remember for all acts of worship. If an act of worship will cause you or others harm, then you are not allowed to perform that act of worship. If it is possible, an alternative action should be performed or you should perform Qaḍā' for that action later when you are able.

MOON-SIGHTING

As we have learnt in previous lessons, the months of the Islamic calendar are based on the moon and its phases. An Islamic month begins when we can first see the crescent moon in the sky, and continues over the cycle of the moon until it disappears. When it reappears again, this is the sign for the beginning of the next month. Therefore, to know when a month of the Islamic calendar begins, we need to see whether we can see the moon in the sky or not.

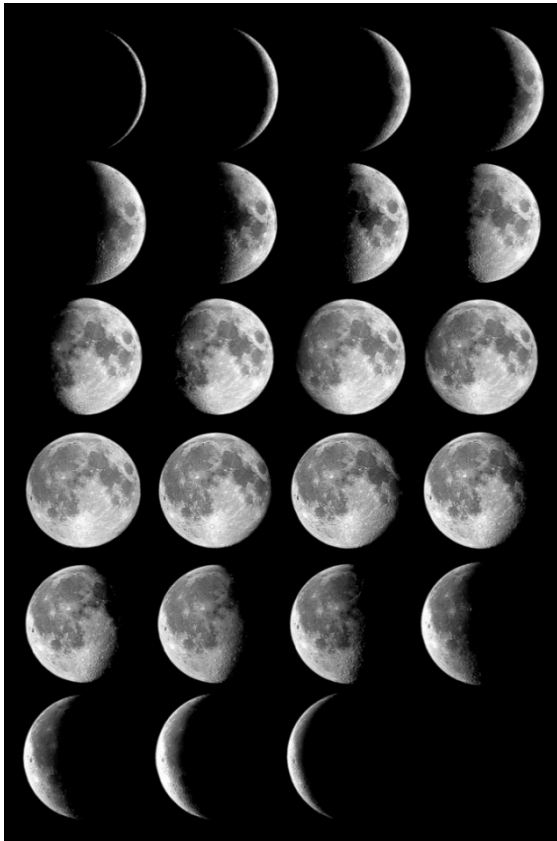
We learnt that we should go out to look at the sky and see whether we can see the crescent moon of Ramaḍān.

If we are able to see it, or other reliable people are able to see it, then we can assume the next day is the first of the month of Ramaḍān.

The same rules apply at the end of the month of Ramaḍān, when we are trying to work out when the month of Shawwāl begins so that we can celebrate ‘Īd.

It is important to remember a couple of things about the beginning or end of the month of Ramaḍān:

- Some scholars have different views on the rules of sighting the moon, this does not mean any of them are wrong because they have all reached their decision in a professional and objective way by applying their ijtihād
- People within the same community might celebrate ‘Īd on different days because they follow different scholars. Again, this does not mean anyone is wrong, and should not be something that we fight about. We should try to maintain unity and good relations between ourselves no matter what.



THE MONTHS OF THE ISLAMIC CALENDAR

In previous years, we have learnt the names of the twelve months in the Islamic calendar, and the names of the four

sacred months (Ash-hurul Ḥurum). Let us revise these with the following activities.

ORDER	MONTH
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	

Review Questions

Q1. The day of ‘Īd is the first day of the month of:

- Ramaḍān
- Shawwāl
- Rajab

Q2. Different scholars may have different rules on sighting the moon. This means:

- Some of them are wrong
- Some of them are less knowledgeable
- this does not mean any of them are wrong because they have all reached their decision in a professional and objective way by applying their ijtihād

Q3. An elderly person who is weak and frail:

- Still has to fast
- Does not have to fast
- Should get someone else to fast on their behalf

ⁱ List of the things that break fast.

ⁱⁱ In Al-Kafi, Imam Al-Baqir: The religion is built on five pillars Salaat, Zakaat, Fasting, Hajj and Wilayat.



JURISPRUDENCE OF FOOD AND DRINK

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

Rules of Food and Drink

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be reminded that we start eating food saying *bismillāh* and finish saying *alḥamdullīlāh* and start with salt or vinegar
- Understand the etiquettes of drinking water
- Understand that pork, alcohol and Non-Ḥalāl meat foods are Najis and Ḥarām to eat. And anything made from these become najis and therefore ḥarām to eat
- Understand that in Islam we cannot eat the meat of all animals
- Very briefly understand the rulings of ḥalāl meat
- Understand very briefly the rulings of which birds and fish are ḥalāl

Allah, the Almighty, has made nature, all animals, fruits and vegetables at the service of man so that he makes use of them. Allah has also put limits on the use of all the bounties so that we could live a better life. Some of these are rules that limit what we can eat and drink. In this lesson, we are going to look at some of the manners of eating and drinking. We will also learn about the rules of Najis food.

How should we eat and drink?

What we will mention here are some of the ways of eating and drinking that have been recommended to us according to the teachings of Islam.

RECOMMENDED ACTS

- Washing one's hands before and after eating
- Saying "Bismillah al-Raḥmānil Rāḥīm" which means "In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful", before we start eating. This is because all of the blessings of food are given to us from Allah. So before we start doing anything, especially eating, we should begin in the name of Allah (SWT).
- Start our meal with some salt and/or vinegar
- Saying "Al Ḥamdu Lillāh" which means "Praise be to Allah", when we finish eating. This is to thank Allah (SWT) for the blessing of the food that has been gifted to us.
- Eating with the right hand
- Eating small bites and chewing the food well

DISLIKED ACTS

- Eating food that is very hot
- Blowing the food before eating
- Eating too much

IT IS ḤARĀM TO CONSUME NAJIS THINGS

- Pork: We all know that eating Pork is Ḥarām. But sometimes there are places which sell 'Ḥalāl' food, while also selling pork. Since Pork is Najis, food cooked using the same utensils are those used for pork or ham also becomes Najis. If we are in doubt about whether there has been contact with pork or not, the rule is that we should assume that there has not been any contact. However, it is always best to take precaution and not buy from shops which also sell pig products.
- Alcohol: As we know, alcohol is ḥarām to consume and is also Najis. Some food flavouring that we might use in some of the foods made at home might have some Najis materials in it, such as Alcohol. For example some Vanilla essence may have Alcohol in it. If we put this in our food, it becomes Najis and ḥarām to eat. Some ice-creams or chocolate can have alcohol in them too. It is always best to check the ingredients before eating something.
- Non-Ḥalāl meat If we go to a take away food outlet which sells both ḥalāl and non-ḥalāl meat, again we have to be very careful. Meat which is not ḥalāl is Najis (except seafood). So, if the ḥarām meat is cooked in the same places that the Halal meat is prepared, the food could become Najis, making it ḥarām to eat. Again, if we are not sure if the food we are buying has become Najis, we can still eat it, but it is always best to take precaution.
- Disbeliever: If food has been touched by someone who is a Kāfir (not a Muslim Christian or Jew) then that food become Najis and we cannot eat it. If we are not sure whether the food has been touched by such a person then we can assume it is clean and okay to eat, but again it is always best to take precaution.

Review Questions

Q1. I buy a new brand of Ice Cream from the corner-shop. On my way home, I read the ingredients and realise there is a very tiny amount of alcohol in the ice-cream. What should I do:

- I can eat it because the alcohol amount is very small
- I can eat it because the alcohol in it won't make me drunk
- It is Najis and Ḥarām to eat, I should throw it out or return it

Q2. I go to a hope which sells both ḥalāl and non-ḥalāl meat:

- I can eat the ḥalāl meat
- I cannot even eat the ḥalāl meat
- I can eat the ḥalāl meat as long as I haven't seen it being contaminated by the non- ḥalāl meat

Q3. Any product made from pig:

- Is Ḥarām but not Najis
- Is not Ḥarām or Najis
- Is both Ḥarām and Najis

Rules of Food and Drink

In the last lesson we discussed some of the manners of eating and drinking, as well as foods that are najis and which we cannot eat. This week we are going to look at some of the ḥalāl and ḥarām foods. In Islam we are not allowed to eat anything and everything, because some things will harm us and are not meant to be eaten as they have been created for other purposes. Some foods are not good for us physically and spiritually. That is why Allah (SWT) has put down some rules for what we can and cannot eat. What we *can* eat is usually called 'ḥalāl food'.

WHAT WE CAN EAT!

We are allowed to eat products from many different animals, as long as they are slaughtered in an Islamic manner.

Some examples of Halal meat are:

- Cow
- Goat
- Sheep
- Camel

- Chicken
- Emu
- Turkey
- Deer
- Gazelle

WHAT WE CANNOT EAT!

Some of the common ḥarām foods include:

- Pig
- Kangaroo
- Dog
- Cat
- Snake
- Elephant
- Monkey
- Zebra

EATING OUT

When we are at home, our parents usually do the cooking and they will usually buy ḥalāl meat from the butcher so we do not have to worry about anything.

However, when we are eating out, we must make sure the meat we are eating is ḥalāl. This means we can only eat meat from a shop:

- Where the owner/worker is a trustworthy Muslim who says the meat is ḥalāl
- Which has proper ḥalāl Certification

FISH

It is important to know this when we go fishing with our parents or are even we are buying fish from the supermarket that there are some rules about seafood as well.

Imam al-Bāqir (as) says: "Eat any fish that has scales, and do not eat what does not have scales."ⁱ

There are two types of seafood that are ḥalāl:

- 1- Fish that have scales
- 2- Shrimp and prawn

Some of the common ḥarām sea foods include:

- 1- Shark
- 2- Crab
- 3- Lobster
- 4- Calamari
- 5- Octopus
- 6- Swordfish

BIRDS

The following birds are ḥalāl to eat:

- Birds that flap their wings more than gliding
- Birds that do not have talons

The following birds are ḥarām to eat:

- Birds that glide more than they flap
- Birds that have talons

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Review Questions

Q1. Which is true?

- a. All seafood is ḥalāl
- b. No seafood is ḥalāl
- c. Some seafood is ḥalāl

Q2. If I go to a shop where the owner/worker is a trustworthy Muslim who says the meat he sells is ḥalāl

- a. I do not need to do any more investigation and I can buy from him
- b. I need to make further investigation before I buy from him
- c. Neither of the above

ⁱ (Imam Baqir a.s) [al-Kolayni, al-Kaafi, vol.6 p. 219]

ⁱⁱ References:

- A Guide To Religious Laws, According to the verdicts of Imam Khomeini and Ayatollah Khamenei (Mohammad Husayn Falah Zadeh)
- Ehawza, Semester Two, Laws of Transactions, Rules of Food and Drink
- <http://www.ihic.org.au/book.php?id=72&idt=5>

HIJAB

الحجاب

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Know the categories of Maḥram and Non-Maḥram and the levels in the Maḥram category
- Know the wājib and mustaḥab dress for men
- Know the wajib and mustaḥab dress for women
- Know that lustful looks are Ḥarām for both men and women
- Limits of Interaction between Male & Female
- Limits of Online Interaction
- Things not allowed between Male & Female e.g Shaking Hands, Joking etc

Rules of Ḥijāb

In previous lessons, we learnt about the concept of hijab and its importance in the individual's life as well as in the society we live in.

In this lesson we will look at what kind of clothes both men and women must wear and those that are recommended to wear, in order to protect each other's respect and dignity. This is because men and women often mix at work, at school or in society in general, and observing Hijab leads to less temptation and corruption.

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

MAḤRAM AND NON-MAḤRAM

In Islam, people are divided into two categories:

- a. Maḥram
- b. Non-maḥram

MAḤRAM

If two people of the opposite gender are maḥram to one another, it means they do not need to observe Ḥijāb in front of one another, and they are like brother and sister in that they can touch, hug etc...



PEOPLE WHO ARE MAHRAM FOR MEN	PEOPLE WHO ARE MAHRAM FOR WOMEN
All men	All women
Mother	Father
Daughters	Sons
Wife	Husband
Aunts	Uncles
Nieces	Nephews
Step-daughters	Step-sons
Grandmothers, great-grandmothers etc...	Grandfathers, great-grandfathers etc...
Grand-daughters, great grand-daughters etc....	Grandsons, great grand-sons etc...
Wife's mother	Husband's father

NON-MAḤRAM

If a person does not fall into any of the above categories, they are maḥram and it means that Ḥijāb must be observed with that person. This means that a man cannot touch or be in a private place with a woman if she is not in the above categories. Similarly, a woman must wear Ḥijāb in front of any man who is not in one of the above categories. You may have noticed that cousins are not one of the categories, meaning that once we reach the age of puberty, we must observe the rules of Ḥijāb with our cousins of the opposite gender.

We must also remember that although the above people are maḥram, one is not permitted to expose their private parts to them. We must also try to dress decently at all times even in front of our maḥram.

DRESS FOR MEN

In Islam, men and women must dress and act in a certain way. In the Qur'an, Allah (SWT) says with regard to men:

Memorisation Activity

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ
أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ

“And say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their private parts: that will make for greater purity for them: And Allah is well acquainted with all that they do” (24:30)

- » The general rule here is that it is wājib for men to cover their private parts from everyone except in emergency situations. This applies to both maḥram and non-maḥram people except one's lawful wife.
- » It is mustaḥab for men to cover the chest, the thighs and other parts that men usually cover from non-maḥram women who are in their presence. As for covering the other parts such as the head, face, and hands, it is not necessary.
- » Men should also not wear tight fitting clothes that will possibly cause the members of the opposite gender to look at them with lust.

DRESS FOR WOMEN

Memorisation Activity

وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ
وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ
عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ

“And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their private parts; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty...” (24:30)

- » The general rule is that it is wājib the entire body of a woman, with the exception of the face and hands up to the wrist, is covered from non-maḥram men. The clothes used must cover the shape and contours of the body as well. It is not enough to only cover the skin.
- » It is mustaḥab for women to wear clothing that will not attract the opposite gender...For example, wearing bright and attractive colours which will attract the opposite gender should be avoided.

In general, we should remember that both men and women should not wear clothing with the intention of tempting others or getting attention from the opposite gender.

RULES OF LOOKING

In Islam, it is forbidden to look at the opposite gender with a lustful intention. This applies to both men and women, but especially to men.

The Holy Qur'an specifically covers this issue for both men and women. The āyāt are referred to in the above section. Please ensure that you memorize them.

It is narrated from Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (as):

“An evil glance is one of the poisonous arrows of Satan. Many of such glances becomes a cause of prolonged jealousy.”

It is also narrated that:

“Those who look at a non-maḥram woman with an evil intention and fill their eyes with this sight (that is they look for a long time) Allah will, on the day of Qiyāmah fill (pierce) their eyes with burning rods. They will continue in this way till Allah completes the hearing of the cases of all the people. Only after that will He order them to be thrown into Hell.”

This rule applies to women also. The Prophet (saw) said:

“The wrath of Allah is very severe upon the married woman who apart from her husband sees another non-maḥram man with a prolonged glance. When this woman does this, Allah the mighty invalidates all her good deeds and does not give her any rewards.”

It is important to remember that looking at a person of the opposite gender without any lustful intention is not ḥaram. However, a look with a lustful intention is a sin and can lead to many harmful effects to a person.

