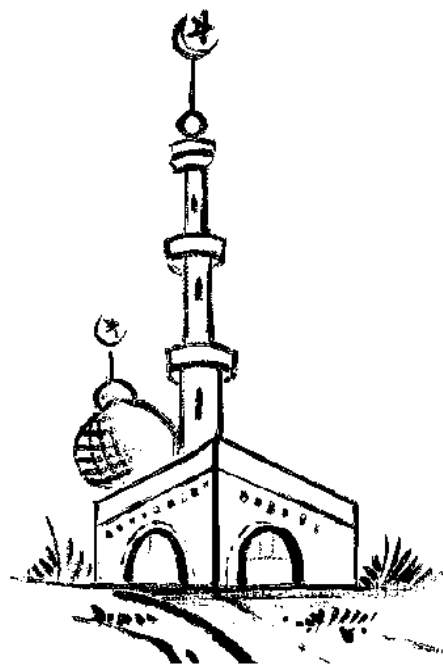


I AM A MUSLIM

BOOK TWO

Islamic Teachings

Intermediate Level



By Salim Che R. F.

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PREFACE

All praise is due to Allāh; and blessings and peace be upon His messenger and servant, Muḥammad, and upon his family and companions and whoever follows his guidance until the Day of Resurrection.

"Our Lord, accept [this] from us. Indeed, You are the Hearing, the Knowing."

(Qur'ān – 2:127)

I undertook to write this book following requests from local Muslims for a simple guide on the elementary teachings of Islam. My attempt in this direction is based on my own observations during years of teaching at the Al-Noor Orphanage Center and the disadvantaged children in rural areas of Cape Town. Every effort has been made to lead the student into Islamic subjects with ease and straightforwardness, each lesson ending with questions which review the points emphasized therein.

Book One of this series contained the basic elementary teachings necessary for children and new Muslims in order to practice their religion. Book Two, which is a continuation of the previous book, builds upon its lessons and adds new material. Its format is similar to that of the previous book, but the language addresses students of an intermediate level and print size has been somewhat reduced.

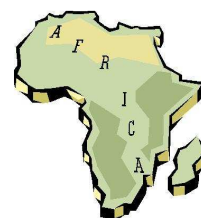
Basic Arabic terms continue to be introduced and presented with simple transliteration, along with the translation of their meanings into English. The Arabic text of Qur'ānic verses has been included since it is not possible to convey their exact meanings in another language. The accompanying translation is from *The Qur'ān: Arabic Text with Corresponding English Meanings* by Saḥeeḥ International.

As well as the usual subjects of Qur'ān, ḥadīth, 'aqeedah, worship and history, additional attention has been given in this book to Islamic manners and ethics, which comprise an essential part of the Muslim's character, and indeed, his worship of Allāh. The aim of Islamic education must be not only to impart information but to develop the *taqwā* essential to keep a Muslim on the path of Allāh throughout his life, to reform and amend our societies and to obtain the best of this world and the Hereafter. And from Allāh we seek success.

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the orphans of Al-Noor Orphanage Center, and to all my students and orphans in the rural areas of Khayetsha and Delft around Cape Town, South Africa. May Allāh alleviate your burdens and bless you all with īmān. May He continuously help us as sincere Muslims to stay on the right path and attain Paradise.

I would like to thank all my Muslim brothers and sisters at Al-Noor Da'wah Forum who have been supporting me. I am most indebted to Sister Amina F. Enyegue, coordinator of Al-Noor Orphanage Center, and Sister Umm Muḥammad, my editor. May Allāh accept the work of each of us and support our efforts toward disseminating correct Islāmic knowledge to our young people and the new Muslims who have joined us.



Salim Che R.F.

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The Transliteration System

In order to facilitate pronunciation of Arabic words throughout this book, certain symbols have been used to represent the sounds of letters having no equivalent in English. However, it is preferable that pupils hear them directly from Arabic speakers. Verses of the Qur'ān, in particular, require an emphasis on correct recitation, and transliterations serve only as an aid for beginners until they are able to read directly from the Arabic text. That should be a priority whenever possible.

ا or ي (long vowel)	ā or aa	ظ	t
ب	b	ع	'
ت	t	غ	gh
ث	th	ف	f
ج	j	ق	q
ح	ḥ	ك	k
خ	kh	ل	l
د	d	م	m
ذ	dh	ن	n
ر	r	ه	h
ز	z	و	w
س	s	و (long vowel)	ū
ش	sh	ي	y
ص	ṣ	ي (long vowel)	ī or ee
ض	<u>dh</u>	ء أ و ئ	,
ط	ṭ		

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ
وَبِحَمْدِكَ

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

عَمَّا سِوَاكَ اللَّهُ

Lesson 1

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT ALLĀH?

Brothers and sisters in Islām,

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh:

We begin our lessons in Book Two by remembering and mentioning the name of Allāh. Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ taught all Muslims to say, "Bismillāh" (in the name of Allāh) whenever they begin something from which they hope to obtain blessing because it is Allāh who grants blessings and success.



We know that Allāh created the universe and everything in it. And it is Allāh who sustains and maintains all of His creation, from the countless galaxies throughout the heavens to the tiniest particles within an atom. He controls each of them, subjecting them to precise physical laws for a specified term. It is He who causes the life and death of every creature, including ourselves, and He who is the source of everything that occurs within His universe. Therefore, He is the only true God and the only one who deserves to be worshipped. Muslims do not worship any created being. They worship only Allāh, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe and of mankind.

We know that Allāh is with us in His all-encompassing knowledge wherever we may be. He told His final Messenger ﷺ, *"I am there when My servant thinks of Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me."* (Narrated by al-Bukhārī)

A believer is deeply conscious of Allāh's favors and blessings in everything around him – in the blowing of the wind, the passing of clouds, the flowing of rivers, the heat of the sun, the light of the day, the darkness of the night, the taming of animals, the growth of plants, in every atom of the heavens and the earth, and in all He has provided which sustains life and enables us to fulfill our duties and our desires.



Allāh has revealed to us some of His attributes. For example, we know that He is Hearing, Seeing, Knowing, etc., but His qualities are not like those of human beings. He is unique and superior, above and beyond all His creation. And He is not part of any of His creation, nor can any of it be part of Him. The Qur'ān confirms:

"There is nothing like unto Him." لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ (42:11)

"And there is not to Him any equivalent." وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ (112:4)

Allāh is ever-Living, with no beginning and no end. He is all-Knowing, aware of all things, including our innermost secrets and thoughts. He is all-Powerful, able to do whatever He wills. His authority is shared by no one. His wisdom, justice and mercy are perfect and absolute, beyond the limits of human understanding. He is free from any imperfection, the supreme Lord upon whom all things depend for their existence.

A Muslim believer lives to obtain the approval of Allāh – to please Him, become close to Him and earn His reward; and that binds his whole life to Allāh. He constantly strives toward the ideal embodied in Allāh's divine attributes within the limits of his human capacity – to improve his deeds, his character, his morals and manners according to the pure way of life ordained by Allāh.

Questions:

1. What should a Muslim say at the beginning of any deed or activity?
2. Who created and sustains us?
3. Is any created being similar to the Creator? Explain.
4. How is Allāh's knowledge different from our knowledge?
5. Who deserves to be worshipped and why?



Note: Students are encouraged to review the information given in Book One, as the lessons in this book are built upon its foundations. Basic facts will at times be repeated here in a summarized form for the purpose of emphasis or expanding upon them, or for introduction to a new subject.

Lesson 2

THE PILLARS OF FAITH

A pillar is what supports a building and keeps it from collapsing, so it is an essential part of that structure. In the same way, Islāmic 'aqeedah (creed or ideology) cannot exist without essential beliefs, the pillars of faith, or as they are called in Arabic, *arkānul-īmān*. These pillars are six:



Belief in Allāh – Every Muslim believes that Allāh exists, that He alone created and sustains everything else in existence, that He is the only Lord and Sovereign of the universe and of mankind. Allāh alone is the Creator, and everything else that exists is His creation. He is one unique being who does not resemble any of His creation; He does not become part of any created being, and no created being has any of His divine qualities. His attributes are perfect and absolute, unlike those of human beings. He causes every occurrence and controls all affairs, and He alone is worthy of worship. The confirmation of Allāh's oneness in His every aspect is called *tawḥeed*.

Belief in His angels – Angels are beings created from light. They have no free will and always praise, worship and serve Allāh. They are strong and trustworthy and have particular functions and duties assigned to them by Allāh.

Prominent among the angels are Jibreel (Gabriel), who was entrusted with conveying the revelation from Allāh to human prophets and messengers; Mikā'eel (Michael), who is in charge of rain and plant growth; Isrāfeel, who will blow the horn at the Final Hour; and Mālik, the keeper of Hell. Some angels are responsible for fetuses in the womb, others for collecting the souls from people who die, others for questioning the dead in their graves, others for guarding and protecting the living from dangers, others for recording people's deeds, and countless others carry out every order given by Allāh. Angels love the believers among human beings and always ask Allāh to bless and support them.

There are other creatures which Allāh created from fire. They are called jinn, and they are different from angels. Like man, Allāh has given them a free will, so some of them have believed and accepted Islām and some of them have not. The evil ones among the jinn are devils who try to tempt people to disobey Allāh. We can keep them away by reciting the last two sūrahs of the Qur'ān, *al-Falak* and *an-Nās*.