Therefore, when we are in an environment where there are members of the opposite gender, we should be careful about our looks and make sure that we are not looking with a bad intention.

Discussion Scenario

1. Sabira, fully covered but wearing tight jeans and a tight shirt with a scarf and sandals, goes to her friend's birthday party where her family has invited her cousins, both male and female. Does she meet the requirements of the wājib Ḥijāb dress for women? What should Sabira be doing?

Review Questions

Q1. Which of the following is not maḥram to a woman?

- a. Her male Cousin
- b. Her uncle
- c. Her great grandfather

Q2. As part of Hijab, a woman must cover everything except:

- a. Her feet up to the shins, her hands up to the wrists, and her face
- b. Her feet up to the ankles, her hands up to the wrists, and her face
- c. Her hands up to the wrists, and her face

Lesson 2: Social Ḥijāb

Ḥijāb is not merely covering our bod. Perhaps more importantly, Ḥijāb also includes the way we act, speak and interact with the opposite gender.

The covering of the head and body is the easiest part of all, Ḥijāb has a lot more to do with modesty and the way we present ourselves.

Ḥijāb is the way we talk, the way we walk; it is a way of life. It is in the inner morality that gives meaning to the external scarf.

INTERACTION BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

Social interaction is an important aspect of our lives as we all need to communicate to get things done. Examples vary from workplace, to community centres, to schools etc... However, when it comes to interaction between men and women, Islam has specific rules. These rules are there to stop corruption and sins happening in our community and society.

MEN SPEAKING TO WOMEN

Men can talk to women provided two conditions are met:

1. There is no lustful intention
2. Speaking does not lead to either of them committing a sin.

For example, a teacher at school may share his ideas with another female teacher. If he speaks appropriately and sticks to what is necessary, then there is nothing wrong with this.

WOMEN SPEAKING TO MEN

Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an:

“Then be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire, but speak in an honourable manner” (33:32)

Women can talk to men if three conditions are met:

1. She has no lustful intention
2. The lady does not make her voice soft and attractive
3. There is no fear of falling into sin

For example: a female student may give a talk at school about a particular topic. As long as she speaks appropriately and speaks in her normal voice, there is nothing wrong with this.

In general, when it is necessary for men and women to interact, they should stick to what is necessary. They should avoid joking, entering into inappropriate conversation or becoming over familiar with one another. This also applies to young people. Once we reach the age of puberty, these rules apply to us as well.

In fact, whenever it is possible, we should avoid being around the opposite gender too much. The following story shows how careful the Ahlul Bayt (as) were about this issue.

Once a blind man asked for permission to enter Lady Fāṭimah's house but she kept a veil between them. The Messenger of Allah (saw) noticed her actions and asked: "Why did you keep a veil between you and him when he cannot see you?"

She (as) answered: "O Messenger of Allah, it is true that he cannot see me, but I can see him and he can smell my fragrance."

ATTRACTING ATTENTION

It is ḥarām for a woman to show off in such a way that it will attract a strange man's attention. Therefore, to walk in a certain way, to 'flirt' or to speak in a certain way that attracts attention, is not allowed.

Similarly, it is not permissible for a boy to act in a way that draws attention to himself from the opposite gender.

MIXED GATHERINGS

Islam discourages mixed gatherings. When families or friends gather, the best way is for the males to gather in one place or room, and for the females to gather in another place or room.

It is also important to remember the following points:

- A cousin of the opposite gender is not maḥram to us. For example, a 10 year old girl needs to wear Ḥijāb in front of her 15 year old boy cousin, and she must observe the social rules of Ḥijāb with him

- A brother-in-law or sister-in-law is not maḥram to us. This means a woman must wear Ḥijāb in front of her husband's brother, and she must observe the rules of social Ḥijāb with him

RULES OF TOUCHING

Men and women who are non maḥram are not allowed to have any physical contact at all. Therefore, shaking hands or giving a 'hi-5' to someone of the opposite gender is not allowed. Playing sport with the opposite gender, if it involves physical contact, is also not allowed.

ONLINE INTERACTION

The same rules that apply to face-to-face interaction also apply to online interaction. So when we use Facebook, Twitter, email or chat rooms, we have to follow the same rules of social Ḥijāb that we discussed earlier. We have to make sure:

- To stick to what is necessary
- To avoid joking or being inappropriate in any way
- To avoid 'flirting'

Finally, it is very important to remember that there is no such thing as a 'friendship' between people of the opposite gender. Although we may think or claim we have innocent intentions and that we 'only want to be friends', these interactions often lead to sins and problems. Therefore, it is best to avoid them from the beginning. Whether it is face-to-face or online, we should limit our friends to people of the same gender, and not put ourselves in the way of temptation.

Review Questions:

Q1. In what way should a lady speak to a man when required?

- a. In a rude manner
- b. With clear voice and to the point
- c. With jokes and fun

Q2. With what intention should you use social media?

- a. Due to boredom
- b. Because everyone is doing it
- c. For the intention of seeking nearness to Allah (SWT)

MUSIC AND DANCING

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Know the brief reasons why music is haram
- Understand the things that make music ḥarām
- Know the rules of dancing for men and women in brief

Music and Dancing

In this lesson, we will be discussing music and songs, and learning which types of music and songs are ḥarām and which are okay to listen to.

Listening to ḥarām music is counted as one of the 'great sins'. This is because of the several bad effects it has on the person who listens to it. In this lesson we will look briefly at some of the reasons why music is haram in Islam.



SOME REASONS WHY MUSIC IS HARAM

1. Music can distract us from the reality of our life and cause to spend a lot of time day-dreaming or fantasising. This makes us lazy and it also deadens the heart, making it difficult for us to pay attention in our prayers and to enjoy the spirituality of supplications.
2. Listening to ḥarām music is punishable with the Hell-fire. Imam al- Bāqir (as) said:



"Music is among the things for which Allah has promised the Fire (of Hell). Then he recited the following āyah: "Indeed successful are the believers those who in their prayer are humble and those who keep themselves aloof from Vain (words and deeds)." [23:1-3].

WHAT MAKES MUSIC HARAM?

The criteria of whether music is ḥarām or not is the following:

- If the music is usually played or listened to in gatherings of sin (e.g. nightclubs) then it is ḥarām
- If the music is not primarily used in gatherings of sin, then it is okay to listen to

As for the words of a song, they make the song ḥarām if:

- They talk about sinful things
- They include vain words, this includes 'love songs' or 'romantic songs'
- It is also important to remember that it is ḥarām for a man to listen to a woman singing.

Once a man asked Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) about what kind of singing was ḥarām. The Imam (as) said: 'when you are listening to something, ask yourself that on the Judgment Day, will these words be words of truth or words of falsehood?' The man understood the meaning of the Imam (as).

The Imams (as) have said: 'A house, in which there is singing, is not safe from calamity, and supplications in that house are not answered, and no angels enter such a house'.



The Imams (as) have also said: 'if a person listens to someone, he is worshipping him. If that person speaks for God, then the person is worshipping God, but if that person speaks for Satan, then that person is worshipping Satan'.

DANCING

Dancing encourages immoral deeds and arouses lust and it can also lead to a person losing their dignity. It is usually associated with gatherings of sin.



Particularly for men, dancing is forbidden in all situations.

As for women, some scholars rule that it is okay for women to dance in front of other women if there is no other ḥarām act being committed (e.g. ḥarām music or songs). However, other scholars rule that it is forbidden for women to dance even in front of other women.

Review Questions

Q1. Music is ḥarām if it:

- usually played in gatherings of sin
- Makes a person want to dance
- All music is ḥarām

Q2. If a song is sung by a woman:

- Then a man can listen if the words are not ḥarām
- A man cannot listen at all
- A man can listen

CHARITY

الصدقة

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand the importance of giving wealth as charity in Islam
- Understand that the wealth we have really belongs to Allah (SWT)
- Know that some types of charity are obligatory
- Know that some types of charity are recommended
- Know that the most applicable types of obligatory charity today is
 - Zakātul fitrah
 - Khums
- Briefly discuss Zakatul Fitr and when it should be paid
- Briefly discuss the basic rules of khums

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

Charity

In this lesson, we will be discussing what types of charity we have and why they are important in Islam.

We all know that giving charity means giving wealth to others who are more in need than us for the sake of pleasing Allah (SWT). Giving charity is a very important part of Islam because we must take care of all our brothers and sisters by sharing the wealth that Allah (SWT) has given us. Allah (SWT) has commanded us Muslims to spend generously in His way in many verses of the Holy Qur'an such as the one below:

“Those who spend (in the cause of Allah) privately or publicly, by night and day, have their reward with their Lord. And (on the Day of Resurrection) they shall neither fear nor grieve.” (2:274)

Such charity does not have to be in the form of money, and can be in the form of food, material or property. It can also be spending our time and skills in the way of Allah (SWT) in order to serve the poor and needy. The best example of this is our beloved Imam Ali (as), who dug many, many water wells and gave them to the poor families.



Figure 1: The opening of a water well for the poor in Africa.

IS IT REALLY OUR MONEY?

Sometimes we may think to ourselves that the money in our pockets is our money and that we do not want to share it with anyone. We are forgetting that the money does not really belong to us and it is merely a blessing from Allah (SWT), who has trusted us with this wealth in order to examine us. Allah (SWT) is the Provider and the Sustainer for all of us. Everything in the heavens and the Earth belong to him, including the money in our pockets. Therefore, we are only taking care of the money that Allah (SWT) has trusted us with and we must spend it in His way, and have no right to hold on to it when we do not need it.



RECOMMENDED CHARITY

In Islam, we have some recommended types of charity, and this is generally called *ṣadaqah*. This is when we donate some of our wealth voluntarily to people who are in need. It includes for acts such as sponsoring an orphan overseas, sending money for the homeless and those suffering from hunger, or giving spare clothes to a clothing collection centre for those in need.

A beautiful story of such *ṣadaqah* is the one about the wedding dress of Lady Fāṭimah (as). On the night before her wedding, a poor woman asked her for some clothes. She only had two dresses, one being a new wedding dress which her father the Holy Prophet (saw) had bought her, and another an old dress she had worn for a long time. She immediately gave the dress which she loved more, being the wedding dress, to the poor woman, and wore the old dress herself.

OBLIGATORY CHARITY

In Islam, some types of charity are obligatory and we *must* make sure that we pay them. There are two particular types of obligatory charity that apply to us today:

- **Khums:** A type of charity where one must pay 1/5th of the money they have spare at the end of each year. For example, if you worked in a fruit shop and saved up \$100 after 1 year, you must pay \$20 of that as khums.

Note: if we pay our khums then Allah (SWT) will reward us and make our wealth grow. However, if we do not pay our khums, there are terrible consequences. First and most importantly, our wealth becomes *ḥarām* which means that the money that we have is Islamically unlawful. Blessing is taken away from the money and the things we buy with that money are considered like stolen things.

- **Zakāṭul Fitr:** this charity is paid on the day of 'Īd. Each person must pay as charity enough money to feed a poor person an average meal. Usually, the head of the family (e.g. your father) would pay this on your behalf.

GETTING INVOLVED IN CHARITY

It is very important for us to get involved in giving charity actively. There are two main ways we can do this:

- Save up part of our wealth and give it to the poor
- Help with fundraising projects that our centres, schools or families may be involved in. This is a great way of using our time, and we would be helping very many needy people.

Review Questions

Q1. Which types of charity are obligatory?

- Khums & *Ṣadaqah*
- Khums & Zakāṭul Fitr
- No charity is obligatory

Q2. The money that we have:

- Completely belongs to others.
- Completely belongs to us.
- Belongs to Allah (SWT) and is given to us as a trust

Q3. Khums is:

- 1/5th of our money.
- 1/5th of our spare money at the end of the year
- Recommended but not obligatory



HAJJ

الحج

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand that Hajj is a requirement that all Muslims need to fulfil in their lifetime
- Understand the layout of Mecca
- Understand the conditions that must be fulfilled for one to undertake this journey
- Understand the components of Hajj
- Understand that umrah is another obligation
- Understand briefly the significance of visiting Medinah

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

Aspects Of Hajj

Just like the daily prayers and fasting, Hajj is an obligation upon the Muslims. Hajj is the pilgrimage or journey that a person makes to the holy city of Mecca. Muslims make this journey every year in the month of Dhul Hijjah.

In this lesson, we will discuss a few different aspects of the Hajj.

HAJJ IS A DUTY

It is clear from the Holy Qur'an and the traditions that performance of Hajj is obligatory on every person who has attained puberty and has the means necessary to perform this journey.

Hajj is one of the basic principles of Islam and denying it or rejecting to perform it is major sin. Denial of the obligatory nature of Hajj is equal to disbelief. Allah (SWT) states in the Holy Qur'an:

...وَلِلّٰهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ اِلَيْهِ سَبِيْلًا
وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِيْنَ

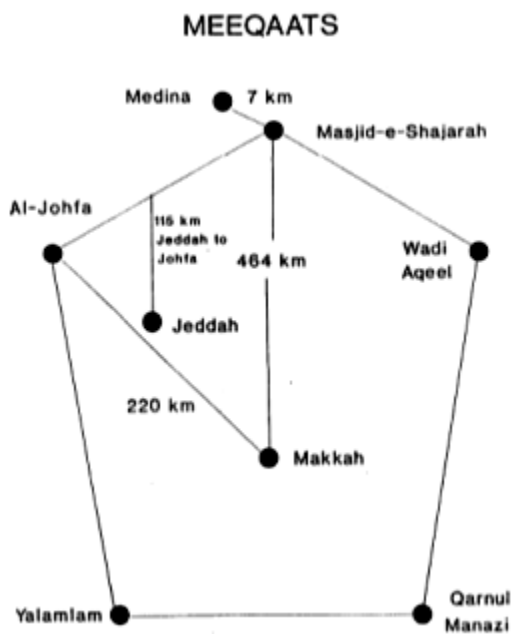
"... Hajj to the House (Ka'bah) is a duty that mankind owes to Allah, those who can afford the expenses, and whoever disbelieves then Allah stands not in need of any of the people ". (3:97)

Imam al-Şāadiq (as) has said:

"Whoever dies without having performed obligatory *Hajj* when he was not prevented by lack of means, illness, or force, dies a Jew or a Christian".
Performing the *Hajj* is obligatory on a person only once in their lifetime.

MĪQAT – BOUNDARIES AROUND MECCA

Any person (not present in Mecca) who wishes to come from far to enter Mecca to perform *Hajj*, will have to put on the *Iḥrām* from any one of the following appointed places.



‘UMRAH

The *Hajj* journey consists of two main parts:

- The ‘Umrah
- The *Hajj* itself

We will discuss the stages of *Hajj* in detail. As for ‘Umrah, it simply consists of some of the stages of *Hajj*, and is like a summarised version of *Hajj*. We will learn more about it in future years.

THE STAGES OF *Hajj*

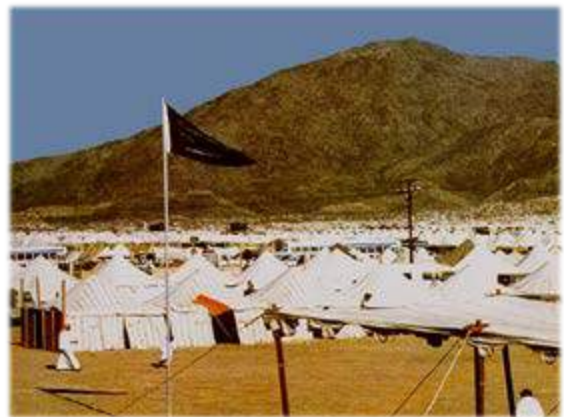
Hajj is a Journey that has different stages and places to visit – once all the stages or parts are completed, only then is the *Hajj* complete.

The *Iḥrām*

The *Hajj* begins when a person wears their *Iḥrām*. This is a special type of simple clothing that people performing *Hajj* are required to wear. Once a person wears the *Iḥrām*, a number of things becoming forbidden for them. For example, they cannot look at a mirror or beautify themselves in any way.

STAYING AT ‘ARAFAH

The next part of the *Hajj* process is to leave Mecca and stay in a desert outside Mecca called ‘Arafah. A person must spend the afternoon of the 9th day of Dhul *Hijjah* in this place. This is the best time to ask Allah (SWT) for forgiveness and for our needs.



STAYING AT MUZDALIFAH

The next step is to stay in a place called al-Muzdalifah between Fajr and sunrise of the 10th day of Dhul *Hijjah*. This is where we collect rocks for the stoning of the pillars.

STONING OF THE PILLARS

On the morning of the tenth day, we head towards Mina, another place on the outskirts of Mecca. Here, on the morning of the 10th, 11th and 12th days, we throw pebbles at a set of three pillars or walls which represent Satan



THE SACRIFICE

Part of performing Ḥajj is to sacrifice an animal and feed its meat to the poor and needy. These days, most people pay to buy an animal and have someone slaughter it on their behalf.

SHAVING OF THE HEAD

After the sacrifice has occurred, men shave their heads, while women cut a small portion of their hair. This is another symbol of a person being freed from their sins. After this, a person can remove their Iẖrām, and most things are permissible for them to do again.

TAWĀF

After shaving the head, we can head back to the Ka'bah in Mecca. Here we must perform Ṭawāf. This means to walk around the Holy Ka'bah seven times, and then perform a two rak'ah prayer at a place called Maqām Ibrāhīm (as). This is the place where this great prophet used to offer prayer to Allah (SWT).



SA'Y

After completing the Ṭawāf, we move to the two hills, Ṣafa and Marwah. Here, we do what Hager, the wife of Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) did thousands of years ago. We walk between the two hills seven times.



ṬAWĀFUL NISĀ'

After completing the walking between the hills, we go back the Ka'bah and perform another seven laps to complete what is called Ṭawāful Nisā'.

STAYING AT MINA

We are required to stay in Mina on the 10th, 11th and 12th days of Dhul Ḥijjah. Once we have done this, and completed all the above actions, our Ḥajj is complete.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF MECCA AND THE PLACES OF IMPORTANCE

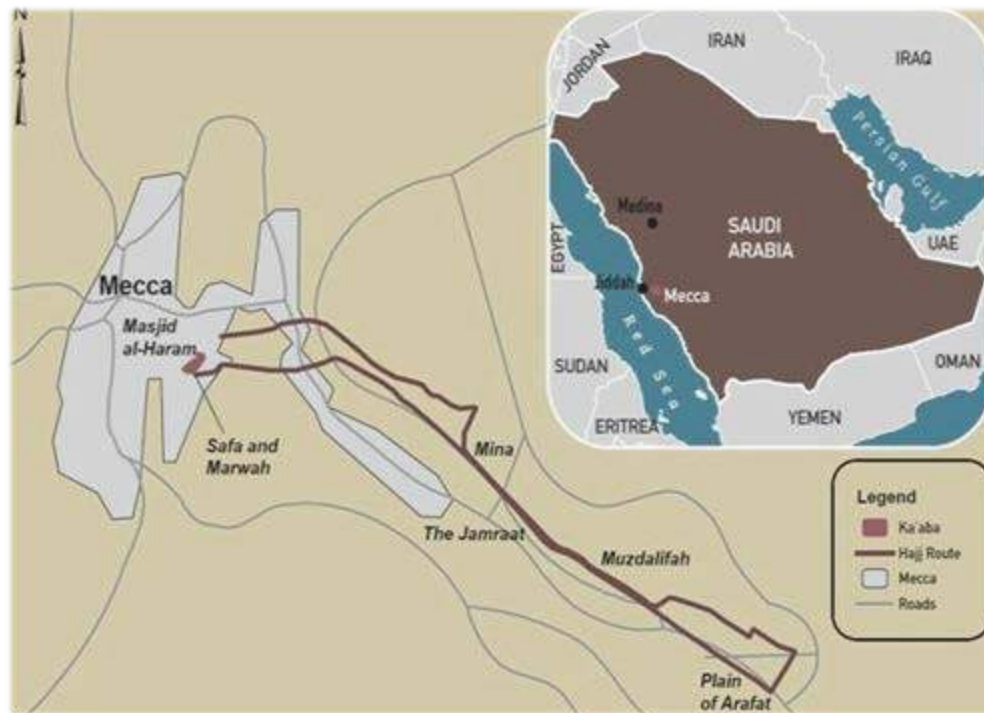
During the Ḥajj, there are a few other places besides the Holy Mosque that pilgrims must visit, as we learnt above.



Masjid al Haram



The Ka'bah



The Plains Around Mecca

WHEN DOES HAJJ BECOME OBLIGATORY?

There are a few conditions that must be met before *Hajj* becomes obligatory:

- The person must be an adult
- The person should have the physical strength and ability to perform *Hajj*
- The person should have sufficient wealth to perform *Hajj*

A person meets all these conditions, then it is obligatory on that person to perform *Hajj*. They are not allowed to delay it for the sake of convenience.

VISITING THE GRAVE OF THE HOLY PROPHET (SAW)

It is highly recommended to visit the grave of the Holy Prophet (saw) and Jannatul Baqi' where four of our Holy Imams (as) are buried. These sites are in the city of Medina, which is not far from Mecca.

When new go to *Hajj*, we usually also visit Medina, to have the honour of visiting the Holy Prophet (saw). There are many hadith that encourage this. For example, Imam al-Reḍā (as) says:

”Then you will visit the tomb of Muḥammad (saw), for the Holy Prophet has said: “Whoever performs the *Hajj* rites but does not visit my grave will be unkind to me.”

And then visit the tombs of the Sayyids (as)”¹

¹Imam al-Reḍā (as) was asked about the reward of visiting the graves of any of the Imams (as). He said:

“He (who visits the grave of any of the Imams) will be rewarded as same as him who visits the tomb of Abu-‘Abdillah (Imam Ḥusayn as). That is Paradise, I swear it by Allah.”¹¹¹

Review Questions

Q1. The *Hajj* Pilgrimage is made up of which two main parts:

- a. *Hajj* and Umrah
- b. Ṣafa and Marwah
- c. Mecca and Medina

Q2. The place where the pilgrims put on the *Iḥrām* before entering Mecca is called:

- a. Mina
- b. Mīqāt
- c. ‘Arafah

Q3. Where do the pilgrims throw the stones at the pillars?

- a. ‘Arafah
- b. Mecca
- c. Mina

ⁱ *Fiqh ur-Ridha*

ⁱⁱ References

- Hajj – The Islamic Pilgrimage, by Sayyid Mohammed Zia Abadi , Ansariyan Publications - <http://www.al-islam.org/thehajj/>
- Hajj Rituals (Manasik-e-Hajj), by Ayatullah Sistani - <http://www.saba-igc.org/Hajj/ManasikHaji-Sistani.pdf>
- Holy Qur'an - al-islam.org/quran & <http://noblequran.com/translation/index.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ *Mustadrak ul-Wasaail*; Kitab al-Hajj, section: Visitation p.189



ENJOINING GOOD AND FORBIDDING EVIL

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

Introduction

“Let there arise from you a group of people inviting what is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong; these are the ones who will be successful.”
(3:104)

In order for religion to progress and for society to be successful, people must guide each other toward piety, by encouraging each other to do good, and discouraging each other from doing evil. This action is compulsory for those who believe in God and the Day of Judgment. Giving sincere advice is not, as some may argue, interfering in someone else's business; rather it is a valuable favour and one of the best forms of charity.

ENJOINING GOOD AND FORBIDDING EVIL

To be able to encourage good deeds and discourage and forbid evil deeds, it is important to know what the meaning of this is. We live in a world where wrong actions are considered normal and are commonly done by so many people – does this mean that the action is good? No!

Good and evil is defined by what Allah (SWT) has ordered us through the Holy Qur'an and the authentic narrations. It is not what we or the people in our community or family decide. It is what Allah (SWT) decides.

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand the meaning of enjoining good and forbidding evil
- Understand the importance of this obligation by referring to the Qur'an and narrations in relation to this topic
- Understand the different ways of meeting these obligations
- Review the importance of listening to advice when it is given to us



Let us take a look at some examples from the Qur'an and Ḥadith about the meaning and importance of enjoining good and forbidding evil.

“The Believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practise regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power, Wise.” (9:71)

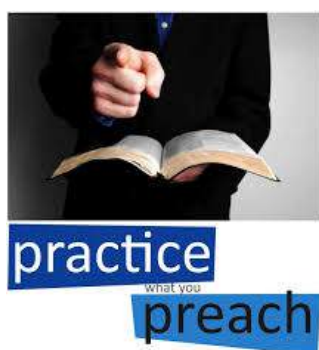
The Prophet (saw) said, ‘Whoever enjoins good and prohibits wrong is the deputy of Allah and the deputy of His Prophet on the earth.’ⁱ

Imam Ali (as) said, ‘The basis of Islamic law is the enjoinder of good and the prohibition of wrong.’ⁱⁱ

Imam al-Ḥusayn (as) said, ‘It is not permissible for a believing eye to watch Allah being disobeyed and close without first changing the situation.’ⁱⁱⁱ

THE CONDITIONS OF THE OBLIGATION

Imam al-Sadiq (as) said, ‘Verily the one who enjoins good and prohibits wrong should possess three qualities: he should act upon that which he enjoins and abstain from that which he prohibits; he must be just with regards to what he enjoins and just with regards to what he prohibits; and he must be gentle in what he enjoins and gentle in what he prohibits.’^{iv}



From this ḥadith, we can see that not everyone can enjoin good and forbid evil – because no one will listen to someone who does not at least try to practice what they preach. Therefore, the conditions for meeting this obligation are:

1. Practice what you preach
2. Be just in what you enjoin
3. Be gentle in your approach (to guide another person) – Do not blame, abuse or insult someone who is doing something wrong. Also, do not force someone to do something good. Encourage them and educate them – do not impose on them.
4. You must have knowledge of what you are preaching or teaching – you cannot guide someone if you do not have correct knowledge
5. You must have the physical and mental ability to guide another person. If performing the obligation would cause significant harm to your life, wealth or health, then it is not obligatory on you.



THE LEVELS OF ENJOINING GOOD AND FORBIDDING EVIL

We may come across many different situations where we see something wrong happening or where we feel we want to do something good.

Sometimes, we attend a program at the centre and there is a fund raiser auction to support needy orphans

in another country. There are so many people donating money, but unfortunately, we might not have enough money to give. In such a situation, even the desire itself or the intention is enough for us to attain the reward, because that intention is all we can give to encourage the good that is happening.

In the same way, when we see something wrong happening in school, for example we see another boy being bullied, but we are not strong enough to say or do anything to stop it, but in our heart we hate the bully's actions – this is also enough to give us the reward of hating what is evil.



However, we must remember the key in this situation is that we must act according to our capacity. If we have the money to give to charity, but we only 'wish' it – it will not be sufficient. Also, if we are strong enough to speak against or do something to stop another boy being bullied, we must take that action. In the case of forbidding evil, it is important to remember that to remain silent and wish it not to happen, when we can do something more is not only wrong, but it can also be punishable especially if we don't do something to stop evil or wrong doing.

The Prophet (saw) said: 'He who sees wrong being done should redress the situation with his own hand, and if he cannot do so then with his tongue, and if he cannot do so then with his heart [disapproving the act], and that is the weakest level of faith.'^v

Therefore, in the case of enjoining good and forbidding evil, there are different levels:

1. To take action to stop the wrong or forbidden action
2. To speak against the evil
3. To hate it and disapprove it in your heart and mind

SOME EXAMPLES OF ENJOINING GOOD AND FORBIDDING EVIL

Enjoining or encouraging good:

1. Getting a group of friends together and working on a project to help orphans.
2. Taking part in a fundraiser to help collect money to buy new furniture for the classrooms at an Islamic school
3. Inviting your friend to attend the Islamic centre for a lecture on a special occasion.
4. Encouraging a friend in school to pray on time and to pray every day.

Forbidding Evil:

1. Telling your friends not to do bad things like smoking or lying or skipping class
2. Stopping another person from bullying someone who is weaker or speaking against it or reporting it to an authority.
3. Reporting a crime or a wrong action to an authority if you are unable to stop it from happening.
4. Stopping a fight from happening at school

ENJOINING GOOD AND FORBIDDING EVIL AT DIFFERENT LEVELS

As the common phrase goes 'Charity begins at home', and the same goes for these obligations. It starts at home with us and our families.

However, it does not stop there. As Muslims, we must practice enjoining good and forbidding evil at every level of our environment. This means, with ourselves, our

family, our community, our country and even the world. You might ask - how can we enjoin good and forbid evil on a large scale like at a national or international level?

The answer to this is creating awareness of good moral behaviour and speaking out against immorality and bad conduct which is unhealthy for the society. Some common examples are:

Enjoining Good Examples:

1. Writing to a fast food chain store or supermarket to introduce the selling of ḥalāl food or meat
2. Writing to your minister to ask the government to allow building of a mosque
3. Helping orphans in poorer countries by collecting money and fundraising in the community, school and other places and sending the money to the orphans

Forbidding Evil Examples:

1. Writing to the Prime Minister encouraging them not to support unjust wars and invasions
2. Taking part in a protest that is organized to create awareness and show disagreement against waging an unjust war against another country
3. Writing or speaking out against anything wrong that is happening in the world today



Remember, enjoining good and forbidding evil affects the whole society. Imagine if you were in a boat and the person in the seat next to you starts making a hole under his seat. Will you just remain silent and say 'he is making a hole under his seat so it is none of my business?' Instead, you will stop him from doing it because his action will affect the whole boat and everyone can drown because of one person's action. In the same way, the human society is like a boat, if someone does something wrong, he must be advised to stop and at the same time we must encourage each other to do good, so we all remain safe, happy and successful.

Review Questions

Q1. How do we know what is good and what is bad:

- a. Our feelings tell us what is good and bad
- b. The newspapers tell us what is good and bad
- c. Whatever Allah (SWT) tells us through the Holy Qur'an and Ahlul Bayt (as)

Q2. What is the lowest level of discouraging or forbidding evil?

- a. To act with whatever means we have to stop the wrong
- b. To hate it in our hearts and reject it in our minds
- c. To write and speak against it

Q3. How do we practice guiding people to do what is right and avoid what is wrong?