Belief in His books – Allāh's books are the scriptures He revealed to His messengers for the guidance of mankind. Those of them mentioned in the Qur'ān are:

- The **Torāh**, revealed to Prophet Mūsā (Moses)
- The **Injeel**, revealed to Prophet 'Eesā (Jesus)
- The **Zabūr**, revealed to Prophet Dāwūd (David)
- The **Ṣuḥuf** of Prophets Ibrāheem (Abraham) and Mūsā
- The **Qur'ān**, revealed to Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ



Of these, only the Qur'ān is still in its original form, unchanged from the time of its revelation. Allāh protected His final message from being altered in any way by man. It is the complete and final divine revelation, so its legislation replaces all earlier religious rulings. It is the pure words of Allāh and corrects whatever was changed and introduced into the previous scriptures by man. Recitation of the Qur'ān is a form of worship which is rewarded by Allāh.

Belief in His messengers – Allāh, the Exalted, sent prophets and messengers (peace be upon them all) as a mercy to mankind. They were human beings of superior moral character selected by Allāh to remind people about Him and to guide them on the path leading to His pleasure and to Paradise. A prophet (nabi) is one who received revelation from Allāh, while a messenger (rasūl) is a prophet who was charged by Allāh to reform society. The most distinguished of the messengers were Nūḥ (Noah), Ibrāheem, Mūsā, 'Eesā and Muḥammad.



The last of the messengers sent by Allāh was Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh, who conveyed the final message of Islām. There will be no prophet or messenger after him. Whenever his name is mentioned, Muslims say, "*Ṣall-Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*," which means: "May Allāh's blessings and peace be upon him."

Belief in The Last Day – The Last Day (al-Yawm al-Ākhir) means the end of time as we know it on earth. So it refers to the Hereafter and the eternal life to come. It is also called "the Hour," "the Day of Judgement," "the Day of Resurrection" (al-Qiyāmah) and other names mentioned in the Qur'ān. It is a day decreed by Allāh which lasts for eternity, so it is the final day and will not be followed by any other.

No one but Allāh knows when it will occur, but on that Day tremendous events will take place. The present universe will be destroyed and a new creation will be brought into being by Allāh. By His command, all people who had ever lived on the earth will be restored to life and gathered for the Judgement. Then the complete and perfect justice

of Allāh will be fully realized; He will inform them about everything they did, said and intended during their earthly lives and will judge each one accordingly. Those who believed and worked hard for the acceptance of Allāh are deserving of His mercy and will be granted the pleasure of eternal Paradise. Those who disbelieved or disregarded Allāh, disobeyed Him and opposed His Messenger ﷺ will have earned for themselves the destination of Hell with its unending punishment.

Belief in Predestination – The Arabic word "Qadar" expresses the concept of divine decree concerning destiny or fate. It means that all things are determined by Allāh and nothing takes place except by His will and with His knowledge. Good and evil both exist by Allāh's decree, but He does not like evil and warned against it. Allāh has decreed for mankind and jinn the ability of free choice during their temporary period on earth, and thus they are accountable and earn the consequences of whatever they choose to do. Those who believe and strive to do what is right are helped by Allāh to accomplish their aims, and those who reject His guidance and make efforts toward evil are allowed to do so, although Allāh becomes angry with them. Man is responsible for his efforts because he acts by choice, but Allāh decrees the outcome, and His justice is absolute.

Faith in divine predetermination makes even the most severe trials easier for believers because they know that Allāh does not do anything without a purpose and that whatever befalls them is not indiscriminate or random, but rather, it happens according to a precise and perfect plan.

ما شاء الله كان

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

Questions:

1. Name the six pillars of faith.
2. What are some of the tasks of angels?
3. What is the difference between angels and jinn?
4. Which of the Books of Allāh should we follow and why?
5. What will happen on the Last Day?
6. What is the meaning of "Qadar"?
7. Are people compelled by Allāh to do good or evil? Explain.



Lesson 3

TAWHĒED AND SHIRK

TawhĒed is the basis of Islāmic belief in Allāh. It means believing, declaring and affirming that there is no true god except Allāh – none other than Him and none along with Him. None is similar to Him, none creates and sustains except Him, none shares in His authority, and none has the right to govern creation but Him. He is the one and only divinity, and He alone is worthy to be worshipped and obeyed.

The opposite of tawhĒed is **shirk**, which means partnership, sharing or considering any created thing or being as equal to Allāh. The Qur'ān says:

"Indeed, shirk is a great injustice." (31:13) إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ

Shirk is unjust because it is wrong and incorrect to say or believe that anything else shares in the divinity of Allāh or is worthy of the worship due to Him. The greatest lie is to claim that anything other than Allāh creates, sustains creation or controls destiny, so it is both improper and useless to pray to any other but Allāh when seeking help. Others can help us only when Allāh allows them to. Shirk is the worst sin a person can commit because it means he is denying that only Allāh can give blessings. If someone dies worshipping anything other than Allāh, he will not be forgiven.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا

"Indeed, Allāh does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And he who associates others with Allāh has certainly invented a tremendous sin." (4:48)

TawhĒed, the confirmation of Allāh's oneness, refers to the concept that:

- 1) He is alone, without partner in His lordship and His actions
- 2) He is single and unique in His essence and His attributes
- 3) He is distinct in divinity and the only one worthy of worship

TawhĒed is expressed in the phrase *لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ* "*Lā ilāha ill-Allāh*," which means: There is no [true] god except Allāh. TawhĒed eliminates any concept of duality, trinity or plurality of gods found in other beliefs. We Muslims know that there is only one God, who is single, indivisible and unique, and we reject the worship of any objects, natural phenomena, creatures or human beings other than Allāh, the Creator of them all. In fact, every prophet sent to mankind warned against shirk and declared:

يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ

"O people, worship Allāh. You have no other god but Him."

(Qur'ān – 7:59, 7:65, 7:73, 7:85, 11:50, 11:61, 11:84, 23:23, 23:32)

There can be no worship without submission and obedience, and that is the meaning of "Islām." Hence, *lā ilāha ill-Allāh* relates to the matter of authority because the Creator has a natural right to govern His creation. Men who rule by laws other than Allāh's law have set themselves up as equals to Him, and that is clearly shirk. People who are pleased with such rulers and willingly obey them instead of Allāh also commit shirk. A Muslim must always obey those in authority, whoever they may be, as long as their order does not oppose the law of Allāh. But our Prophet ﷺ told us, *"There is no obedience to a created being in disobedience to the Creator."* (An authentic ḥadīth narrated by Aḥmad)

When someone disobeys Allāh, seeking to please others instead of Him or at the same time, he is committing shirk. False objects of worship are not limited to carved idols or to the sun, stars, fire, angels, devils, dead ancestors or so-called saints. They are also plentiful in the form of customs and traditions, scientific theories and political ideologies, powerful rulers and popular personalities, wealth and worldly enjoyments – in short, anything that governs and directs a person's way of life. It is even possible that one commits shirk because his own wishes and inclinations are being obeyed by him instead of Allāh.

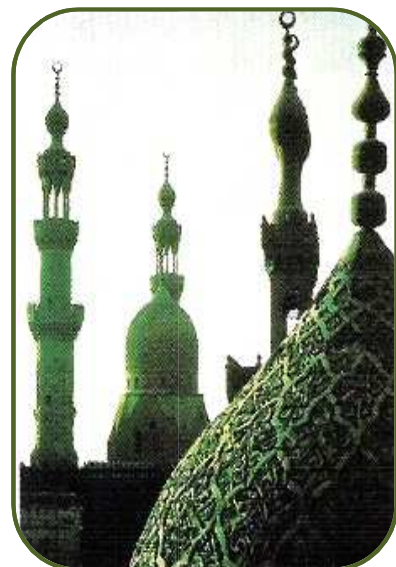
أَرَأَيْتَ مَنْ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ

"Have you seen the one who has taken as his god his desire?" (25:43 and 45:23)

Tawḥeed in belief and in practice is what purifies the soul and pleases Allāh. Worship of Allāh alone and earnest adherence to His religion earns for the Muslim acceptance of all his good deeds, forgiveness of his errors, the love and mercy of his Lord and entrance into eternal Paradise.

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of "tawḥeed"?
2. What is the meaning of "shirk"?
3. How is obedience related to worship?
4. Mention a ḥadīth about obedience.
5. Give some examples of things that are worshipped besides Allāh.
6. How are they worshipped?
7. What is the result of tawḥeed?



Lesson 4

YAWM AL-QIYĀMAH

كَمَا بَدَأْنَا أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُعِيدُهُ وَعَدَّا عَلَيْهَا إِنَّا كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ

"As We began the first creation, We will repeat it – a promise binding upon Us. Indeed, We shall do it." (21:104)



Among the pillars of faith is a Muslim's belief in the Last Day, which is the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm al-Qiyāmah*). Allāh, the Exalted, has informed us in the Qur'ān that the present creation is limited to a specific term decreed by Him. At the end of that term everything will be destroyed by His command, and He will initiate a new creation, which is the Hereafter. Scientists study the birth and death of immense galaxies

within our universe, but we cannot imagine how the entire universe will end except through the descriptions given in the Qur'ān. You can read Sūrahs at-Takweer, al-Infithār, al-Inshiqāq and az-Zalzalah to learn of some of the great events which will occur on that Day.

Just as the universe exists for a specific time known only to Allāh, everything in it has its own lifespan – the galaxies, the stars within them, and the planets with their moons and satellites. Living creatures on the earth are no exception. All of them, including men and their civilizations, exist within a term decreed by Allāh. He informed us:

مَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى

"We did not create the heavens and earth and what is between them except in truth and for a specified term." (46:3)

وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَّهَا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ

"And the sun runs [on course] toward its resting point. That is the determination of the Exalted in Might, the all-Knowing." (36:38)

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ

"And for every nation is a term. So when their time has come, they will not remain behind an hour, nor will they precede [it]." (7:34 and 10:49)

Every individual also has a lifespan determined by Allāh. Its length is not so important. What really matters is how one makes use of it because at the time of Qiyāmah all people will be brought back to life on a new earth to be asked about everything they used to do in this world and why they did it. Our Prophet ﷺ affirmed, *"The feet of a person will not move on Yawm al-Qiyāmah until he is questioned about four things: his life and how he spent it, his knowledge and what he did with it, his wealth – from where he obtained it and how he spent it, and his body – how he used it."* (Narrated by at-Tirmidhi – ṣaḥeeḥ)

Not the smallest deed or innermost secret can be hidden from Allāh, and not an atom's weight of good or evil will be missing from the record on Yawm al-Qiyāmah. Every person will witness everything he did and will be convinced beyond any doubt about the justice of his fate – whether he deserves punishment or is worthy of mercy. Allāh will rightly punish the persistent wrongdoers and will forgive the believers who repented from their sins and endured the trials of this world with patience and faith. There are only two destinations in the Hereafter: either the fire of Hell or the gardens of Paradise – depending on the nature of our deeds in the life of this world.

Allāh informed Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ of some things that would take place before Yawm al-Qiyāmah. But when people asked him when it would be, Allāh revealed verses of the Qur'ān stating that this knowledge remains with Him alone. Allāh, the Exalted, did not reveal the time of Qiyāmah because what He wanted us to know instead is that we should be preparing for it. And He sent us the guidance we need for that in His Book and through the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ.

However, the Prophet ﷺ did suggest that al-Qiyāmah is as near to each person as his own death – similar to sleep, when one finds the morning has arrived immediately upon awakening. That is because the soul is then removed from the limits of time and space. So if we contemplate, we will find it is no farther away than the few days, hours or minutes we have left on this earth. And Allāh confirms:

إِنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَهُ بَعِيدًا وَنَرَاهُ قَرِيبًا

"Indeed, they see it as distant, but We see it as near." (70:6-7)

This means that not only should we prepare for Yawm al-Qiyāmah by repenting from wrongdoing, obeying Allāh, and worshipping Him sincerely but that we must not lose any time in doing so. This life we are living is our one chance to acquire the best of the Hereafter, so we must not waste it. Allāh, the Most Merciful, has given us all this information so we can take the best advantage of our opportunities here on earth and use them well.

Questions:

1. Will the present creation last forever?
2. What will happen to the universe on Yawm al-Qiyāmah?
3. What will happen to human beings on Yawm al-Qiyāmah?
4. About what will people be questioned?
5. How should we prepare for Yawm al-Qiyāmah?



Lesson 5

QADAR

Not a single thing takes place except that Allāh knows it beforehand, and nothing occurs except by His will and His decree. Allāh predetermined everything that has happened from the beginning of creation and everything that will ever happen until its end. All of it is registered in the eternally preserved tablet, *al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfūth*. Whatever is decreed by Allāh must occur, and what was not decreed by Him can never occur. Nothing happens in this universe, good or bad, except by His will, and none of His creation can change anything that Allāh has decreed. This divine predetermination is called *Qadar*. The Qur'ān tells us:

وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ قَدَرًا مَقْدُورًا

"And the command of Allāh was a destiny determined." (33:38)

Qadar is Allāh's plan for His creation. Even when we do not understand it, we do not question Allāh about what He does because human comprehension is very limited. Instead, we believe in Allāh's complete justice and wisdom and that He does not decree except what is good. Difficulties and disasters become easier to bear with the knowledge that these trials are decreed for us as opportunities to earn His great reward. For Allāh has instructed believers that when some matter worries them or a calamity befalls them to seek help from Him through patience and prayer. At a time determined by Him, He will then relieve their distress, provide a solution and give them unlimited rewards in the Hereafter for whatever they endured.

Everything exists by Allāh's will. He who created people also created the means by which they act – their own wills and abilities. They do good or bad deeds through the will and ability which Allāh has given them. Human wills and abilities do not operate outside the will of Allāh, who created them. Although our deeds, our destiny and our fate is willed by Allāh and known to Him, it does not mean He forces us to do right or wrong, good or evil, because He has willed to give us a choice about what we do. So our decisions are within the framework of His will. Allāh knows what every person will choose to do and then allows him to do it. He does not call us to account for anything outside our control or beyond our ability. But we are responsible for every free choice we make, and we will find the consequences of it both in this life and the next.

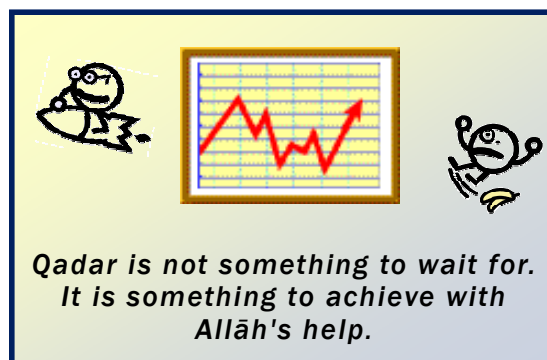
When Allāh gave us these options, He also gave us the guidance by which to make smart choices. He informed us of what pleases Him and what angers Him; of what earns reward and what earns punishment. He mapped out for us the path to Paradise and warned us to avoid the path of Hell. Then He honoured us with trust and responsibility to obey Him willingly, and not merely automatically as

other creations do. That is how we earn His approval and reward – through our willing obedience to Him and sincere worship.

Some people are lazy and careless; they might neglect their duties and make problems but blame the negative results on destiny or fate. And perhaps they cause damage or injury to others and then claim that it was Qadar. Some even say that if Allāh had willed, they would not have sinned or committed crimes. All of this is wrong because Allāh taught us how to live and ordered us to always do what is right. It is sinful for a person to blame someone else for his own mistakes, and it is even worse to blame Allāh, the Exalted, for them. Allāh has not ordered anything that man cannot do and has not prohibited anything he cannot avoid because His justice is complete and perfect. Each individual is held responsible within the limits of his ability and not beyond it. Whatever choices a person makes and acts upon freely can never be excused by blaming fate. Only those misfortunes which are beyond one's control may correctly be attributed to Qadar.

And some people think that since everything is predetermined by Allāh, there is no use in trying to change an unfavorable situation. That is also wrong because everything Allāh determines is the result of a cause. So when a person uses a means to achieve something, Allāh has decreed the outcome accordingly. Everyone knows that if someone does not eat, his fate will be certain death; yet he eats to avoid that fate. In the same way, hard work and careful planning generally lead to success, while laziness or carelessness undoubtedly lead to failure; and righteous deeds lead to Paradise and evil ones lead to Hellfire...

"Cause and effect" is a natural law created by Allāh to be utilized by His creatures. It is the law by which Qadar is determined. So everyone's destiny in this life and in the Hereafter is predetermined by Allāh, but it is the direct result and consequence of our own choices and deeds, and this is what Allāh has willed and decreed.



Questions:

1. What is the meaning of "Qadar"?
2. What should we know when troubles afflict us, and how should we act?
3. Can we choose to do something that Allāh has not willed?
4. Does Allāh compel people to behave in a certain way? Explain.
5. Should people submit to their fate and not try to change anything?
6. What is the relationship between Allāh's will and human will?

Lesson 6

THE PILLARS OF ISLĀM



In Book One we learned the pillars of Islām, which are: shahādah (declaration of faith), ṣalāh (performance of regular prayer), zakāh (required annual expenditure), ṣaum (the fast of Ramadhān) and ḥajj (pilgrimage to Makkah).

Islām is based on these five pillars and, like a building, it cannot stand without them. But we know that a building is not complete with pillars alone. If one is to live or work in it, it also needs to have a floor, roof, walls, doors, windows, interior furnishings, and so on. The additional essentials in Islām are the sum total of what Allāh has ordered in the Qur'ān and through His Messenger ﷺ. For a Muslim's Islām to be complete he must observe not only its five pillars but all of its commands and prohibitions to the best of his ability. Let us briefly review:

1. Shahādah is the confirmation of a Muslim's belief. It is expressed in the words: *Ash-hadu allā ilāha ill-Allāhu wa ash-hadu anna Muḥammadan 'abduhū wa rasūluh*. They mean: "I bear witness that there is no god except Allāh, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and His messenger." These words are not simply a slogan to be repeated. They are an oath to be acted upon, one that affects the Muslim's attitudes and his behavior. Islam is not merely a private belief; it is a complete way of life.

The other four pillars (ṣalāh, zakāh, ṣaum and ḥajj) require only a limited expenditure of time, effort or wealth. But the concept expressed in the shahādah is part of everything a Muslim does. It means that he lives his whole life according to the teachings of Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ. And that is the true meaning of worship – obedience and submission to Allāh.

The second part of the shahādah is affirmation that Muḥammad was the one appointed by Allāh to convey His final message, to explain it and to teach it to mankind by being a role model and practical example. The Qur'ān orders Muslims to obey Allāh and to obey the Messenger ﷺ because in matters of religion, he spoke only according to what Allāh willed and commanded. Thus, his Sunnah (way or method) is the second source of Islāmic legislation after the Qur'ān.

We recite the shahādah in every ṣalāh and on other occasions, such as after the completion of wudḥū'. It is confirmation that we are Muslims.

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

2. Ṣalāh (prayer) has always been a basic part of the religion taught by the prophets of Allāh. It is the backbone of the religion and the key to Paradise. It is essential in Islām and is the first thing a person will be questioned about on Yawm al-Qiyamāh. Anyone who denies that ṣalāh is obligatory or claims he does not need to pray cannot be considered a Muslim. Allāh ordained the regular performance of five obligatory prayers in every 24 hours in order to purify our hearts, remove minor sins, and please our Creator, to whom we will return after death. All additional prayers are voluntary.