- a. By being rude and impolite
- b. By being wise and gentle
- c. By forcing someone

Lesson 2: How to Enjoin Good and Forbid Evil

In the previous lesson we learnt about the importance of enjoining good and forbidding evil and the effects this has on the individual, the family, community and even on a national and global scale. Even though anyone can do the act of enjoining good and forbidding evil – they have to know what obligations they have by doing this.

This lesson will discuss the qualities, obligations and limitations of the person doing the act of enjoining good and forbidding evil and the situations in which we should do it or in some case should not do it.

Imam al-Ṣādiq (as): “When the following āyah was revealed: ‘O you, who believe, protect yourselves and your families from the Hell-fire...’ a man from among the Muslims sat and began crying. He said: ‘I have been unable to protect myself, and now I have been made responsible over my family as well’. The Messenger of Allah told him: ‘it is sufficient for you to command them to that which you command yourself and forbid them from that which you forbid yourself’”.

THE QUALITIES OF THE ONE WHO ENJOINS GOOD AND FORBIDS EVIL

1. Ability
2. One who is obeyed
3. Knowledge
4. Application to oneself

Mas’adah ibn Ṣadaqah narrates: “Imam al-Ṣādiq as was asked about enjoining good and forbidding evil, is it the obligation of the entire community? He (as) said: ‘No’.

It was said: ‘why’. He (As) said: ‘it is the obligation of the one who has the ability and who is obeyed, one who knows what is good and what is evil.’

Ability - means that the person who wants to enjoin good has the skills and facilities to be able to guide the person who is doing wrong. An example of ability could be that the person who wants to enjoin good and forbid evil shares a close relationship with the person who is doing wrong, for instance a close friend, or husband and wife.



The probability of affecting the person: if we feel that our advice will have an effect on the person, then we are obligated to say or do something. If we feel that it will not, or might make them worse, then we do not need to say anything. Unfortunately, some people reach such a stage of stubbornness that when we give them advice about an issue (e.g. ḥijāb) they close up and become hostile, and it may even make them more stubborn. So before we give advice, we should assess how it will be received.



Knowledge means that the person should know the difference between right and wrong first, before they tell others what to do. It is impossible to guide someone when you yourself are lost.

Application to one self – this is the most important factor in achieving an effect of enjoining good and forbidding evil. Simply, it means practice what you preach. Your advice will have a much stronger impact if you practice what you tell another person.



Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur’an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ

“O you who believe! why do you say that which you do not do? It is most hateful to Allah that you should say that which you do not do.” (61:2-3)

THE BASIC OBLIGATIONS

In addition to the above qualities of the person giving advice and enjoining good, there are certain responsibilities in the manner which this act is performed.

- 1. The first obligation is that the adviser should be polite and courteous and not embarrass the other person.**

There is another beautiful story from the life of Imam Ḥasan (as) and Imam Ḥusayn (as) which shows us how we can advise others without embarrassing them or making them feel humiliated.

One day, the two Imams, who were young boys at the time, went to the mosque to pray. There they noticed an old man who was performing the Wuḍū' in the wrong way. In order to avoid hurting his feelings by just telling him directly, they made a plan between themselves, to show him the right way to perform Wuḍū'.



The Imams asked the man to judge between them as to whose Wuḍū' was more correct. Once the man saw them performing Wuḍū', he realised he was doing it wrong and fixed his Wuḍū'. Furthermore, he did not feel at all offended or embarrassed.

2. We should be fair in giving advice

When we are giving advice, we should make sure that we are doing it fairly and justly, with a pure intention. We should not be doing it simply to pick out others' mistakes or to make ourselves feel superior.

IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING TO ADVICE



As human beings we are always in need of guidance so we can achieve the best from our potential. One of the keys to success is seeking advice from successful and wise people.

We have learnt about many stories in the Qur'an and history of the Prophets where people refused to listen to advice, because they were selfish. They rejected listening to someone else's point of view and in the process they ended up rejecting the truth for which they were punished. Therefore, not listening to advice can lead us far away from the truth and can land us in many problems.



- a. Because it helps us avoid mistakes
- b. It makes us humble
- c. Both of the above

ⁱ [Mustadrak al-Wasail, v. 12, p. 179, no. 13817]

ⁱⁱ [Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 6817]

ⁱⁱⁱ [Tanbih al-Khawahir, v. 2, p. 179]

^{iv} [al-Khisal, p. 109, no. 79]

^v [al-Tarhib wa al-Tarhib, v. 3, p. 223, no. 1]

^{vi} **References:**

- Lecture notes on Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil – Sheikh Mansour
- Hadith Databank – Dar al Hadith - http://www.darolhadith.com/modules.php?name=my_AlfabetMenu
- Discovering Islam, by Imam Sayed Moustafa Al-Qazwini – Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil - <http://www.al-islam.org/discovering-islam/14.htm>
- Holy Quran – Sura Tauba, 9, Verse 71

Let's look at some of the benefits of listening to advice

- It helps us increase our knowledge
- It solves some of our problems by giving us guidance in the right direction
- It protects us from making mistakes
- It builds strong relationships as people consult one another, there is sharing of knowledge and compassion between them which in turn creates unity and wellbeing for the community

^{vi}By listening to advice, the person listening must take into consideration the words of advice and then make a decision themselves. After they have made their decision, they should have trust in Allah (SWT).

Review Questions

1. What is one of the qualities of the person enjoining good and forbidding evil?

- a. He should be male
- b. He must be rich
- c. He must practice what he preaches

2. If you think that a person will not listen to advice, you should:

- a. Force him to listen
- b. Punish him
- c. Ignore him

3. Why should we always be eager to listen to advice?



LAWS OF TRANSACTION

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

Rules of Transactions

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Know that Islam has rules for all aspects of our lives including the economic aspects
- Understand that business is encouraged in Islam
- Understand that we are not allowed to buy and sell certain items
- Understand that participating in a ḥarām transaction in any way is not permissible
- Know some of the basic rules of transactions

One of the fundamental aspects of our lives today is that we are constantly using money to buy and sell items and services. You may get money from your parents to buy clothes, shoes or food and you may earn money to buy the things that you want like mowing the lawn or washing cars.

Islam encourages trade and transactions. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah (SWT) says:

“and Allah has allowed trading and forbidden usury”
[2:275]

Imam al-Bāqir (as) said:

"He who seeks for sustenance in this world in order to be independent of people for his needs, to provide for his family members, and to stretch affection unto his neighbours, will meet Allah, Almighty and Glorious, on the Day of Judgement while his face will be as bright as the full moon."ⁱ

It is very important that we remember that money needs to be earned. We should not, as Muslims, rely on anyone, beg for money or keep asking our parents, friends or siblings for it. We have to try to be independent of others and help our parents when we can.

As this is such an important part of our lives, Allah (SWT) in His infinite wisdom and mercy has set out certain laws to ensure the society is protected from cheating, discrimination, unfair practices, extravagance (isrāf) etc. In this lesson we shall discuss some of the basic rules of

transactions that are important for us to know and remember.

ḤARĀM TRANSACTIONSⁱⁱ

We shall briefly discuss the rules regarding transactions that are not permissible in Islam:

- It is ḥarām to buy or sell any Najis ‘ayn item (this means something which is najis in itself). This includes things like:
 - Dogs (unless they are hunting dogs)
 - Alcohol
 - Pigs
 - Animals killed in a non-Islamic way

This means that we cannot buy puppies as pets or buy food that has alcohol even if we want to give it to those who are non-Muslims.

It also means we cannot be involved in selling these things.

- It is ḥarām to buy or sell any stolen property or property taken from others by force. Sometimes we have to use common sense to know when an item is stolen such as the person we are buying from, the cost of the item (compared to the normal cost), lack of receipts or accessories etc...
- It is ḥarām to buy or sell any items that are used for ḥarām acts mostly – like gambling tools
- To cheat in any transaction is also ḥarām. This rule applies whether the other person is a Muslim or not. The Holy Prophet (saw) has said:

"If a person makes a deceitful transaction with the Muslims, or puts them to a loss, or cheats them, he is not one of my followers. And when a person cheats his fellow Muslim, Allah deprives him of Blessings in his livelihood, closes the means of his earnings, and leaves him to himself."ⁱⁱⁱ

- It is ḥarām to use money that does not belong to us or to use money without permission- We cannot purchase things from iTunes or online with our parents' credit card without supervision or permission from our parents.

DISCOURAGED TRANSACTIONS

- Buying things we do not need
- Buying things that have no benefit

- Spending more than we can afford to
- Buying more than that we need
- Not buying our needs even though we can afford to (so not being miserly in our spending)

HELPING IN A ḤARĀM TRANSACTION IS ALSO ḤARĀM

It can happen sometimes that our friends or family even may ask us to buy something for them which is not permissible for us to buy. For example, when we are at a footy match, a friend may ask us to buy them a pork sausage hot dog for instance. This is not permissible and we are assisting in a ḥarām act.^{iv}

We have to be very polite and refuse to assist in the buying and selling of ḥarām things.

Class activity

Make 4 columns on a piece of paper. In the first column write down all the things you have bought over the past 2 weeks that you can remember including food. Label the other 3 columns, Permissible, Disliked, Not permissible and put each item you have bought into one of these 3 categories with the help of your teacher.

Review Questions

Q1. My friend at school bought this brand new play station latest release game which normally costs \$200 for \$20 from a shady character who normally hangs out outside your school. He asks you if you want to buy it. What should you do?

- a. Buy it and convince yourself it is a great bargain
- b. Ask him if it is stolen or genuine and avoid buying it.
- c. Buy 5 copies and sell them each at \$50

Q2. I have an old Nintendo game that I have played with for a long time and want to sell it, should I:

- a. Sell it to someone who is young or ignorant about the latest games and convince him that it's a latest new release game and get a good price for it
- b. Advertise it honestly and sell it to anyone who will pay the best price

- c. Sell it as a new release new game and use any money I get to sponsor an orphan or give other forms of charity.

ⁱ Al-Kafi, vol. 5, p. 78

ⁱⁱ It may be prudent for teachers to browse through the basic rules of transactions to ensure that they are able to answer secondary questions related to this topic accurately. More details are available <http://www.al-islam.org/laws/transactions1.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ Cheating involves but is not limited to, overstating or exaggerating merits of an item or service, over pricing an item or service, putting impossible conditions, charging interest, being unfair in any form.

^{iv} Parents and teachers may want to discuss more relevant examples with their class.



SOCIAL RULES

IN ISLAM



BACKBITING

SOCIAL ISLAM

LEVEL 3

الغيبة

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand what it means to backbite
- Be able to recognise backbiting
- Understand that backbiting (or listening to it) is forbidden in Islam
- Understand the consequences of backbiting in this world and the next
- Learn basic tips on avoiding backbiting

Backbiting

Abu Dhar, a very close companion of the Prophet, once asked the Prophet (SAW):

“O Messenger of Allah, what is ghībah (backbiting)?”

The Prophet (saw) replied:

“It is to mention about your brother that which he detests”

Abu Dhar asked:

“O Messenger of Allah, what if that which is mentioned about a person is true?”

To which the Prophet (saw) replied:

“Know that when you mention that which is in him, you have committed ghībah (backbiting), and when you mention that which is not in him, then you have slandered him”ⁱ

Backbiting means to talk negatively about someone when they are not there. If, for example, you tell your friend Ahmad about the faults of your other friend Ali when Ali is not present, then this is backbiting. The person saying these words and the person listening to them are both committing a sin.

AVOIDING BACKBITING

Avoiding backbiting is one way of guarding the tongue. Just like minding the tongue, backbiting is not *only* physically talking and saying bad things behind someone’s back, but also includes when you say something about

someone that they would not like on Facebook, email, Twitter etc...

In the Holy Qur'an, Allah (SWT) tells us that the reality of backbiting is like eating your brother's flesh. So before we say anything negative about anyone, we should try to picture this reality and stop ourselves from saying these words.

"...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) Allah..." (49:12)

BACKBITING LEADS TO HATRED



Backbiting creates many problems within families and communities. Many families break up and get involved in family conflict because of backbiting. Our communities often also face problems and break up because of backbiting.

Another consequence of backbiting which we learn from the Prophet (saw) is that when someone backbites, their good deeds are transferred to the person they have spoken badly about. Here is a story to help explain this a little better:

In the time of our first few Imams, there were two men; for the sake of the story let's call them Haroon and Khalid.

One day Khalid started telling everybody bad things about Haroon. After a few days Haroon heard about this. The first thing he did was to go home and put all his money and gold and silver in a big bag and then took the bag to Khalid's house.

When Khalid saw Haroon coming he became scared because he thought that Haroon had come to beat him up. Khalid came out of his house and fell on his knees and begged to Haroon: 'O Haroon, I am really sorry, I did not mean to tell tales about you, O please do not beat me!'

Haroon said: 'I have not come to beat you, I have come to give you this money!'

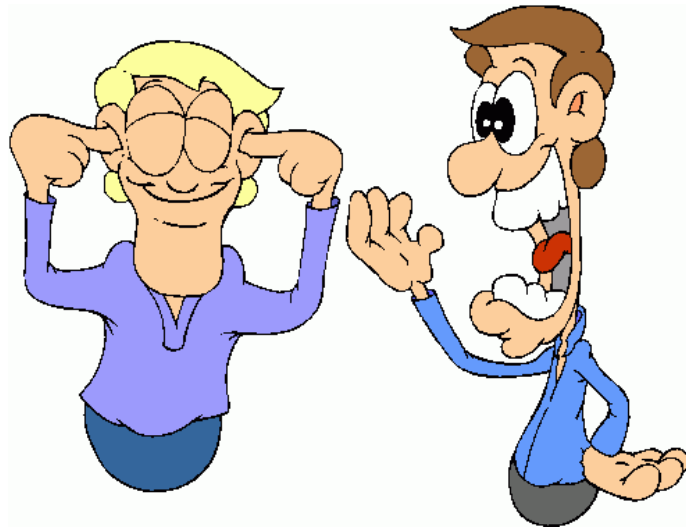
Khalid stood up and asked: 'Why are you giving me wealth when I have insulted you and spoiled your name among the people?'

Haroon replied: 'The Holy Prophet (saw) has said that if one person backbites of another, the rewards of the first person gets transferred to the second.' he continued, "So now that you have spoken bad of me behind my back, I am thanking you for giving me all your Thawāb. This money is too little for the amount of Thawāb that you have given me.'

Think about it – is it worth losing all the rewards we have gained for our good actions because of our backbiting?

PRACTICAL TIPS ON AVOIDING BACKBITING

- If you are going to a gathering/party try to pre-plan topics you are going to talk about. For example, talk about football, school, what you did during the holidays etc. When you pre-plan you will always find something to talk about rather than letting the conversation steer towards a conversation about someone else who is not there.
- If you are not the one backbiting but others around you are; then there are a few different ways this can be handled. Here are a few:
 - 1) Defend the person who is being criticised. For example, if you go to your friend's party and they are talking behind your other friend's back then try and stand up for your friend. This is the best option.
 - 2) Very politely tell the person talking that it is bad to talk about someone behind their back and that we should talk about something else. Remember to be polite and not insult him in front of others.
 - 3) Leave the gathering – unless we really cannot for e.g.s we are with parents or we are in the car



Class Activity

Think of ways you can avoid backbiting or being part of a gathering where backbiting is taking place. Brainstorm your ideas and then share it with the class so that we can all get ideas. ⁱⁱ

Remember, if Allah (SWT) wanted he could have shown our faults to people – however He conceals our faults. Therefore, in order to practice this attribute of Allah (SWT) let us try to stop backbiting and spreading other people's faults.