Allāh wants us to remain connected to Him throughout our lives. He wants to answer our du‘aa’ and accept our repentance. He wants us to confide in Him and rely upon Him in every situation. When we faithfully turn to Allāh at every time of prayer as He instructed, He is pleased with us and appreciates our remembrance of Him. And when we finally return to Him in the Hereafter, He will receive us with the greatest honor and reward.

3. Zakāh is a financial form of worship with social benefits. It is the right of Allāh and, by His command, the right of the poor and needy upon every Muslim blessed with adequate provision and additional wealth. It is also an obligation and a form of worship, so it must be accompanied by the intention to obey Allāh and earn His reward. That is what distinguishes it from a tax in materialist systems. It also differs from charity in that it is an obligatory duty; anyone who denies it cannot be considered a Muslim, and anyone who withholds it is a sinner.

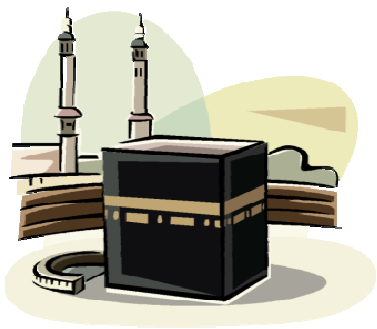


4. Ṣaum (fasting) is an expression of complete submission to Allāh. Fasting in Islām means abstention from food, drink, smoking and marital relations from the break of dawn until the setting of the sun. Although abstention might appear to be something negative, it is in effect positive, for it is done with the intention to draw nearer to Allāh.



Allāh ordained fasting throughout the month of Ramadhān. It teaches men to free themselves from the domination of their animal natures and take control of their physical selves. It strengthens our willpower and provides training in patience. There is social benefit also because experiencing hunger causes Muslims to appreciate the extent of their own blessings and reminds them of those who do not find enough food to fill their stomachs and relieve their suffering at the end of the day. It encourages us to help those people as much as we can.

5. Ḥajj, or pilgrimage to the Ka'bah, is the fifth pillar of Islām. It is a reflection of pure faith, total submission and love for Allāh. Ḥajj is obligatory once in a lifetime, but only upon those Muslims who have the physical and financial ability to make the journey. The Muslim performs a series of rites of obedience on specific days. When his Ḥajj is performed sincerely and without sin, it is accepted by Allāh and the pilgrim returns home purified of all previous sins, having obtained forgiveness and an abundance of blessings.



Questions:

1. What are the pillars of Islām? Are they sufficient to make one's Islām complete?
2. What is the meaning of the shahādah? How does it affect a Muslim's life?
3. What are the sources of Islāmic legislation?
4. What is the first thing we will be asked about on Yawm al-Qiyāmah?
5. What are some of the benefits of ṣalāh?
6. What are some of the benefits of ṣaum?
7. Who is required to perform Ḥajj?

Allāh, the Exalted, has said in the Qur'ān:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allāh is

ISLAM

Note: The following sections will contain some fiqh (legislative) rulings. Although the prevalent schools of thought differ over some of them, they are mentioned in this book according to what has been confirmed by authentic ḥadīths. This method is not only more correct in keeping with the Sunnah but less confusing for the student.

Lesson 7

ṬAHĀRAH

Ṭahārah means purity. A Muslim should be pure in both heart and body. He purifies his heart by sincere worship of Allāh. And he purifies his body by wudhū' (ablution) and ghusl (complete bath). But since performing them is a form of worship, they also serve to purify his heart and soul.

Physical purity is part of Islām. If a Muslim comes in contact with impure or unclean substances, he must wash them from his body and clothing. These substances include:

1. Pigs or any part of them
2. The dog, except for its hair
3. Dead animals which have not been Islāmically slaughtered for consumption, with the exception of fish, locusts and insects with no running blood
4. Blood that has flowed from an animal or a human body; but bleeding that cannot be prevented from a wound is overlooked during worship
5. Human vomit, urine and excrement
6. Urine and stool of animals that are not permissible for consumption

Water is considered pure and suitable for purification unless it is mixed with unclean elements to the degree that its taste, color or smell is changed. If one is uncertain about the purity of water, he should assume it is pure and not question further. Doubt is not sufficient to make it impure.

When clothing has been contaminated by an impurity, it must be washed out with water. Any stain remaining after washing is excused. One's place of prayer must also be clean and pure. The ground is purified by removing from it any solid impurities or their decay. In the case of impure liquids, water must be poured over them, or they must be allowed to dry completely under the sun.

METHODS OF BODILY PURIFICATION

You learned how to purify yourself for prayer by performing ghusl and wudhū' in Book One. Here is a review with the addition of some new information.

1. **Ghusl** – Allāh has said:

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا

"If you have become sexually impure, then purify yourselves." (5:6)

And He said:

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّى يَطْهُرْنَ

"And do not approach them [wives] until they have become pure." (2:222)

A complete bath is required:

- When a non-Muslim embraces Islām
- After sexual intercourse
- After discharge of seminal fluid due to arousal or dreams, but not due to cold or illness
- At the cessation of a woman's monthly period or post partum bleeding
- At death – the deceased Muslim is washed before being shrouded for burial

During menstruation and bleeding due to childbirth, a woman cannot pray, fast or perform ṭawāf around the Ka'bah until the flow of blood has completely stopped and she has performed ghusl. She is also prohibited from marital intercourse at that time, but nothing else is forbidden between her and her husband. She does not make up prayers missed during these periods but must make up the days of fasting missed during Ramadhān. Any bleeding which might occur outside the normal days of menstruation or after 40 days from childbirth is not included in the prohibition. However, a woman with this problem must clean the private area and make wudhū' before every fardh ṣalāh until the flow has stopped. The same rulings apply to people who are unable to control their urine or passing of wind.

Ghusl is preferred but not required:

- Before attending the Friday prayer (Ṣalātul-Jumu'ah) and the 'Eid prayer (Ṣalātul-'Eid)
- Before entering the state of iḥrām (consecration for Ḥajj or 'Umrah)



To make the ghusl valid, one must first have the intention (niyyah) in his/her mind either to remove the state of impurity or to make ghusl in adherence to a sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. (The intention should not be spoken aloud.) The other condition is that skin of the entire body must be thoroughly wet with water. It is best to follow the practice of the Prophet ﷺ when performing ghusl, which is:

- First, saying "Bismillāh"
- Washing the hands and then the private area
- Washing the hands again and then making wudhū' as for ṣalāh
- Pouring water and rubbing it into the head three times
- Pouring water and washing the whole body, beginning with the right side

2. **Wudhū'** – In Sūrah al-Mā'idah, Allāh instructed:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ

"O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles." (5:6)

Ablution is required for ṣalāh and ṭawāf. It is preferred, but not required, for reading the Qur'ān and holding the muṣḥaf. (A muṣḥaf is a volume containing the Arabic text of the Qur'ān alone. It does not include other books containing Arabic text along with translation or explanation of the meanings.) The Prophet ﷺ also used to make wudhū' at the beginning of ghusl and before going to sleep at night.

For wudhū' to be valid, one must have the intention (niyyah) in mind, wash the forearms including the elbows, wipe over the head, and wash the feet and ankles once. The sunnah practice of the Prophet ﷺ is:

- Cleaning the teeth before wudhū'
- Saying "Bismillāh" when beginning
- Washing both hands to the wrists three times
- Rinsing out the mouth and nose three times
- Washing the face three times
- Washing the right and then left arm including the elbows three times
- With wet hands, wiping over the head and ears once
- Washing the right and then left foot including the ankles three times
- After wudhū' is completed, reciting: *"Ash-hadu allā illāha ill-Allāhu waḥdahu lā shareeka lahu, wa ash-hadu anna Muḥammadan 'abduhū wa rasūluh."*



3. **Tayammum** – Allāh also instructed:

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ. مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

"But if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have had intercourse with wives and do not find water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and hands with it. Allāh does not intend to make difficulty for you, but He intends to purify you and complete His favor upon you that you may be grateful." (5:6)

When someone is unable to use water or it is not available, clean sand or dust from the earth may be used for purification. This is called *tayammum*. Any substance of the earth (ground) serves the purpose, such as sand, clean soil, stones or dust that has settled on something. Tayammum is allowed as a substitute for both wudhū' and ghusl in the following circumstances:

- When there is no water or an insufficient quantity for purification
- When the amount of water available is needed for drinking, cooking or watering animals
- When someone is injured or ill and using water would cause him further harm

How to do tayammum:

- Begin with the niyyah as in wudhū' or ghusl, and say, "Bismillāh."
- Strike the ground (or the substance being used) with both hands, and then blow off any excess dust. Wipe over the face with the hands once. Then wipe the hands over one another to the wrists once.
- Tayammum substitutes for wudhū' or ghusl and enables a person to do any acts of worship that normally require ghusl and wudhū'. It does not need to be renewed for every prayer as long as the previous tayammum has not been invalidated.
- Tayammum is invalidated by the same things that invalidate wudhū' and also by the availability of sufficient water and the ability to use available water. If a person has already prayed with tayammum and then water becomes available, his completed prayer is valid and need not be repeated.
- When a person has done tayammum in place of ghusl, his completed prayers are valid and need not be repeated. However, it is necessary to perform ghusl as soon as water becomes available.
- If for some reason one is unable to do either wudhū' or tayammum, the prayer must not be neglected or postponed. Instead, he should pray in an impure state and need not repeat the prayer later. Such allowances are from the mercy of Allāh.

4. General Sunnah Practices – There are some natural traditions of cleanliness and good grooming taught by the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ that should be observed by Muslims:

- Male children should be circumcised. It is not mandatory for adult men newly converted to Islām if they find difficulty in doing so.
- Men are encouraged to keep beards when possible.
- For both men and women, hair should be removed from the armpits and pubic area at least once every 40 days. Nails should be trimmed regularly and one's clothing and hair kept neat and clean.



Questions:

1. What is the meaning of "ṭahārah"?
2. Which substances are impure?
3. When is ghusl necessary? When is it recommended?
4. What is the sunnah practice at the beginning of ghusl?
5. When is wuḍhū' necessary? When is it recommended?
6. What is tayammum, and when is it permitted?
7. How do you do tayammum?
8. What cancels or invalidates tayammum?
9. Can prayers be postponed when there is no water? Explain.



Words of Wisdom

- When Allāh ordains, He sustains.
- An attitude of gratitude generates more blessings.
- Plan ahead. Remember, Noah built the ark when it wasn't raining.
- The best way to get something done is not to care who takes the credit for it – but Allāh knows.
- Everyone receives advice, but only the wise profit from it.
- He who prostrates before Allāh can stand before anyone.
- Before you speak, ask yourself: Is it necessary? Is it true? Is it thoughtful? And is it better than silence?
- Everyone wants to change the world, but it begins with changing the self.
- One thing you can't recycle is wasted time. And Allāh will ask you about it.
- Feelings result from thoughts, not circumstances. So trust in Allāh.



Lesson 8

MORE ABOUT ṢALĀH



In Book One you learned about the five obligatory (fardh) prayers of fajr, thuhr, 'aṣr, maghrib and 'ishā' and some of the sunnah prayers. You also learned how to pray correctly. By now we are all aware of the compulsory nature of the fardh prayers and that there is no acceptable excuse in the sight of Allāh for ever missing a single one of them, except when a person is unconscious or the case of women during menstruation and after childbirth. However, Allāh has made certain allowances to enable us to pray even in difficult situations. Among them is tayammum, which can take the place of the two ablutions: wudhū' and ghusl. Others will be discussed below.

Prayer While Traveling

During a journey, one is allowed to shorten four rak'ah prayers, omitting the last two rak'ahs and making the salām after the second rak'ah. He may also join thuhr and 'aṣr prayers, praying both consecutively (two rak'ahs each) any time during the period of thuhr or 'aṣr. Likewise, he may pray maghrib (three rak'ahs) and 'ishā' (two rak'ahs) joined any time during the period of maghrib or 'ishā'. Fajr is prayed as usual. Among sunnah prayers, only the fajr sunnah and the witr were maintained by the Prophet ﷺ during travels.

Although some scholars have set a minimum limit at about 88 kilometers, no specific distance for a trip is given in the sunnah. If one intends to settle in a place for some time, he prays as though at home. However, if he stops temporarily and is delayed, he may continue to shorten (but not join) prayers even for a long period, as this was the practice of the Prophet ﷺ and his companions after him.

The Prayer of the Sick and Disabled

Impaired physical condition does not prevent prayer. The fardh is required as long as one's mental capacity is intact and he can discern when it is time for ṣalāh. A Muslim who is unable or finds difficulty in standing may pray sitting on the floor or on a chair. If unable to sit, he may pray lying on his right side, bowing his head slightly for rukū', and somewhat lower for sujūd. If he is unable to do this, he may pray on his back or in any position possible, indicating rukū' and sujūd with his eyes, as Allāh, the Exalted has said:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

"Allāh does not charge any soul except with what it can bear." (2:286)

Making Up Prayers (Qadhā')

Every Muslim should make a serious effort to pray his fardh ṣalāh at the beginning of its period whenever possible. The extension of that period is a mercy from Allāh for those who for some reason are unable or would find difficulty in doing so. Anyone who unintentionally sleeps through the time of a prayer or forgets it is not considered sinful, but he must fulfill that obligation immediately as soon as he awakens or remembers. That is the only compensation for a missed prayer when it is unintended.

On the other hand, many scholars are of the opinion that a prayer missed deliberately can never be made up. One who commits such a major sin can only repent sincerely to Allāh for his neglect and try to eliminate it through an abundance of good deeds. For Allāh has said in the Qur'ān:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرَى لِلذَّاكِرِينَ

"And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds. That is a reminder for those who remember." (11:114)

Sujūd as-Sahu: Prostration for Forgetfulness

Sujūd as-sahu compensates for certain mistakes so that the prayer need not be repeated. It is two prostrations made at the end of the prayer, either before the salām or after it. It is prescribed in the following cases:

- Forgetting to sit for the first tashahhud – done before the salām
- Doubt about how many rak'ahs were prayed – One should assume the lesser number and continue until he is certain that the prayer is not incomplete. Then he does the sujūd before the salām.
- Forgetfully making the salām before the prayer is complete – The missing rak'ahs are performed and followed by the sujūd after the final salām.
- Mistakenly praying an extra rak'ah if one remembers or has been informed of it. The sujūd is done after the salām.

This was the practice of the Prophet ﷺ. However, there is no harm in making the two prostrations before or after the salām in any case.

THE COMPONENTS OF ṢALĀH

Not all acts of ṣalāh are of equal importance. Some aspects are essential to it, and their omission invalidates the prayer. Others are recommended but not required. The following table shows the classification of essential, required and sunnah acts of ṣalāh:

Rukn (essential): If omitted for any reason, the prayer is invalid and must be repeated.

Wājib (required): If omitted by mistake, it can be compensated by sujūd as-sahu, but if deliberately, the prayer is invalid.

Sunnah: Whether omitted by mistake or deliberately, the prayer is valid and nothing is required.

Standing during obligatory prayers when one is able to do so	rukṇ
Saying the opening takbeer ("Allāhu akbar")	rukṇ
Raising the hands with the opening takbeer	sunnah
Placing the right hand over the left on the chest	sunnah
Looking toward the place of prostration	sunnah
Du‘aa’ al-istiftāḥ (opening supplication)	sunnah
Seeking refuge from Shayṭān	sunnah
Reciting "Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥeem" and Sūrah al-Fātiḥah	rukṇ
Saying "Āmeen"	sunnah
Reciting additional verses or a sūrah after al-Fātiḥah	sunnah
Reciting out loud in fajr, maghrib and ‘ishā’ prayers	sunnah
Rukū’ (bowing at the waist)	rukṇ
Saying "Allāhu akbar" when bowing	sunnah
Saying "Subḥāna rabbi al-‘aṭḥeem" once when in the position of rukū’	wājib
Saying "Subḥāna rabbi al-‘aṭḥeem" more than once or additional praise	sunnah
I’tidāl (returning to the standing position)	rukṇ
Saying "Samī’ Allāhu liman ḥamidah" while returning to the standing position	wājib
Saying "Rabbanā wa lakal-ḥamd" while standing	wājib
Additional praise of Allāh while standing	sunnah
Saying "Allāhu akbar" when changing positions (other than i’tidāl)	sunnah
Sujūd (prostration)	rukṇ
Saying "Subḥāna rabbi al-a‘lā" once while prostrating	wājib
Saying "Subḥāna rabbi al-a‘lā" more than once and/or additional du‘aa’	sunnah
Sitting between the two prostrations	rukṇ
Sitting on the left foot with the right upright and toes toward the Qiblah	sunnah
Saying "Rabbighfir lī" between the two prostrations	wājib
Saying "Rabbighfir lī" more than once between the two prostrations	sunnah
Second sajdah (prostration)	rukṇ
Pausing to attain stability in each position of prayer	rukṇ

Observing the correct order for every rukn of the prayer	rukun
Sitting for first tashahhud and reciting it	wājib
Sitting on the left foot with the right upright and toes toward the Qiblah	sunnah
Placing the hands on the thighs and pointing the right index finger	sunnah
Raising the hands when standing up for the third rak'ah	sunnah
Sitting and reciting the final tashahhud	rukun
Asking blessings for the Prophet ﷺ and additional du'aa'	sunnah
Sitting back on the floor with the right foot extended	sunnah
Saying "As-salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatullāh" twice	rukun
Turning the head to the right and the left while saying the salām	sunnah

Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ said:

"The first of their deeds people will be called to account for on the Day of Judgement is prayer. Our Lord will say to the angels – although He knows most – 'Look to My servant's prayer; was it complete or incomplete?' So if it was complete, it will be recorded as complete, but if it was lacking anything, Allāh will say, 'Look, does My servant have any voluntary prayers?' And if he had some voluntary prayers, He will say, 'Complete for My servant his obligatory prayers from his voluntary ones.' Then the [rest of his] deeds are taken accordingly."

(Narrated by Aḥmad, Abu Dāwūd and an-Nasā'ī - ṣaḥeeḥ)



Questions:

1. Is anyone excused from prayer? Explain.
2. What prayers can be shortened during travel? What prayers can be joined?
3. How can a patient pray who is bedridden?
4. When should someone who has slept through a prayer time make it up?
5. What should you do if you doubt how many rak'ahs you have completed?
6. What are the essential parts of ṣalāh that cannot be omitted?
7. What is the ruling about a wājib (required) act?

Lesson 9

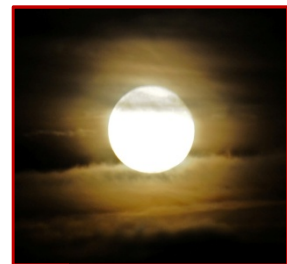
SUNNAH PRAYERS



We know that in addition to the five fardh prayers, a Muslim can draw closer to Allāh and earn extra reward through voluntary prayers at any time of the day and night, except during the three periods mentioned by the Prophet ﷺ: when the sun is rising, setting, or directly overhead before the thuhr adhān. Allāh's Messenger ﷺ informed us that supplementary prayers compensate for deficiencies in fardh prayers. The best of voluntary prayers are those which were performed regularly or recommended by the Prophet ﷺ. The most important of them are:

Rawātib – Sunnah prayers in association with the fardh ṣalāh, either before or after it, are called *rawātib* (plural of *rātibah*). They are: two rak'ahs before ṣalātul-fajr, two or four rak'ahs before ṣalātuth-thuhr and two after it, two rak'ahs after ṣalātul-maghrib and two rak'ahs after ṣalātul-'ishā'. These are strongly encouraged for those who find the time. Rawātib of secondary importance are ones that the Prophet ﷺ is reported to have prayed on occasion but not regularly. They are: two or four rak'ahs before ṣalātul-'aṣr, two rak'ahs before ṣalātul-maghrib and two rak'ahs before ṣalātul-'ishā'.