Review Questions

Q1. Ghībah or backbiting is:

- a) To say something about someone that is not true
- b) To say something about someone that they would not like us to say behind their back
- c) To insult someone to their face

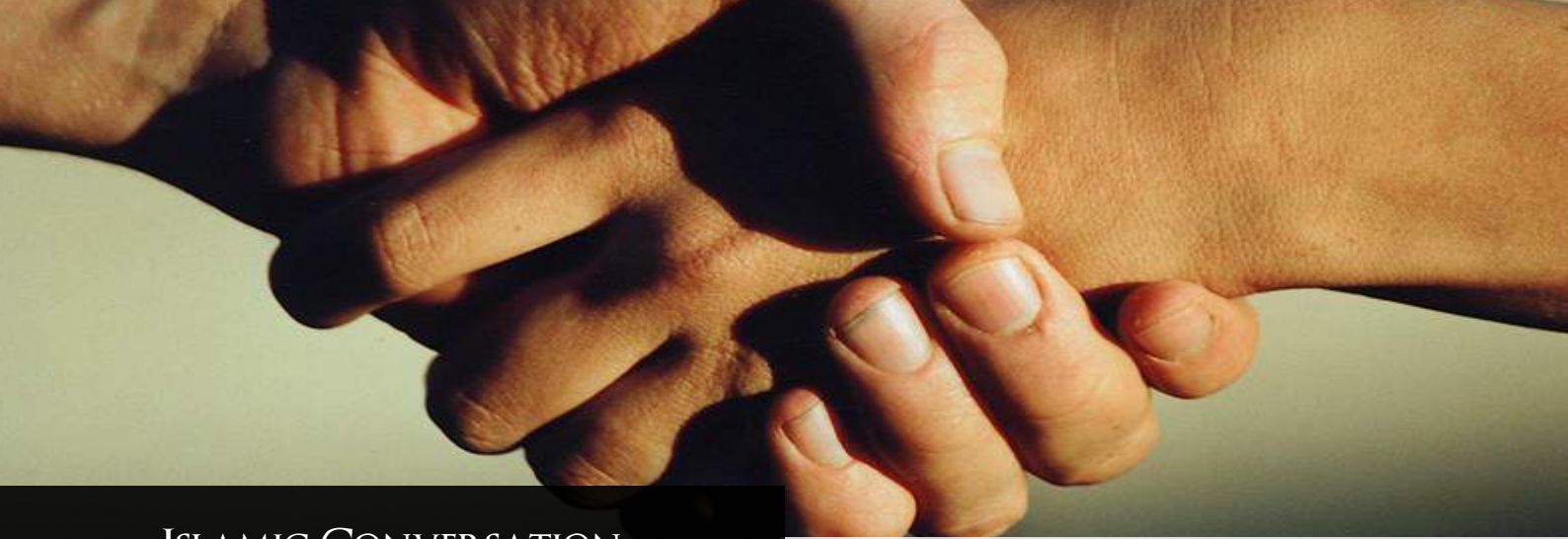
Q2. Saying something negative about someone on the internet is:

- a) Not backbiting
- b) Is an example of backbiting
- c) Is okay because we are not saying it physically

ⁱⁱ Bibliography:

- <http://www.madressa.net/akhlaq/class-8/264-gheebat-a-tohmat-backbiting>

- <http://www.islamic-laws.com/backbiting.htm>
- <http://quran.al-islam.org/>
- ⁱⁱ <http://www.islamic-laws.com/backbiting.htm>



ISLAMIC CONVERSATION

SOCIAL ISLAM

LEVEL 3

HOW TO GREET OTHERS

When we see someone, we should:

- Make eye contact
- Smile
- Greet them with words

If we see our fellow Muslim brothers and sisters, we are also expected to:

- Say 'assalāmu 'alaykum' or similar greetings.
- Shake hands (if they are of the same gender)
- Hug one another on special occasions (again if they are of the same gender)



ACTIVITY: NADIA AND HER UNCLES

Nadia has two uncles. One of them is rich but the other is not as well off. Whenever she sees her rich uncle, she greets him very nicely, knowing that he will give her gifts. However, when she sees her poorer uncle, she barely says 'salam'. Can you think of what she is doing wrong?

Islam teaches us to make sure that we do not treat anyone better or worse for the wrong reasons, especially in our greetings. In our example, how should Nadia greet and treat her two uncles?

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand the Islamic etiquette for greetings
- Discuss that we should not favour people over others in greetings for the wrong reasons
- Understand that Islam encourages humour in conversation
- Know the limits we have to keep when making jokes
- Discuss the issue of 'pranks'

Islamic Conversation

As we all know, Islam is a religion which has the perfect guidelines for everything in our lives. These guidelines include how we should go about our greetings and conversations between each other, which we will be learning more about in this lesson.

GREETING KINDLY

Islam encourages us to greet all people in a friendly and kind manner. We should make sure that we are always the first to start a greeting as this is the tradition of our Holy Prophet (saw).

If someone else greets us first, then we have to make sure we reply in an equal manner, though we are recommended to reply with a better or longer greeting.

Salim is very popular at school. Whenever Ahmad meets him, he makes sure to greet him nicely, and talk to him as much as he can. Ali is not so popular, and when Ahmad meets Ali, he says a quick 'salam' and then walks off. Are Ahmad's actions right? What he could do to correct his actions?

HUMOUR

Islam is a religion which encourages humour. This is shown to us by the example of our Holy Prophet (saw) as well as the Ahlul Bayt. You may have heard the story of when the Holy Prophet told an old lady that old women will not enter paradise. He then explained that they enter paradise as young girls, and told the lady that he jokes but says only the truth.

This is the model that we have to follow. When making jokes or words of humour, we must make sure that we do so within the boundaries of Islam, by:

- Never ever lying.
- Never hurting someone's feelings, making fun of others, or being racist.
- Not becoming a clown by joking way too often as others will see us as foolish and never take us seriously.
- Not disrespecting holy or solemn occasions or places.
- Not becoming over-friendly with the opposite gender. This does not include the elderly and those who are *mahram* to us.

PRANKS



We sometimes have some fun performing practical jokes or 'pranks' on others. This can sometimes be okay but we have to make sure that we are very careful so that we do not unintentionally harm ourselves or others.

Imagine scaring an old lady, who may have heart conditions. Or imagine ordering pizza to a fake address

and therefore wasting the time and food of others. Would we like to be treated like this?

We must definitely stay away from such evil pranks and make sure that we do not harm others in order to make ourselves feel happy.

GOOD JOKES



Can you think of some good jokes that do not go against our Islamic values?

Here are some examples:

- Two hats were hanging on a hat rack in the hall. One hat said to the other, "You stay here, I'll go on a head."
- What do you call a skeleton that rests all day?
Lazy bones.
- How do you sink a submarine full of fools?
Knock on the door.
- What do you call cheese that is not yours?
Nacho cheese!

Review Questions

Q1. Islam encourages to:

- a. Greet others kindly, and be the first to greet.
- b. Wait for others to greet us.
- c. Not greet others.

Q2. Islam encourages humour, but we have to make sure that we:

- a. Never be serious.
- b. Never lie, never hurt others, and do not become a 'clown'
- c. Never laugh.

**Q3. If someone says Assalāmu ‘Alaykum to us,
which is the best reply?**

- a. ‘Salam’
- b. ‘Wa Alāykum Assalam’
- c. ‘Wa Alāykum Assalam Wa Raḥmatullāh Wa Barakātuh’

BEING SOCIABLE

SOCIAL ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand what it means to have a friend
- Understand that Islam encourages friendship
- Understand that some characteristics make it hard for a person to make friends
- Understand that a good friend is one who is there in times of need

Being Sociable

From previous years we have learnt that in Islam, it is encouraged to be sociable. Being sociable means communicating and engaging (socialising) with other people around us, especially with our fellow Muslims. We will learn more about why we should be sociable today and how to become sociable today.

FRIEND OR ACQUAINTANCE?

In our life, we may know a lot of people. We know all our teachers, our classmates, our grocery store owner, our colleagues, and the list goes on. But who are our friends? Those who are closest with us and share similar interests and beliefs are our friends. We usually spent a lot of time with friends and care about them. Others who we know and see regularly but have not built a relationship with or simply have added as a 'Facebook friend' are classified as our acquaintances.

ISLAM & FRIENDSHIP



From the moment we are born, we constantly need interactions with those around us. Islam recognizes this and encourages us to make connections with our society and to build friendships with other good Muslims in our community. A good Muslim has many good friends who all are practicing believers and remind each other of Allah. Prophet Jesus (as) describes a good friend as:

"One whose presence reminds you of Allah, his speech increases your knowledge and his deed inspires you (to do well) for the next world." [1]

HAVING NO FRIENDS

Imagine that we had no friends. What would happen?

- We would have no one to talk to or gain support from, no one to share our moments with and no one to seek advice from. We would become very lonely.
- We would have a bad attitude towards others in society and not be able to be a useful member of our community because we isolate ourselves from them.
- We would not share our thoughts and feelings with others, and would want everything for ourselves and become very selfish.

WHAT DRIVES AWAY FRIENDS?

There are some qualities in us that can drive good people away from us and prevent friendships from being possible. For example, if we continuously use bad language towards others, they would want to keep away from us. These bad characteristics include:

- Continuously arguing with others.
- Being greedy and wanting more than our share.
- Being rude and disrespectful towards those potential friends around us
- Spreading gossip or bad stories about others (tale bearing)

If we want other good people to feel comfortable with us, we must make sure that we are generally kind to other and keep away from these bad qualities.

Class Activity: Role Play

Arrange yourselves into groups of four students. Each group should come up with a scenario where a person does something that would annoy the people around them and make them lose friends. Once you have checked your story with your teacher, you can act it out in front of the class. You can use some of the examples above as part of your stories.

A FRIEND IN NEED IS A FRIEND IN DEED

Imagine that you had broken your arm during a soccer accident and were stuck in hospital. You were there all by yourself and felt very lonely.

Now, read each of the following options regarding what a good friend would do and raise your hands when the teacher announces the friend you believe is the best and nicest.

Mahdi comes to visits you and spends an hour by your side, giving you some gifts to cheer you up and promising he would come back and visit you tomorrow.

Akbar calls you on the phone and speaks to you for a few minutes and tells you all about how fun the soccer game was today at school.

Husayn comes to visit you just before prayer time and asks how you are. He then helps you make wudhu and pray, then recites with you du'ā' for your speedy recovery and spends time talking and comforting you before promising to come again at the same time tomorrow.

Remember that the best friend is one who offers you the most when you are in need. Therefore, the saying goes that a friend (when you are) in need is a friend indeed (a true friend).



ISLAMIC GREETINGS

Part of maintaining good friendships is to know how to greet each other. Let us quickly learn some rules of Islamic greetings.

Islam encourages us to greet all people in a friendly and kind manner. We should make sure that we are always the first to start a greeting as this is the tradition of our Holy Prophet (saw).

If someone else greets us first, then we have to make sure we reply in an equal manner, though we are recommended to reply with a better or longer greeting.

HOW TO GREET OTHERS

When we see someone, we should:

- Make eye contact
- Smile
- Greet them with words

If we see our fellow Muslim brothers and sisters, we are also expected to:

- Say 'assalāmu 'alaykum' or similar greetings.
- Shake hands (if they are of the same gender)
- Hug one another on special occasions (again if they are of the same gender)



Class Discussion

Nadia has two uncles. One of them is rich but the other is not as well off. Whenever she sees her rich uncle, she greets him very nicely, knowing that he will give her gifts. However, when she sees her poorer uncle, she barely says 'salam'. Can you think of what she is doing wrong?

Salim is very popular at school. Whenever Ahmad meets him, he makes sure to greet him nicely, and talk to him as much as he can. Ali is not so popular, and when Ahmad meets Ali, he says a quick 'salam' and then walks off. Are Ahmad's actions right? What he could do to correct his actions?

HUMOUR

Islam is a religion which encourages humour. However, there are rules for jokes in Islam.

This is the model that we have to follow. When making jokes or words of humour, we must make sure that we do so within the boundaries of Islam, by:

- Never ever lying.
- Never hurting someone's feelings, making fun of others, or being racist.
- Not becoming a clown by joking way too often as others will see us as foolish and never take us seriously.
- Not disrespecting holy or solemn occasions or places.
- Not becoming over-friendly with the opposite gender. This does not include the elderly and those who are *mahram* to us.

GOOD JOKES

Can you think of some good jokes that do not go against our Islamic values?

Here are some examples:

- Two hats were hanging on a hat rack in the hall. One hat said to the other, "You stay here, I'll go on a head."
- What do you call a skeleton that rests all day? *Lazy bones*.
- How do you sink a submarine full of fools? *Knock on the door*.
- What do you call cheese that is not yours? *Nacho cheese!*



Review Questions

Q1. A good friend is one who:

- Reminds of us of playing soccer.
- Reminds us of watching TV.
- Reminds us of Allah (SWT)

Q2. Islam encourages us to:

- Keep ourselves away from other humans.
- Build strong friendships with good Muslims

Q3. We won't make good friends if:

- We are rude and disrespectful.
- We are kind and pious.
- We are well mannered.

Q4. If we have no friends we may become:

- Cheerful
- Sociable
- Lonely

Q5. Islam encourages to:

- Greet others kindly, and be the first to greet.
- Wait for others to greet us.
- Not greet others.

Q6. Islam encourages humour, but we have to make sure that we:

- Never be serious.
- Never lie, never hurt others, and do not become a 'clown'
- Never laugh.

Q7. If someone says Assalāmu 'Alaykum to us, which is the best reply?

- 'Salam'
- 'Wa Alāykum Assalam'
- 'Wa Alāykum Assalam Wa Raḥmatullāh Wa Barakātuh'



NEIGHBOURS AND GUESTS

الأحسان بالجار

SOCIAL ISLAM

LEVEL 3

NEIGHBOURS AND GUESTS

In this lesson, we will discuss the Islamic rules and recommendations on how we should treat our neighbours and our guests.

NEIGHBOURS

Our Holy Prophet Muḥammad (saw) has taught us that a neighbour is not just the one who lives next door to us, but includes all those up to forty houses in all directions¹. This pretty much covers our whole neighbourhood. Your neighbour is also someone you are sitting next to, standing next to (like on a bus) etc...

The neighbour holds a special status in Islam. Islam encourages Muslims to treat their neighbours in a gentle way that reflects the true spirit of Islam especially with people of other faiths. It makes no difference whether the neighbours are Muslim or non-Muslim. It is for this reason that we should be good with our neighbours and show them the best of Islam.

How should we show kindness and goodness towards our neighbours?