Tahajjud (night prayers) – Prayer at night, especially after having slept for awhile, was ordained for the Prophet ﷺ by Allāh and is recommended for Muslim believers. Allāh is especially close to His worshipping servants during the last part of the night, and du'aa' is even more likely to be answered at that time. No number of rak'ahs is specified, but the Prophet ﷺ used to pray eight rak'ahs followed by three of witr. And he said, "The best prayer after the obligatory ones is prayer during the night." (Narrated by Muslim)



Tarāweeh prayers are those prayed at night in congregation or individually during the month of Ramadhān. They are usually prayed as eight or twenty rak'ahs, but whatever a person can do is acceptable.

Witr – Witr can be part of tahajjud and is the last prayer of the night. It was done by the Prophet ﷺ regularly, even during journeys, and is the most emphatically encouraged of the sunnah prayers. "Witr" means an odd number, and refers to the single rak'ah which concludes voluntary night prayers. It may be prayed at any time of the night – before sleep or after. And although it is intended as the last prayer of the night, a person may later pray additional rak'ahs if he wishes to do so and should not repeat the witr.

Witr is usually performed two rak'ahs at a time followed by the single rak'ah. Its total can be one, three, five, seven or nine rak'ahs and is done any time after the 'ishā' prayer up until fajr. It is frequently prayed as three rak'ahs, in which case the sunnah is to recite after al-Fātiḥah in the first rak'ah, Sūrah al-A'lā; in the second, Sūrah al-Kafirūn; and in the third, Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ, although any parts of the Qur'ān are acceptable.

It is also a sunnah (and not compulsory) to recite the du'aa' of qunūt (standing supplication) in the single rak'ah of witr prayer either before rukū' or after it during i'tidāl. The following du'aa' was taught by the Prophet ﷺ to be said in witr:

"Allāhummahdinee feeman hadayt, wa 'āfinee feeman 'āfayt, wa tawallanee feeman tawallayt, wa bārik lee feemā a'tayt, wa qinee sharra mā qadḥayt, fa-innaka taqḍhee wa lā yuqḍhā 'alayk. Innahū lā yadhillu man wālayt wa lā ya'izzu man 'ādayt. Tabārakta rabbanā wa ta'ālayt. Nastaghfiruka wa natūbu ilayk. Wa ṣallallāhu 'alan-nabiyyi Muḥammad."

Meaning: "O Allāh, guide me among those You have guided, and grant me health among those to whom You have granted it, and choose me among those You have chosen, and bless for me what You have given, and protect me from the evil of what You have decreed, for it is You who decrees and nothing is decreed for You. He whom You have taken as an ally is not humiliated, and he whom You have taken as an enemy is not honored. Blessed are You, our Lord, and exalted. We ask Your forgiveness and turn in repentance to You. And may Allāh bless the prophet, Muḥammad."

Dhuḥā (mid-morning prayer) – The dhuḥā prayer is a sunnah of two to eight rak'ahs. Its period is from shortly after sunrise to about 20 minutes before the ṭuhr adhān.



'Eid Prayer – On the two occasions of 'Eid a special prayer is held shortly after sunrise. It is preferred in an open area outside the city, but it can be performed in a masjid. All Muslims including women and children are encouraged to attend. This prayer consists of two rak'ahs beginning with additional recitations of takbeer and is followed with a speech by the imām. It is best to make ghusl before attending and to wear one's good clothes.

Istikhārah (requesting the decision of Allāh) – When one considers doing something which is Islāmically permissible but is uncertain about its benefit, he should seek the assistance of Allāh, completely trusting in His preference. The Prophet ﷺ used to teach his companions the istikhārah for all matters great or small and said that if someone intends something, he should pray two rak'ahs other than the obligatory prayer and then say:

"Allāhumma innee astakheeruka bi'ilmika wa astaqriruka biqudratika wa asaluka min fadhlikal-'atheem, fa-innaka taqdiru wa lā aqdiru wa ta'lamu wa lā a'lamu wa anta 'allāmul-ghuyūb. Allāhumma in kunta ta'lamu anna hādhal-amra [mentioning the matter by name here] khayrul-lee fee deenee wa ma'āshee wa 'āqibati amree, faqdirhu lee wa yassirhu lee, thumma bārik lee feeh. Wa in kunta ta'lamu anna hādhal-amra sharrul-lee fee deenee wa ma'āshee wa 'āqibati amree, faṣrifhu 'annee waṣrifnee 'anhu waqdir lee al-khayra ḥaythu kāna, thummar-dhinee bih."

Meaning: "O Allāh, I ask of You Your preference by Your knowledge, and Your decree by Your ability, and I ask of You from Your great favor. For You are able while I am not able, and You know while I do not know, and You are the Knower of all things concealed. O Allāh, if You have known that this matter [naming it here] is good for me in my religion, my livelihood and the end result of my affair, decree it for me, make it easy for me, and then bless it for me. And if You have known that this matter is bad for me in my religion, my livelihood and the end result of my affair, then turn it away from me and turn me away from it, and decree for me what is good wherever it may be; and then make me content with it."

This du'aa' may be recited before the salām or after it. The answer is not necessarily in a dream as some people believe, but in the ease with which the matter is completed or in its prevention by Allāh.

Ṣalātul-Janāzah (funeral prayer) – When a Muslim dies, *janāzah* prayer should be held for him by some (at least one) member of the community, but the more people attending the better. This prayer is



conducted standing throughout, without rukū', sujūd or julūs. Its pre-conditions are the same as for any other prayer. The body of the deceased is placed between the imām and the Qiblah. The imām stands opposite the head if the deceased is a man, and opposite the waist if it is a woman. If there are both sexes among the deceased, the men are placed nearest the imām and the women nearest the Qiblah. The prayer is performed as follows:

1. The imām, followed by the congregation, raises his hands and says, "Allāhu akbar," placing his hands on the chest. He then recites Sūrah al-Fātiḥah silently.
2. He says, "Allāhu akbar" a second time, raising his hands, and recites silently the prayer for blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ, which is said in regular prayers after the final tashahhud.
3. Saying, "Allāhu akbar" for the third time, again raising the hands, he then recites supplications from the sunnah or any other supplication he wishes for the deceased.
4. After saying "Allāhu akbar" for the fourth time, he continues du'aa' briefly and concludes with one salām, turning his head to the right.

When it is not possible to perform the janāzah prayer for a Muslim who has died, a prayer in absence may be conducted. It is called *aṣ-ṣalātu 'alal-ghā'ib* (prayer for the absent). It is performed in the same manner as the janāzah prayer, except the body is not present before the imām.

Ṣalātul-Kusūf (eclipse prayer) – This distinctive prayer during the period of a solar or lunar eclipse (whether total or partial) is a confirmed sunnah. It is preferable in congregation, but may be offered individually, and consists of two rak'ahs, each of which contains two rukū's. It is conducted as follows:



1. The worshipper begins as in any other prayer, standing as usual, reciting al-Fātiḥah and other portions of the Qur'ān for a long period.
2. He then makes rukū' as usual, prolonging it.
3. He returns to the standing position, and after saying, "Rabbana wa lakal-ḥamd," recites al-Fātiḥah again followed by another long portion of the Qur'ān, slightly less than the first.

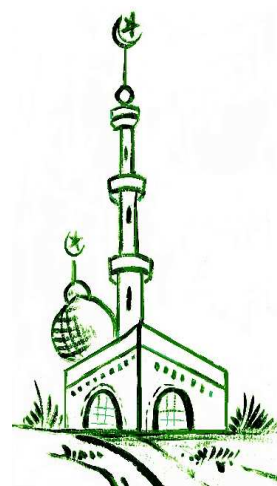


4. He bows in rukū' a second time, prolonging it, and then completes the rak'ah as in regular prayer, also prolonging the period of prostration. Then he stands up again for the second rak'ah.
5. He performs the second rak'ah in the same way as the first, ending with julūs and salām as in ordinary prayers.

الحمد لله رب العالمين

Questions:

1. What are some benefits of voluntary prayers?
2. What are the rawātib? List them.
3. How many rak'ahs are there in the witr prayer?
4. How many rak'ahs are there in the dhuḥā prayer, and what is its time?
5. How do we seek Allāh's help in making decisions?
6. What is ṣalātul-janāzah, and how does it differ from other prayers?
7. What is ṣalātul-kusūf, and how does it differ from other prayers?



READING AND MEMORIZATION

In Book One you began to learn and memorize some short sūrahs to recite in prayer. You learned: Sūrah al-Fātiḥah (1), Sūrah al-‘Aṣr (103), Sūrah al-Kawthar (108), Sūrah al-Kāfirūn (109), Sūrah an-Naṣr (110), Sūrah al-Masad (111), Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ (112), Sūrah al-Falak (113) and Sūrah an-Nās (114). In the coming lessons we will resume study of the shorter sūrahs of Part 30 of the Qur’ān, which is called *Juz’u ‘Amma*.

The Manner of Recitation

- Start recitation by seeking Allāh's protection from Satan, saying: *"A‘ūdhu billāhi minash-shayṭānir-rajeem."* Allāh has said: **"When you recite the Qur’ān, [first] seek refuge in Allāh from Satan, the rejected."** (16:98)
- Say, *"Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥeem"* at the beginning of each sūrah, with the exception of Sūrah at-Tawbah. Say it also if you are to begin with a verse describing Allāh so as not to connect His description to the name of Satan. Otherwise, pronouncing it is optional when beginning in the middle of a sūrah.
- Recite the Qur’ān distinctly and correctly.
- Be humble before the words of Allāh, remember that He is addressing you, and think deeply about the meanings of what you are reciting.
- Avoid talking and laughing during recitation. Allāh instructed: **"And when the Qur’ān is recited, then listen to it and pay attention that you may receive mercy."** (7:204)

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



SŪRAH AL-MĀ'ŪN

(Assistance – 107)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالدِّينِ ﴿١﴾ فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي
يَدْعُ الْيَتِيمَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَا تَحْضُ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ ﴿٣﴾
فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٤﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ
﴿٥﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَيَمْنَعُونَ الْمَاعُونَ ﴿٧﴾

Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥeem

1. Ara'aytal-ladhee yukadhdhibu bid-deen
2. Fadhālikal-ladhee yadu'ul-yateem
3. Wa lā yaḥudhdhu 'alā ṭa'āmil-miskeen
4. Fawaylul-lil-muṣalleen
5. Alladheena hum 'an ṣalātihim sāhūn
6. Alladheena hum yurā'ūn
7. Wa yamna'ūn al-mā'ūn

Meaning:

1. Have you seen the one who denies the Recompense?
2. That is the one who drives away the orphan
3. And does not encourage the feeding of the poor.
4. So woe [i.e., destruction] to those who pray
5. [But] who are heedless of their prayer
6. Those who make show [of their deeds]
7. And withhold [simple] assistance.

This sūrah speaks about some of the characteristics of those who are weak in faith. Since they do not really believe that Allāh will call them to account for their deeds in the life to come, they are heedless and feel no responsibility toward weaker members of society, such as orphans and people in need. And even if they should pray, they do not pray sincerely to Allāh but only because others expect it of them. While they pretend to be virtuous, it is only for show. They will not go to the least trouble for anyone unless they think they can gain a worldly benefit. If they were true believers, they would surely fear the anger of Allāh and hasten to change their behavior.

Lesson 10

THE NOBLE QUR'ĀN

The Qur'ān is not like any other words or any other book, so the scholars have given it a particular definition. The Qur'ān is defined as: "the words of Allāh revealed to Muḥammad ﷺ, the recitation of which is a form of worship." Obviously, this definition cannot be applied to anything else.

Reading and recitation of the Qur'ān is an important form of worship for which a Muslim can expect great reward and benefit in the Hereafter. "The Qur'ān" means the actual words of Allāh in their original Arabic language, and Allāh's Messenger ﷺ informed us that we obtain the reward of a good deed for every letter we read or recite of the Arabic Qur'ān. And he also said: *"Whoever recites the Qur'ān being skillful in it will be with the noble messenger angels. And whoever recites it faltering, as it is difficult for him, will have two rewards."* (Al-Bukhārī and Muslim)

So a Muslim should recite the Qur'ān regularly and not neglect it. But that alone is not sufficient because there is a definite purpose behind recitation of the Qur'ān, which Allāh has explained:

كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ

"A blessed Book which We have revealed to you, [O Muḥammad], that they might reflect upon its verses and that those of understanding would be reminded." (38:29)

The Qur'ān is a message from Allāh, our Creator, to each one of us. Therefore, we need to understand what it says. Every Muslim who is able should make an effort to learn Arabic, the language of the Qur'ān. If that is not possible, then reading a translation of the Qur'ān's meanings in order to know what Allāh has said and to live by His instructions is a deed of great merit, for no one can afford to be ignorant of the Qur'ān's contents. It was revealed by Allāh to regulate and govern human life, and it speaks with the perfect knowledge of the Creator about His creation. It states the truth, invites everyone to the way of truth, and contains important information about human destiny. A person who understands and appreciates the meanings of the Qur'ān comes to know the attributes of his Creator and to love Him and fear His displeasure. From the Qur'ān he can understand the purpose of his life on earth and what is expected of him during his life. He also becomes aware of the consequences of his attitudes and behavior and learns how to relate to all things – to his Lord, to his fellow men and to all of creation.

Allāh, the Exalted, has described His Book, saying:

ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

"This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allāh." (2:2)

وَهَٰذَا كِتَابٌ أَنزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

"And this is a Book We have revealed [which is] blessed, so follow it and fear Allāh that you may receive mercy." (6:155)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُّبِينًا

"O mankind, there has come to you a conclusive proof from your Lord, and We have sent down to you a clear light." (4:174)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَتْكُمْ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَشِفَاءٌ لِّمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

"O mankind, there has come to you instruction from your Lord and healing for what is in the breasts and guidance and mercy for the believers." (10:57)

When he strives to apply its teachings to life, the Muslim attains a high moral, intellectual and social level. That is why Allāh's Messenger ﷺ said: *"The best among you are those who learn the Qur'ān and teach it."* (Al-Bukhārī)

Questions:

1. Give a definition for the Qur'ān.
2. How should one recite the Qur'ān?
3. Why was the Qur'ān revealed?
4. What can a person know from the Qur'ān?
5. Quote a verse and a ḥadīth about the Qur'ān.



Did you know...

- *That while all the other religious obligations were revealed to Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ upon the earth, the five daily prayers were ordained by Allāh in the heaven? It happened during the Prophet's miraculous night ascent (mi'rāj).*
- *That ṣalāh and zakāh are mentioned together in 26 verses of the Qur'ān?*

Lesson 11

HOW THE QUR'ĀN WAS COMPILED

As the Qur'ān was being revealed to Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, many of the Ṣaḥābah (his companions) committed the verses to memory as the Prophet recited them. There were also scribes who wrote down the revelation on pieces of leather, bone and palm leaves, and its verses were placed in order and arranged as Allāh had designated and as His Messenger instructed. At the time of the Prophet's death, almost all Muslims had memorized portions of it, and many of them had memorized the entire Qur'ān. In addition, it had been inscribed in entirety, although not yet compiled in one volume. Some of the Ṣaḥābah had made personal copies for themselves after having memorized it from the Prophet ﷺ.

Collecting and compiling the Qur'ān followed soon after the Prophet's death during the caliphate of Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq. Upon the advice of 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb, Abu Bakr charged Zayd bin Thābit with bringing all of the Qur'ān together on written sheets. These were checked for accuracy against what had been memorized by a great number of the Ṣaḥābah. After the death of Abu Bakr and then of 'Umar, the collection remained with 'Umar's daughter, Ḥafṣah, who also had been the Prophet's wife.

The standardization of one authentic volume (*muṣḥaf*) took place during the caliphate of 'Uthmān bin 'Affān. The copy kept by Ḥafṣah was obtained, and upon the order of 'Uthmān it was transcribed with great care by four of the most knowledgeable scribes: Zayd bin Thābit, 'Abdullāh bin az-Zubayr, 'Abdur-Raḥmān bin al-Ḥārith bin Hishām and Sa'eed bin al-'Aaṣ. Copies were sent to each of the Islāmic territories to replace all other collections in circulation. 'Uthmān kept a copy in Madīnah, and the original sheets were returned to Ḥafṣah. There was consensus by the Ṣaḥābah that what is contained in this standard copy is the true revelation received by Muḥammad ﷺ from Allāh, the Exalted.

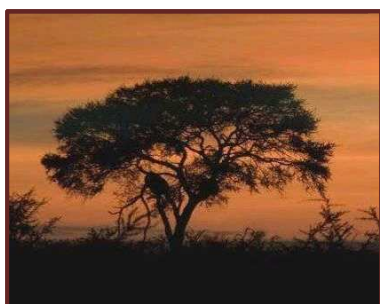
The *muṣḥaf* of 'Uthmān had no dots or vowel marks because they were not necessary for those who knew the pure Arabic tongue. With the spread of Islām among other peoples, there arose a need to guard against incorrect reading and misinterpretation of the Qur'ān. At first, scholars were reluctant about these additions, but it was finally agreed that they did not affect the text itself and were merely aids to proper pronunciation and understanding. There has been no addition, subtraction or alteration in the words or even the letters of the Qur'ān since the time of its revelation. Thus, its original text was protected and preserved as Allāh had promised.

Questions:

1. How did the Ṣaḥābah keep the revelation from being lost?
2. When was the Qur'ān collected into one volume?
3. When was the standard copy transcribed, and by whom?
4. Why were dots and vowel marks added to the letters?
5. Has there been any change in the Qur'ān's words? Explain.



A page of the Qur'ān
from the third century



TIME is a valuable commodity on lease to us from Allāh. He has granted it to us for earning the best of this life and the Hereafter. Wasted time is lost opportunity. Muslims are expected to make the best use of their time, and Allāh will question every person about how he spent his time on the Day of Judgement.

The early scholar, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri, said:

- ♦ You are but numbered days. For each day that has gone, a part of you has gone.
- ♦ Not a day passes but that it says, "O son of Adam, I am a new day that will witness your deeds. And when I leave you, I will not return."
- ♦ Your day is a guest, so treat it well. If you do so, it will go on its way praising you; but if you do not, it will go on its way blaming you.
- ♦ The world is but three days: yesterday, which has gone with all it contained; tomorrow, in which you may not be present; and today, which is yours, so use it well.



Lesson 12

THE MIRACULOUS QUR'ĀN

The Qur'ān is the final revelation from Allāh to mankind and it contains a divine message for the benefit of humanity. "Qur'ān" means "that which is read or recited." It is the only book in human history that has been not only transcribed, but memorized by millions of people and transmitted orally, generation after generation, exactly as it first came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. That in itself is miraculous.