“Worship Allah and join none with Him (in worship); and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the poor, the neighbour who is near of kin, the neighbour who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those (slaves) whom your right hands possess”. (4:36)

From the above ayah, we can see that the Holy Qur’an clearly states that we should do good to our family

Students should understand:

- The importance of goodness to neighbours
- The ways of being good to neighbours, most importantly not harming them
- That Islam encourages us to have guests and to be good hosts

members and near ones and orphans and our neighbours, whether they are our relatives or not.

Here are a few ways we can show kindness towards our neighbours:

- Being good to neighbours is not only restricted to those who share the same building with you. Your roommate is your neighbour; the person sitting behind you or next to you in a bus or at a bus stop is your neighbour; the person enjoying fresh air next to you in a public garden is also a neighbour. You ought to treat all of those people kindly and socialize with them within the scope of Islamic law.
- Introduce yourself and your family to your neighbours when you move into a new place or when new neighbours move in. This will also help to relieve any fears or tensions they may have about Muslims. Also, don't forget to say good-bye when you or they move away.
- Care for them continually, especially at times of need and distress, as "*the neighbour in need is a neighbour indeed*." If a neighbour is elderly or chronically ill, offer to run errands or shop for him or her.
- Never try to harm your neighbour even if they threaten you or the like. Instead try solving any problems by being calm and talking to them. Things like parking in such a way that is inconvenient to our neighbours or making a lot of noise and thus inconveniencing our neighbours are forms of harming our neighbours and are considered major sins.

"By Allah, he is not a believer! By Allah, he is not a believer! By Allah, he is not a believer," Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said.

It was asked, "Who is that, O Messenger of Allah?"

Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

"...One whose neighbour does not feel safe from his evil."

Other ways of showing goodness toward neighbours:

- A "Salām" or a "hi", a slight nod of the head, a brief hello in the hallway...
- How about food? It's been said that food unites. In Africa and many other Muslim countries, by sharing food with our neighbours, we are literally reducing the hunger pangs of many. But it's not just about hunger when sharing with neighbours. Here in western countries, sharing really is about kindness, about uniting people, sharing what's common to our humanity. It's also about building neighbourly relations through small acts of kindness.

Therefore, the most important thing to remember is that we should never harm our neighbours, and that we should be good to them and extend an offer of kindness to them whenever we can.

In addition to this, we should remember that if one of the ways of coming close to Allah (SWT) is to be good to our neighbours:

Prophet Muhammad (saw) said:

"The best of companions with Allah is the one who is best to his companions and the best of neighbours to Allah is the one who is the best of them to his neighbour."

After knowing above facts, it is good opportunity to remind ourselves the saying of Sayyedah Faṭimah (as):

"Al-Jār Thumm al-Dār"

"(Beware of the rights of) the neighbours before (your own) home."

GUESTS

Islam is a religion which encourages us to meet with each other and invite our friends and family to gatherings. However, these gatherings have some rules that we must follow so that they be accepted by Allah (SWT) and so that we avoid displeasing Him. In this lesson, we will look at some of the rules of hosting.



ISLAM AND GUESTS

Prophet Muhammad (saw) has said that:

“Guests are the guide to paradise.”

We Muslims are very much encouraged to have guests, and there is tremendous reward in hosting them with kindness, generosity, honour and respect. As Muslims, we should keep our connections with our relatives and friends strong and invite them to our houses frequently.

We should also accept invitations to ḥalāl gatherings, and this is a right of our fellow Muslim brothers and sisters upon us. In fact, visiting our relatives often is one of our most important Islamic duties. However, it is important that we make sure to keep these both in moderation, meaning that we should not invite guests or accept invitations too often such that we are not able to meet our other obligations and duties.



The Holy Prophet (saw) has also said that:

“When Allah (SWT) wants to bless people, He sends a valuable gift to them.”

When asked what this valuable gift was, he replied:

“Guests! They enter with their provision and leave with the household’s sins.”

This means that when we have guests, Allah (SWT) brings with them an increase in our provision, and forgives the sins of our family. This shows how much Allah loves those who host righteous gatherings and invite guests.

BEING SELECTIVE IN OUR GATHERINGS

Of course, there are rules regarding who we can invite and who we can accept invitations from. We should make sure that we only host or attend gatherings where there are righteous people who remind us of Allah (SWT) and observe His rulings. We must not find ourselves amongst those who sin and take us away from Allah as we do not wish to be among such wrongdoers in the Hereafter.

Review Questions

Q1. In regards to inviting our relatives, we should:

- a) Invite all of them every single day.
- b) Only invite them once a year.
- c) Invite them often, though keeping it in moderation.

Q2. With regards to the mentioned hadith, the Holy Prophet (saw) regards which of the following as a valuable gift sent as a blessing to people from Allah?

- a) Money.
- b) Guests.
- c) Status.

Q3. When having guests we should make sure that we:

- a) Make much more food than is necessary.
- b) Do not be extravagant and do not waste food.
- c) Make many different types of food.

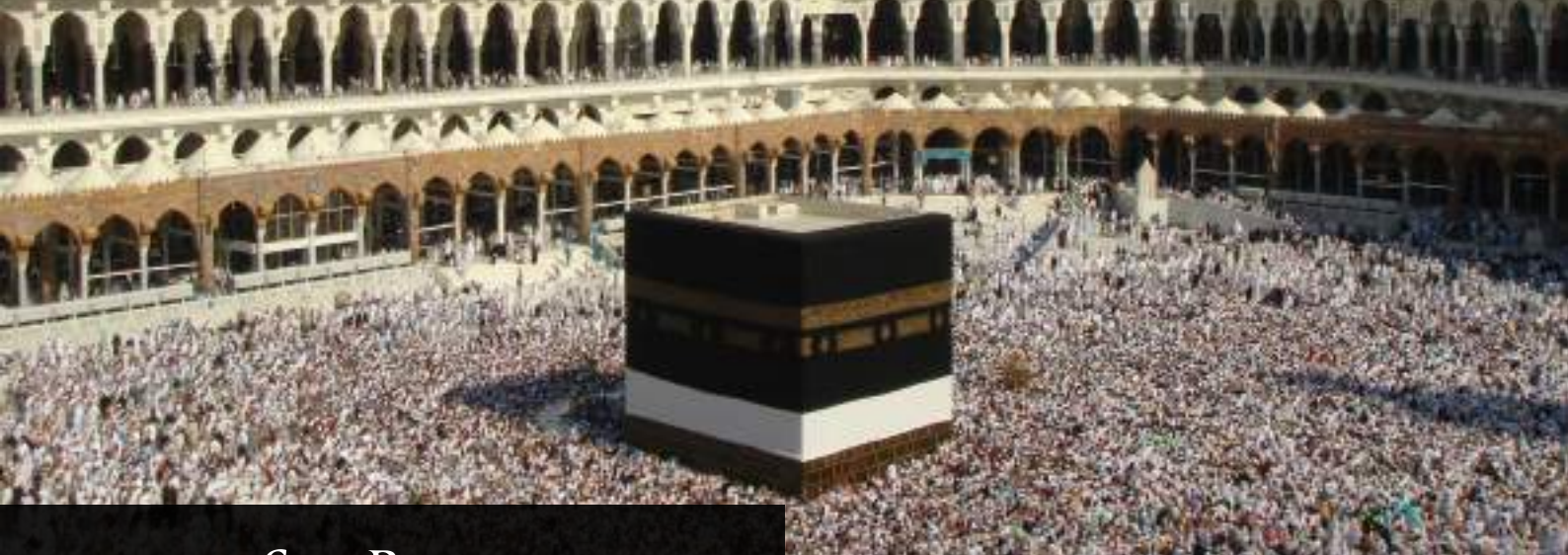
Q4. We should make sure that we do not invite others to or attend gatherings of:

- a) Righteous friends and family who remind us of Allah (SWT) and observe the Islamic rulings.
- b) Those who sin and take us away from Allah (SWT)
- c) Our distant relatives.

Q5. We are ordered by Allah (SWT) to be good to:

- a) Our Muslim neighbours
- b) Our neighbours who are our relatives
- c) Our neighbours in general

ⁱWasaelu-Shi'a 12:125



SELF PRAISE

العجب

SOCIAL ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Self-Praise

In this lesson, we will discuss one of the illnesses of social life- that of self-praise. Often a person will like to praise themselves or talk about their own achievements, whether directly or indirectly. The source of this action is the feeling of pride (pride).

Pride, in this meaning, is a feeling of exaggeration of one's virtues and good deeds, by magnifying them and being satisfied with them. This is accompanied by a sense of superiority because of them. A person with pride considers himself free from all defects and faults. It causes one to believe that they are better than another person.



It is important to note that simple feeling good about a good deed we have done without becoming proud or arrogant is not a bad thing.

TYPES OF PRIDE

Praising oneself is a consequence of pride. It is a fatal disease of the soul. It is often a disease that affects people who are talented in different aspects of life such as sports or academics, or people who have a particular trait such as being good-looking or smart. Such people feel they have something which others do not. Particularly if others around them are praising them. They may feel special or

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Know what it means to admire one's own characteristics (pride)
- Understand that being proud of our good deeds results in the rewards being lost
- Know that self-praise leads to many more sins
- Understand that self-praise results in loneliness
- Know simple techniques of avoiding this bad trait

better than others because of some achievement they have attained which others have not.

Pride can come in various ways and it is something that is in our mind. When we act upon it, it is called arrogance.

PRIDE ABOUT BELONGINGS AND PROPERTY

Sometimes, Allah (SWT) blesses some of us with a good amount of wealth. As a result we are able to afford good things in life for example a big house, a few nice cars and our parents give us the best clothes and toys which have big brand names. These things can easily make us proud of our selves especially if the other people around us like our friends and other relatives cannot afford the same kinds of things. We then start thinking that we are better than others who do not have these things.

PRIDE AS A RESULT OF TALENT

This type of pride is a result of our talents and skills whether they are intellectual or even sometimes physical. Some of us have been given special talents – for example, some people are very intelligent academically, while others are really good at sports and some are good at other things like computers or games.

These types of blessings, talents and skills can easily make us feel proud of ourselves before other people, thinking that we are better than them in what we do and that others are not as good as we are. We sometimes focus on our own skills or talents and do not appreciate other people's talents.



PRIDE AS A RESULT OF OUR GOOD ACTIONS

In this case, a person may perform a good action like giving charity or praying on time. However, they spoil their action because after doing it, they get a feeling inside themselves that they are better than others around them, who might not be doing that same action.



CONSEQUENCES OF PRIDE

PRIDE DESTROYS THE REWARDS OF GOOD DEEDS

In Islam, we believe that all praise is due to Allah (SWT) because He gives us all the blessings we have-He is the benefactor.

Therefore, if at all we feel pride or feel that we are the cause of our own success, we have taken the praise of Allah (SWT) for ourselves and this is also a sin. As a result, we lose the reward of our good actions, because we have praised ourselves instead of praising Allah (SWT) – and we know that the reward of any action is only given when the action is performed as sincerely as possible only for Allah (SWT).

Pride also results in us being ungrateful to Allah (SWT) for the blessing that He has bestowed upon us.

PRIDE LEADS TO OTHER MAJOR SINS

Pride leads to a number of major sins and evil traits, mainly because a person who is proud refuses to take advice from others and continues performing the wrong action they are involved in. They belittle their own sins and never think of removing their sins from themselves.

PRIDE RESULTS IN LONELINESS

A person who is affected with pride and praises him or herself frequently loses friends very quickly. As human beings, we naturally do not like being around people who insult us or put us down and praise themselves. People like these are 'show-offs' and we all know that it is very hard to be around a person who is a 'show-off'.

Therefore, a person who is affected with self-praise thus becomes lonely and isolated.

Imam 'Ali (as) said: "No loneliness can be compared in dreadfulness to the one that is the result of pride"¹

OVERCOMING PRIDE

SELF-MONITORING THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS

To overcome pride, we need to take a close look at our thoughts and actions, to make sure we do not feel or think we are better than others for any reason, and that we do not praise ourselves or act arrogantly.



Also, by focusing on the talents and good things of other people, we will learn to appreciate that everyone else also is good in their own way.

REMEMBERING ALLAH'S BLESSINGS

ⁱⁱRemember that life, power, knowledge, and other achievements are the blessings of God upon us. Every good deed, worship, talent, and opportunity is achieved due to His blessings and Grace. Without His permission, no creature can do a single good deed.

ⁱ Nahjul Balagha, saying # 113.

ⁱⁱ REFERENCES

- In a Nutshell – Diseases of the Soul: Self-Praise (pride) - http://www.al-islam.org/nutshell/diseases_soul/

Review Questions

Q1. What is pride ('ujb)?

- a. Being humble before others and proud before God
- b. Being proud before other people and not remembering God
- c. Praising Allah for one's own gifts and talents

Q2. What is one of the consequences of pride

- a. The person with pride makes many friends
- b. The person with pride does not correct his mistakes
- c. The person with pride is clever

Q2. What is a cure for pride

- a. Remembering that all blessings are from Allah (SWT)
- b. Pretending to be humble but being proud in the heart
- c. Committing sins on purpose

- Dar-al-Hadith – Cultural Scientific Institute - http://www.darolhadith.com/modules.php?name=my_AlfabetMenu&vid=373&scid=16
- www.madressa.net



COMMUNITY SERVICE

SOCIAL ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand the meaning of community service
- Understand the importance of meeting the needs of the believers
- Understand people's needs from us are God's blessings to us
- Understand that community service is for the sake of Allah (SWT) only
- Understand community service will make us happier
- Discuss forms of community service that can be done and we can be a part of

Helping Fellow Muslims

Community service is: providing a helping hand and rendering services to the community which can include helping just one person to helping all of humanity. There are many ways in which we can help others in our community. Some basic examples are:

- Joining and donating fundraising programs for the poor and needy
- Helping to maintain our local mosque or community centre
- Giving help to our Muslim friends when they ask for help in any legitimate thing they need, such as:
 - Helping them with homework
 - Giving them a lift in our parents' car to a sports game
 - Sharing lunch with them if they can't afford it that day

The Prophet (saw) said:

“Any person in my community who acts kindly towards his brother in faith, Allah will grant him the service of the servants of Paradise.”

MEETING THE NEEDS OF BELIEVERS

We must understand that not everyone has the same status in terms of power, wealth, health etc... in the community. Thus many require aid and help in many aspects. The Muslim community is like one body and if one part is hurt, the other parts have to show concern. Imam Ḥasan (as) has said:

“Treat others similar to the way like for them to treat you.”

This is a very important point because we all would like to have nice things, good health and enjoy great amount of respect within a community. Thus if we treat our fellow brothers and sisters the way we would like to be treated, our communities would prosper.

The Holy Qur'an says:

“For, never would Your Lord destroy a community for wrong so long as its people behave righteously [towards one another]” (11:17)

This righteous behaviour can have several meanings but a clear meaning would be the fact that the believers respect the rights of each other and take care of each other in all aspects. An example is that an engineer will help with building a centre, while a banker with the expenses and financial aspects, builders with labour, lawyers for the council's approval and so on.

A BLESSING FROM ALLAH (SWT)

By having to meet the needs of believers, it is a blessing from Allah because we are rewarded for every form of assistance we provide to the believers.

The Prophet (saw) said:

‘Verily Allah gives succour to this community only as a result of [the presence of] the weak among them, their supplication, their prayer and their sincerity.’

Succour means help and assistance. Therefore, blessings are showered upon a community as a result of the weak who thus require assistance from those who have the ability to help and assist thus getting blessed by Allah (SWT).

THE EXAMPLE OF AN IMAM

In one instance, Imam al-Ḥasan (as) was performing ṭawāf around the Holy Ka'bah. At this time, a man came and asked the Imam (as) for help. He was in debt and was in a desperate situation, and was going to be placed in jail. He wanted the Imam (as) to loan him some money. The Imam (as) did not have any money to give him. The man then asked if the Imam (as) would intercede for him with his debtors so that they would allow him more time to repay his debt. The Imam (as) agreed to this. One of the companions of the Imam (as) saw this. He showed his surprise at this, saying to the

Imam that jurisprudentially one is not allowed to stop their ṭawāf and leave before finishing it. However, the Imam replied that this social responsibility took priority.

“Whoever helps his Muslim brother in a need that he has, it is as if he worshipped Allah for nine thousand years, in which he stood on his feet during the night and fasted during the day”.

In another instance, Imam al-Ḥasan (as) was praying a recommended prayer, when he saw an old man struggling to get up because he could not reach his walking stick which had fallen far away from him. The Imam (as), while he was praying, walked over to the man, gave him his walking stick, then resumed his prayer.

These two examples show that in Islam helping people and meeting their needs is extremely important, and can take precedence over ritual acts of worship.

Review Questions

Q1. How can we help a fellow Muslim?

- a) Telling them to find help from a non-Muslim
- b) Showing off to them that you are rich and wealthy and they are not
- c) Offering them as much help as possible based on your capacity

Q2. Which of the following person will receive the most reward based on good intentions?

- a) A person who only helps out with some money
- b) A person who helps out with money and also assists in a program at a centre
- c) A person who helps out by giving money, helps out at the centre and encourages others to do so as well

Benefits of Community Service

In the last lesson, we learnt how important it is help our fellow brothers and sisters and people in general in whatever ways possible.

HELPING TO THE SAKE OF ALLAH (SWT)

We should help others with intention of seeking the pleasure of Allah (SWT). This is because if there was any other intention, it would lead to showing off or pride thus nullifying our rewards.

Giving charity, whether it is with our money, time or effort, has many rewards. The Holy Qur'an states:

“Those who spend their possessions [for the sake of God] by night and by day, secretly and openly, shall have their reward with their Sustainer; and no fear need they have, and neither shall they grieve.”
(2:74)

If we want to gain these rewards, we have to make sure to follow these rules:

- make our intention solely for Allah (SWT)
- try to give in private more than in public
- avoid showing off, boasting or bragging

It is also important that we do not make the person we are helping feel bad. We should not hold it over them that we have helped them, and constantly remind them of it. Instead, we should make it seem like what we did was something very small or nothing, so that they do not feel shy or bad.

“Meeting the needs of believers is not complete except by meeting three principles: belittling the help so that it becomes great, keeping it secret so that it may become apparent, doing it quickly...”

If we want to gain even more reward, we should offer to help our friends before they even come to ask us. Imam 'Ali (as) said:

“Let none of you compel his brother to ask, if you already know about his need.”

BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

The most important benefit of doing good to others and meeting their needs are the rewards God will give us in the Hereafter. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah (SWT) makes a promise to help those who helped others in this world:

“Who is it that will offer up unto God a goodly loan, which He will amply repay, with manifold increase? For, God takes away, and He gives abundantly; and it is unto Him that you shall be brought back.” (2:245)

In addition, there are other benefits to community service. It makes us better people in general. The Holy Prophet (saw) has said:

“The best of people are those that are most beneficial to other people.”

There are numerous other benefits of community service:

1. The members of the community form stronger bonds and thus create a stronger community.
2. It creates happiness and joy within us as discovered by many scientists. When we do good to others, we feel good within ourselves. This is in fact one of the cures to make us feel happier when we feel down or depressed.
3. It allows people to discover talents that they thought they never had like those who decided to help in organizing activities realising their potential as event organizers.
4. Helping others means Allah (SWT) will help us especially when we are in need.

ALLAH (SWT) WILL LOOK AFTER US

Allah (SWT) will look after us if we are always helping¹ out others in the form of money or services.

Imam al-Sajjād (as) says:

“The one who meets the need of a believer has begun by meeting the need of God and because of it God will meet one hundred of his needs. One of these needs is paradise. The one who relieves the sorrow of someone else, God will relieve the sorrow of the Hereafter from him. If one visits an ill person, the angels will surround him and pray for him until he leaves. The angels say: ‘may Paradise be for you purely’. By Allah, meeting the need of a believer is dearer to Allah than fasting two consecutive months while performing I'tikāf in Masjidul Haram”

Review Questions

Q1. We should help for the sake of Allah (SWT) because:

- a. Because He will reward us
- b. Because He will help us overcome difficulties
- c. Both of the above

Q2. When we help others, we should:

- a. Make a big deal out of it
- b. Make it very public
- c. Make it seem small and keep it private

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SOCIAL INDEPENDENCE

SOCIAL ISLAM

LEVEL 3

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand that Islam encourages independence in our personal and social needs
- Know that an independent person is liked by others more than a person who asks frequently
- Understand that we should Allah (SWT) for everything no matter how small
- Understand that we do need help, especially during our younger years and we should ask when necessary
- Understand the type of people and the type of friends we should seek help from

Independence is encouraged

Imam al-Şādiq (as) has said:

شَرَفُ الْمُؤْمِنِ قِيَامُ اللَّيْلِ وَ عِزُّهُ
اسْتِغْنَاؤُهُ عَنِ النَّاسِ

“The honour of a believer lies in his night-worship and his glory lies in his being independent of the people.”

Islam encourages us to refrain from asking other people for our needs. We all come across situations where we have the option of doing something for ourselves, or seeking help. For example, if we are faced with a difficult assignment, we can either take the time to understand it properly and do our own work, or we can copy-paste from a number of websites and hope we can get away with it. Even worse, a person might call their friend and ask for that friend's assignment so they can copy it. If we want to be successful in our lives, and to be liked by people, we need to take the option of doing things ourselves- of being independent.

A lesson from the Holy Prophet:

One of the companions of the Holy Prophet (saw) once found himself in severe poverty. His wife advised him to go to the Holy Prophet (saw) and request his help.

The man approached the Holy Prophet (saw), but as soon as the Prophet's (saw) eyes fell upon the man, he said:

“If a person seeks something from me, I shall certainly grant it to him, but if he were to exhibit himself as being self-sufficient and free from want, Allah shall make him wealthy.”

Hearing this, the man said to himself, “The Holy Prophet (saw) has intended me by this speech of his”.

Without uttering a word, he returned home and narrated the incident to his wife. His wife said, “The Holy Prophet (saw) is also human; explain your dilemma to him and see what he has to say.”

The man returned to the Holy Prophet (saw) for the second time but heard the same sentence from him and again came back home without saying a word. When this was repeated for the third time, the man borrowed a pickaxe from one of his friends and set off towards the mountains. Throughout the day he worked hard to gather firewood, which he sold for some flour and that night, he and his wife had bread for dinner.

The next day, he worked harder and collected more firewood and this continued for several days till he was able to purchase a pickaxe for himself.

After some period, as a result of his hard work, he managed to purchase his own animals and property, and slowly became rich.

One day, arriving before the Holy Prophet (saw), he narrated to him the events of his life and the effect of his words, whereupon the Prophet (saw) responded:

“I had said (before): One who seeks to be independent (of others), Allah shall make him independent.”

INDEPENDENT PEOPLE ARE LIKED BY OTHERS



Let us look at an example of being independent in a social situation. If we are at the community centre and there is food being served. However, there are no spoons available. Thus, if it is possible to get them yourself, that is better than asking someone else to get it for you.

In the case where we even have to give up certain luxuries and desires, we should try our very best not to ask unless it is absolutely necessary. There are times for example, when we are in university, we cannot afford to buy certain textbooks, and the only way of accessing them would be by going to the library all the time. In such cases, it may be better to actually go to the library rather than borrow it from another person.

The Holy Prophet (saw) has said:

“Be wary of asking others for your needs”

This is a very important piece of advice because this way, we will be independent and we will maintain our dignity and respect. People who keep their dignity and respect by hiding their needs and being independent are praised even in the Holy Qur'an.

Also, because we are not asking people and not troubling them, they are more likely to like us and respect us. Whereas if we are always asking for things, people will avoid us and lose respect for us.

WE SHOULD ASK ALLAH (SWT) FOR EVERYTHING

While it is not good to ask people for things, it is very good to ask Allah (SWT) for everything- even something as simple as the salt in our food. Not only will Allah (SWT) give us what we want or something better, He will also reward us for asking Him, and not asking people.

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ
عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ

“And your Lord said: “Ask Me, I will answer you. Indeed those who too arrogant to worship Me, they will surely enter Hell in humiliation.” (23:60)

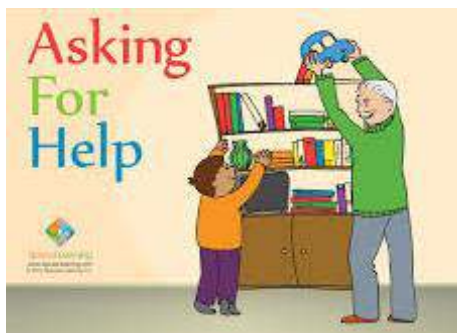
This is a very important message because firstly, Allah (SWT) is aware of all our needs but He wants us to ask Him. It is this act of asking or invocation that is highly recommended.

ASK FOR HELP WHEN NECESSARY

Many a times, it becomes extremely important to ask for help in situations where help is really necessary. A good example is when we are involved in an accident, God forbid, whereby we have to call people to come to our aid in taking us to the hospital etc. This is necessary, although Allah (SWT) will help us, but it is through people that He provides us with assistance. At the end of the day, it is He who will have helped us out no matter what the means.

Another situation is when for example we are being bullied at school, or if we are feeling depressed about something. Sometimes we cannot solve these problems on our own, especially when we are young, and so we should ask for help from the right people.

ASKING THE RIGHT PEOPLE



When it is necessary to seek help, we should go to the right people to ask for help:

- Parents – They brought us up and know all of our weaknesses and strengths. Thus they are the first people we should ask for help. This is especially in very sensitive cases like which type of friends to have or how to deal with a bullying issue at school etc...
- Teachers – They teach us and give us knowledge and also understand us to a large extent. If parents are unable to help us, especially in a school related issue like an issue with certain subjects in school, bullying etc...then we should seek their assistance when necessary.

- Older siblings – For those who have older brothers and sisters, it is important to seek their help when it is something they can help with.
- Grandparents/Aunts/Uncles – they can also be of assistance
- Friends: if we are going to ask friends for help, we should make sure to ask the right friends- those who are intelligent, trustworthy and helpful. We should not ask those who will:
 - a. Be rude to us and reject our request
 - b. Tell our secrets to people
 - c. Give us bad advice

Review Questions

Q1. Who are the first people we should generally go to for help?

- a. Parents
- b. Neighbours
- c. Teachers

Q2. People who are independent are highly respected because:

- a. Those people are always showing off to others.
- b. Those people rely on Allah (SWT) for everything.
- c. Both a & b

Q3. What qualities should a friend possess in order to ask for his/her help?

- a. They should be very rich and famous.
- b. They should be on your facebook friends' list.
- c. They should be trustworthy and intelligent

¹ Sources

1. Notes of Sheikh Mansour
2. Anecdotes of reflection Part 1 at <http://beta.al-islam.org>
3. <http://www.maaref-foundation.com/>

4. Shia Hadith Browser app for Android.

SUSPICION

سوء الظن

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand what it means to assume something, and that negative assumptions are discouraged in Islam
- Understand that to avoid negative thoughts, we have to stay away from people who have negative thoughts and attitudes
- Learn strategies for avoiding suspicion
- Understand that we have to try to avoid suspicion against us

Suspicion

“O you who believe, avoid most assumption because some assumption is evil...” (49:12)

Negative assumption or suspicion is impermissible in Islam, and is forbidden by the Holy Qur'an. Suspicion means to think about or view something in a certain way – the negative or pessimistic thinking is what Islam considers sinful. Let us discover more about this dangerous mental and spiritual disease and its effects.

SOCIAL ISLAM

LEVEL 3

SUSPICION

Islam encourages us to always think the best about one another in life. When we hear a word from someone, or see them doing something, we are encouraged to interpret it in the best way possible and to avoid giving it a negative or evil explanation.



Unfortunately, many of us automatically think negatively and interpret things in a bad way, leading to suspicion. Suspicion can lead to a breakdown in many relationships, especially marriages and friendships. It can also become extreme, leading people to be paranoid and to always think someone is trying to hurt them or plot against them.

An example of negative assumptions or suspicion is this: you walk in and suddenly your friends stop speaking. You automatically think they were talking about you. You get upset and it causes a fight, and the friendship may even break down. Later, you realise they were never talking about you! They had a private issue between them that they could not share with you, this is why they stopped talking.

AVOIDING SUSPICION

STAY AWAY FROM SUSPECTING PEOPLE

Suspicion is a contagious problem so spending too much time around people who only think negatively and badly about what is going on around them leads one to automatically think like them and doubt everything in a bad way.

Therefore, one of first steps to avoid suspicious thinking is to avoid keeping company with people who are always thinking negatively. Bad habits like backbiting and slander are a result of suspicion in many cases.

Suspicion also leads to spying on other people's private affairs and breaks down trust between families and friends.

REMOVING SUSPICION FROM OURSELVES

While we are encouraged not to be suspicious of other people, at the same time we should also try to be an open book and remove suspicion from ourselves to make it easier for people to trust us. If we are in a situation that we think people might interpret in a bad way, we should explain ourselves to others and show them that we are not involved in anything negative.

One day, the Prophet (saw) was speaking to his aunt in the market when a man walked by. The Prophet (saw) told him: 'this is my aunt'. The man said 'of course, O Messenger of Allah – I would not think bad of you ever', but the prophet (saw) wanted to make sure that the man did not think the Prophet (saw) was talking in a friendly way to a strange woman so he explained himself, even though he is the Prophet.

MAKING EXCUSES FOR OTHERS & HAVING POSITIVE THOUGHTS ABOUT OTHERS

ⁱWhen we see someone in a situation that looks suspicious, we must try to make as many excuses for them as possible and try to find as many justifications as possible. The Ahlul Bayt (as) tell us:

“Interpret the action of your brother in the best way possible until it becomes very clear that he is going the wrong thing, and do not interpret a word that comes from your brother negatively”.ⁱⁱ

If we really cannot find a justification, we should ask them to clarify what they were doing or what they meant.

We are therefore encouraged very much to give people what is commonly known as the 'benefit of doubt'. This means that whenever we see a situation which can be interpreted in a good and bad way, and we doubt which one it is – we must take the beneficial or positive interpretation of that doubt.

THE BENEFITS OF AVOIDING SUSPICION

Imam 'Ali (as) says that avoiding suspicion benefits us more than anyone else because it leads to calmness and tranquillity of the heart.

“Interpreting things positively (huṣnul ḍānn) leads to peace of mind”ⁱⁱⁱ

Homework

Q1. Negative assumptions lead to:

- a. Protecting ourselves from others
- b. A breakdown in relationships
- c. Calmness

Q2. One of the best benefits of avoiding suspicion is:

- a. Losing friends
- b. Losing our wealth
- c. Being calm and tranquil

References:

Mizanul Hikma vol. 4 p.1784

Lecture by Sheikh Mansour on Social Rules - Suspicion

ⁱⁱ [Mizanul-Hikma vol.4 p.1784]

ⁱⁱⁱ [Mizanul Hikma, ibid]

COMMUNITY CARE

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Learn some of the etiquettes of looking out for the ill, including
- Understand some of the etiquettes of looking after the elderly

Social Rules

LEVEL 3

Community Care

A community can be defined as a group of people that live together or a group of people whose beliefs, ideas or culture bring them together. Perhaps the best example of a community for us is our community who gather at our local mosque or Islamic centre.

DIFFERENT PEOPLE WITHIN A COMMUNITY

Different types of people make up a community. There are the elderly, the adults and the children. The Holy Qur'an and the Ahlul Bayt (as) have given us directions on how to treat two particularly vulnerable groups within our communities:

- Those who are ill or frail
- The elderly

THE IMPORTANCE OF VISITING THE ILL

As humans, it is in our nature that we feel sad when we hear that someone in our community is sick. Islam emphasises on the importance of visiting the ill in our community. The reason Islam gives this role so much importance is because:

- It brings a sense of brother/sisterhood in the community
- It gives the ill person or their family love and support which eases their pain

- It reminds us about how weak we are as humans and that an illness can overpower us at any given time
- It reminds us to be thankful for our health

Consider the following sayings of the Holy Prophet (saw) to understand the importance and benefit of visiting the sick:

"Every Muslim who visits a sick person is absorbed in Allah's blessings and during the time he is seated by him he sits in the middle of Divine Mercy. If he visits the sick man in the morning, seventy thousand angels pray for him till evening and if he visits him in the evening, seventy thousand angels pray for him till morning."

"Visit the sick and attend the funerals of the dead so that you may remember the next world. Pray for the sick person and say: O Allah! Cure him with your cure and treat him with your medicine and keep him safe from your calamity."

BASIC ETIQUETTES OF VISITING THE ILL

Different communities have different things that they do when they visit the ill. There are some that read Qur'an and pray for them, there are some that talk to them about different topics in order to get their mind off the illness, and there are some that help keep the ill person's affairs in order. There are others who financially or physically support and assist the caretakers of the ill person. As mentioned above, everyone needs help and support in the community - especially those who are closer to the less fortunate.

The Holy Prophet (saw) said:

"The perfect visitation of the sick person is when you put your hand on him and ask him how he is feeling. And the handshake is the perfect greeting."

When we are around a patient, we should do our best to not discuss topics that would upset or stress them. Instead, we should try to cheer them up and keep them happy.

It might also be an idea to remind them of the Mercy which they receive due to their illness. Imam Ja'far al-Şādiq (as) says in regards to this:

"When the believer experiences a single episode of fever, his sins would fall off as tree leaves would; and if he

becomes bed-ridden, his moaning is counted as tasbeeh (glorifying God)"

It is also important to pray for the ill person, when we are visiting them and in their absence. In particular, we can do this by:

- Reciting Surat al-Fātiḥa
- Āyatul Kursi
- Āyah 27:62
- Dua al-Mashlūl

THE DIFFICULTIES OF ILLNESS

An ill person is faced by many difficulties in their life as a consequence of their sickness. They may not be able to perform all their daily tasks without help. They may suffer loss of income or occupation. Their mood may suffer and they may become isolated. For these reasons, it is important to look for those who fall ill, especially if their illness is chronic and makes them unable to engage in social life.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ELDERLY

We often forget that old people were once young people. They had a family, a goal and still have a purpose in life. We often forget to include them in our lives, and don't give much importance to their needs. This is the reason Allah (SWT) has placed a lot of importance in the Qur'an on keeping in touch with one's relatives.

Old people are amongst the wisest people in our community. They have lived longer than most people and have therefore learnt a lot of lessons from life. Seeking an old person's advice is very beneficial.

SHOWING RESPECT TO THE ELDERLY

As showing respect to everyone in the community is very important, it is crucial to show love and respect to elder members of the community. Old age results in weakness and sometimes even separation from one's children as they are too busy looking after their own families. Therefore, it is essential that one treats them with utmost respect and honour.

The rights of the elders are respected in Islam. Families are taught to honour and respect their elders instead of casting them out to the homes for the elderly. In the Islamic world, one rarely finds 'old people's homes'. The strain of caring for one's parents or elders within the community in this most difficult time of their lives is considered an honour and a blessing and an opportunity for great spiritual growth. In Islam, it is not enough that we only pray for our parents and for the elderly, but we should act with limitless compassion, remembering that ⁱwhen we were helpless children, they preferred us to themselves.

Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (as) said:

“He is not from amongst us who does not show respect to our elderly and does not show mercy to our youngsters.”

Prophet Muḥammad (saw) said:

“One who recognises the virtue of an elder person and honours him for his age, Allah shall protect him from the fear of the Day of Judgment.”

Review Questions

1. When we visit the ill

- a. We should act like we normally act around them
- b. We should try to cheer them up
- c. We should discuss stressful topics around them

2. Islam teaches us to:

- a. Care for the elderly and look after their needs ourselves
- b. Care for the elderly in nursing homes
- c. Not listen to the advice of the elderly

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- ⁱ Makarem ul Akhlaq
 - Bihar al-Anwar
 - Al-Islam.org
 - Risalatul Huqooq
 - Al-Kafi



ISLAM AND THE ENVIRONMENT

محيط

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Discuss the importance of the environment in Islam
- Discuss some ways we can help the environment
- Discuss some of the dangers facing the environment today

SOCIAL ISLAM

JUNIOR LEVEL

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Islam regards our environment very highly and has immense respect for it. Allah (SWT) has referred to various parts of the environment such as the sun, bodies of water, trees, plants, animals and the earth in over 750 āyāt of the Holy Qur'an.



Islam & the Environment

Everything we see around us in the natural world such as the trees, rivers and skies can be classified as the environment. It includes all the various things that we need for living, such as the oxygen from trees and the food from plants and animals. The environment also is a sign of the existence of Allah (SWT) because of its immense beauty, and just looking at the environment brings joy and peace to our hearts and reminds us of our Creator. In this lesson, we will be looking at what our religion tells us regarding the environment around us and exploring our responsibilities towards it.

Even the term for paradise in Islam is 'jannah', which literally means a garden. Therefore, if we want the natural environment (trees and rivers) of paradise to be our home in the Hereafter, we have to look after the natural environment in this world. Allah (SWT) makes it clear that He does not love mischief such as destroying plants and animals in the following verse:

"...They strive in the earth to make mischief and destroy the crops and the cattle, and God does not love mischief." (2:205)



Our Holy Prophet (saw) and Imams (as) also highlight how we should care for the environment in many narrations, showing us that we should plant as much as we can and not destroy. The Holy Prophet (saw) especially gave farmers special respect, saying that :

“farmers are the treasures of mankind”

and:

“cultivate the land and plant on it, for by Allah, no business is more halal and sweeter than this”.

With regards to taking care of animals, we can learn a lot from the story of Prophet Noah (as), where he boarded a pair of each and every species on his boat. He did not just save the animals that were useful to human beings or the ones that we could eat, but rather cared for every single one of Allah (SWT)’s creations and boarded them all onto his ark.

Class activity

HOW CAN WE HELP THE ENVIRONMENT?

Each and every one of us can help the environment in different ways. Can you think of some of these ways?

As a class, brainstorm the different ways that we can help the environment and write them on the whiteboard. Then, each student should select one of them and make a drawing which shows it.

DON'T WASTE

You have probably come up with lots of good ideas in your brainstorming session. One of the most important things we can do to help the environment is to avoid waste. Waste harms the environment, because it means we need to make more of a certain thing, and this leads

to more energy use and more pollution. Examples of waste include:

- Wasting food by throwing it away
- Wasting electricity by leaving lights on when they are not being used
- Wasting water by turning the tap on full, when we only need a little water, or by taking extra long showers

Wasting is a sin in Islam, and the Holy Qur’an advises us that:

“And do not waste, for Allah does not love those who waste” (6:141)



DANGERS FACING THE ENVIRONMENT

Due to our irresponsible actions and carelessness, there are a lot of dangers facing our environment. Two of the major issues are:

- Deforestation: In the recent centuries, the human population has increased a lot throughout the world, and we humans have chopped down more and more trees in order to make way for our buildings and roads, as well as to use the wood. A lot of our houses where we live right now used to be forests full of beautiful tall trees. Trees are very important blessings of Allah (SWT) because they clean the air, converting carbon dioxide into the oxygen that we breathe. Therefore, continuing to destroy forests is very dangerous and we should work to re-plant.



- Pollution: We human beings have continued destroyed our environment by being irresponsible for our actions. Industries have spilled their toxic wastes into the seas and we have polluted the air with the fuel that is burnt by our cars and machines, as well as other sources of air and water pollution. This pollution has had a huge negative effect on plants and animals, with large populations dying or facing extinction due to our actions.

Review Questions

Q1. In regards to our environment, we should:

- a) Be careless and do whatever we like.
- b) Cut down all trees and use them to build houses.
- c) Take care of, protect, and build the environment.

Q2. The Holy Prophet (saw) regarded farmers as:

- a) The fathers of mankind.
- b) The treasures of mankind.
- c) The laziest of mankind.

Q3. Allah (SWT) in the Holy Qur'an says that He:

- a) Loves those who create mischief and destroy the crops and cattle.
- b) Does not love mischief such as destroying crops and cattle.
- c) None of the above.



ANIMAL RIGHTS

حقوق الحيوان

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand that Islam has rules and rights related to animals
- Discuss that human rights always take priority over animal rights
- Understand that while we can use animals for their proper use we are not allowed to torture or hurt animals
- Understand that Islam encourages us to take care of animals
- Discuss the impermissibility of having dogs as pets

Animal Rights

INTRODUCTION

Islam not only sets out rights for humans, but for all creatures. Animals have a number of rights in Islam and these rights must be observed. As Muslims, we have a responsibility towards all other creatures. This includes domestic animals that people use on farms and common household pets.

The first right that animals have is that they should not be abused or mistreated. Unfortunately, in many communities, young people abuse animals (e.g. throwing stones at birds or dogs etc...) for fun. This is something that is not allowed in Islam. This is definitely not allowed in Islam.

SOCIAL ISLAM

LEVEL 3

THE HIERARCHY OF CREATION

All creatures are equal when looked at from the aspect of being the slaves of God. However, in relation to each other, there is a hierarchy among the creatures. Humankind were the last creatures to be created and so the rest of creation has the purpose of serving humans. Human life takes priority over animal life, and there is no dispute about this. If we are faced with a situation where we have to save a human life at the cost of an animal's life, of course we must give priority to the human life.

USING ANIMALS FOR THEIR PURPOSE

Animals have served human beings in different ways over time. Some of the examples of ways we use animals are as follows:

Transport – Man has benefitted a lot from animals when it comes to transport. The most common animals used for transport have been horses, donkeys and camels. Camels are very useful in the desert and for carrying goods. In this aspect, it is important to know that Islam does not allow overburdening the animal by placing too much weight on its back. This amounts to cruelty to the animal and is forbidden in Islam.

Food – Islamic food laws allow Muslims to eat meat. Certain animals are not allowed to be used as food, and when slaughtering, several guidelines must be followed to minimize the animal's suffering. For examples, animals that are to be slaughtered must be given water and a sharp knife must be used to make the process fast and less painful.

Pets – In Islam we are allowed to keep certain animals as pets. A Muslim who chooses to keep a pet takes on the responsibility of the animal's care and well-being. They must be provided with appropriate food, water, and

shelter. The Prophet described the punishment of a person who neglected to care for a pet. He reported that when he ascended during his Mi'rāj he saw a woman who in this world had a cat whom she had imprisoned without food or drink, until the cat died of hunger and thirst. On Judgment Day, this woman was being tortured because of this action.

When it comes to keeping pets, there are a number of rules we must keep in mind. The first is that dogs are not allowed as pets unless they are shepherd or guard dogs on a farm. The second is that the animal should not come to harm from being kept as a pet. For example, it is not allowed to keep a bird in a cage simply for our amusement. The bird is created to fly, and imprisoning it is harming it.

Science and research – We are allowed to use animals for scientific research but Islam has very strict rules on how far we can go in using animals for research and testing. We will not cover the details in this lesson, but it is enough to mention that even for science and research, we cannot do anything to animals if it causes them distress or harm unless there is an exceptionally good reason for it.

HARAM INTERACTIONS WITH ANIMALS

Hunting and Sport - In Islam, hunting for sport or fun is prohibited. Muslims may only hunt as is needed to meet their requirements for food. Even while hunting for food, we cannot hunt or hurt a baby bird. The Prophet (saw) says:

“While a baby bird is in its mother’s nest, it is in the refuge of God.”

It is also prohibited to make animals to fight one another. It is also not permissible to kill any animal unless it is likely to cause us harm or it is being killed for food or other good reasons.

TAKING CARE OF ANIMALS – AN OBLIGATION

If we choose to keep a pet, then we must look after it. This includes providing the animal with:

- Food
- Drink
- Suitable accommodation
- Medication

ⁱFor example, if a person chooses to keep a cat at home, then feeding the cat and giving it a place to sleep are obligations. If it becomes ill and it is feasible to take it to a vet for care, then we should do this also.

Let us end with an example of how the Ahlul Bayt (as) cared for animals. One day, Imam Ḥasan (as) was eating, when a dog came and stood near him. A companion who was watching the Imam (as) noticed the Imam was eating one morsel and throwing the next morsel to the dog to eat. The companion offered to shoo the dog away. However, the Imam (as) said he was not being bothered by the dog. In fact, the Imam (as) said he was too shy to eat while another creature of God watched him.

Review Questions

Q1. Islam has taught Muslims

- a. That it is okay to mistreat animals because they have no feelings
- b. To care for and respect all creatures of God including animals
- c. To cause harm to animals if it entertains and amuses us

Q2. Proper care of animals according to Islam means:

- a. Providing good food, water, accommodation and medical attention to animals
- b. Keeping them at home but not giving them food or water
- c. Both a & b

Q3. If you see a harmless spider in your house, what is the Islamic way to get rid of it?

- a. Squash it under your foot
- b. Try and catch it with a tissue without killing it and then throwing it out
- c. Spray it with insecticide till it dies

ⁱ References

- Holy Qur'an
- Rights of Animals in Islam – Lecture by Sheikh Mansour Leghaei on Social Islam – Rights of Animals
- Animal Welfare – What does Islam say about how Muslims should treat animals? - <http://islam.about.com/od/islamsays/a/animalwelfare.htm>