But the Qur'ān's miracle is not limited to its documentation and preservation. It is also miraculous in content. It is a statement from the Creator of the universe from beyond the limits of creation. It contains information about previous civilizations, foretells events which have since come to pass, and cites many facts unknown to man until recent developments in technology led to their discovery by scientists. Although only uncovered and confirmed by modern science within the last two centuries, these facts were revealed to the unlettered Prophet over 1400 years ago – truths about the universe and its creation, about the earth and other heavenly bodies, about the animal and plant kingdoms, secrets of life, the human body and much more. At the time of the revelation and for many centuries thereafter, such things could have been known only to Allāh, Creator of the heavens and the earth. However, He promised to make them evident at a later date, saying:

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ

"We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth." (41:53)

Nevertheless, the Qur'ān was not meant to be a book of science. It is a book of guidance. It urges man to consider the signs in Allāh's creation, to think about these evidences and study them. A person of intellect cannot deny them. He will logically conclude that no man could have written this Book. And he will be led to true faith based on conviction and certainty.

Another miracle of the Qur'ān is found in the precision, accuracy and beauty of its language, which can be appreciated by those with an extensive knowledge of Arabic. Scholars have pointed out that every word, in fact, every letter has a definite function in the expression of various meanings. And the precise arrangement of words within its verses gives each sūrah of the Qur'ān its own distinct rhythm when recited correctly.

This unique Arabic text is no less than the actual words of Allāh as revealed to His final Messenger ﷺ. So naturally, a translation can never take the place of the original, and no translation can be called "the Qur'ān." Among its miracles is that no human being has ever been able to produce anything similar to the Book of Allāh. How could they, when the knowledge and ability of Allāh is perfect and absolute?

Whether reciting, listening or studying, it is essential to begin with the correct intention, which is that you are doing it for the acceptance and approval of Allāh. Learn the Qur'ān's general meanings and find out what Allāh expects of you. For this purpose, you may make use of a translation or explanatory notes. But in cases of uncertainty or disagreement, the Arabic text is the only valid reference. True understanding will be reflected in the application of all you have learned. Keep in mind that Allāh is addressing you directly, that His guidance is complete and perfect, and that it is indispensable for your wellbeing in this life and the next.

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the word "Qur'ān"?
2. Mention some of the Qur'ān's unique aspects.
3. What is proven by the scientific facts stated in the Qur'ān?
4. Can a translation take the place of the Arabic Qur'ān? Explain.
5. What shows real understanding of the Qur'ān?



**Did you know that over 1400 years ago,
Allāh, the Exalted, said in the Qur'ān...**

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

"Have those who disbelieved not considered that the heavens and the earth were a joined entity, and We separated them and made from water every living thing?" (21:30)

وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ

"And the heaven We constructed with strength, and indeed, We are its expander." (51:47)

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسُ ضِيَاءً وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا وَقَدَرَهُ مَنَازِلَ

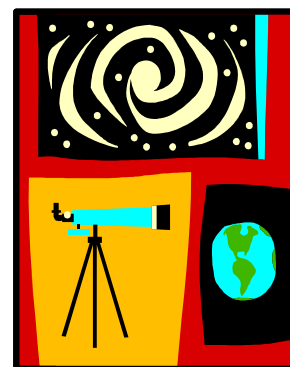
"It is He who made the sun a radiating light and the moon a derived light and determined for it phases." (10:5)

وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَهَا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ

"And the sun runs [on course] toward its stopping point; that is the determination of the Exalted in Might, the Knowing." (36:38)

وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

"And from all things We created two counterparts; perhaps they will be reminded." (51:49)



READING AND MEMORIZATION

SŪRAH QURAYSH

(The Quraysh – 106)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

لَا يَلْفِ قُرَيْشٍ ۖ إِيَّاهُمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ ﴿١﴾
فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ ﴿٢﴾ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِّنْ
جُوعٍ وَءَامَنَهُمْ مِّنْ خَوْفٍ ﴿٣﴾

Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥeem

1. *Li-eelāfi quraysh*
2. *Eelāfihim riḥlatash-shitā'i waṣ-ṣayf*
3. *Falya'budu rabba hādhal-bayt*
4. *Alladhee at'amahum-min jū'iw-wa-āmanahum-min khawf*

Meaning:

1. For the accustomed security of the Quraysh –
2. Their accustomed security [in] the caravan of winter and summer –
3. Let them worship the Lord of this House,
4. Who has fed them from hunger and made them safe from fear.

Allāh, the Exalted, had honored the Quraysh with security, prosperity and prestige among the tribes of Arabia. The privilege and reputation they gained as custodians of the Ka'bah allowed them to travel throughout the land without fear of being harmed. It also enabled them to conduct commercial dealings with the neighboring regions, and this was a source of abundant profits and great wealth. They sent their caravans filled with goods for trade in winter to the south and in summer to the north.

Freedom from hunger and fear is among the greatest blessings bestowed upon people by Allāh, and is not enjoyed by everyone on earth. Although Allāh had favored the Quraysh with many blessings, they committed shirk. They filled the Ka'bah with idols to worship and forgot Allāh, the Lord of the Ka'bah. Allāh appointed His final Messenger ﷺ from among the Quraysh and called upon them before everyone else to worship none but Him.

In fact, all people should show gratitude to Allāh for His countless blessings by worshipping Him alone.

Lesson 13

PROPHETS IN THE QUR'ĀN

Part One

From the beginning of man's existence on earth, Allāh sent prophets to guide humanity. The first was Ādam and the last was Muḥammad ﷺ. Unlike other creations, man was blessed with a free will to make his own choices. But many human beings misuse the abilities and powers granted them by their Creator, causing disorder in their world. Thus, they are in need of guidance. The Creator of intelligent beings provided them with the guidance they need. He sent messages to mankind through human messengers.

The Islāmic creed did not begin with the prophethood of Muḥammad ﷺ, nor was it invented by him. It is basically the same message contained in previous divine scriptures and taught by all the prophets of Allāh. As you remember, a prophet (*nabi*) is someone chosen by Allāh to receive His revelation. Some prophets are also messengers. A messenger (*rasūl*) is a prophet sent by Allāh with legislation to reform society.

Thousands of prophets and messengers were sent to mankind throughout history until the time Allāh willed to send Muḥammad ﷺ as the "seal of the prophets." In fact, a prophet was sent at some time to every previous nation, conveying to them the message of Allāh. In the Qur'ān, Allāh addresses His final Prophet ﷺ, saying:

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ لَمْ نَقْصُصْ عَلَيْكَ

"And We have already sent messengers before you. Among them are those [whose stories] We have related to you, and among them are those [whose stories] We have not related to you." (40:78)

Only twenty-five prophets are mentioned by name in the Qur'ān, but their stories represent the history of da'wah, generation after generation. The focus of their message was tawḥeed. They all taught that the Creator alone is worthy of worship, and none of His creation has that exclusive right.

The prophets named in the Qur'ān are listed in the following chart. The amount of detail given in its text about each of them varies. For example, the story of Yūsuf takes up an entire sūrah, Nūḥ and Mūsā are referred to in several sūrahs, other prophets are mentioned less often, and some only briefly. We respect all prophets of Allāh, and when one of them is mentioned, we say, *'alayhis-salām* ("peace be upon him").

Name

English equivalent



Ādam	Adam
Idrees	---
Nūḥ	Noah
Hūd	---
Ṣāliḥ	---
Ibrāheem	Abraham
Ismā'eel	Ishmael
Is-ḥāq	Isaac
Lūṭ	Lot
Ya'qūb	Jacob
Yūsuf	Joseph
Shu'ayb	---
Ayyūb	Job
Mūsā	Moses
Hārūn	Aaron
Dāwūd	David
Sulaymān	Solomon
Yūnus	Jonah
Dhul-Kifl	---
Ilyasa'	Elisha
Ilyās	Elias
Zakariyyā	Zechariah
Yaḥyā	John
'Eesā	Jesus
Muḥammad	---

The five most eminent prophets are called *ulul-'azm* or "those of determination." They are mentioned briefly in this and the following lesson.

Prophet Nūḥ – When Allāh created Ādam, He appointed him as a prophet to teach his descendants the worship of Allāh. The people of Nūḥ were the first of them to commit shirk and worship idols. At first, they erected statues to remind them of certain pious men who had passed away. But later generations forgot that they represented human beings and began to worship them as gods. So Allāh sent Nūḥ as a messenger to invite them back to the correct religion.

Nūḥ tried every means of da‘wah to persuade his people to leave the useless idols and worship Allāh, but he did not succeed. They were arrogant, and they mocked and threatened him. Even his wife and one of his sons remained among the non-believers. Nūḥ continued his efforts for the cause of Allāh for many long years. But only a few of the poorer people believed in his message.

Finally, Allāh revealed to Nūḥ that no others would follow him except those few believers. So Nūḥ made du‘aa’ to his Lord to rid the earth of the evil ones that prevented worship of Him. Allāh inspired Nūḥ to build a ship large enough to hold his family, the few believers and a pair of every living creature. Then He sent floodwaters to cover the earth and destroy the wicked nation. His son, who refused to join them in the ship, was drowned as well. Only the believers who boarded the ship with Nūḥ were saved. Their descendants eventually spread throughout the earth once again.

Prophet Ibrāheem – Whenever people forgot the guidance of Allāh, He sent a noble messenger to remind them of the truth. Ibrāheem grew up in an age of darkness and ignorance, but Allāh had blessed him with intelligence and ability to reason. Thus, he was able to overcome his opponents among the disbelievers in lively debates. The Qur’ān relates his encounter with a tyrannical king who claimed to be a god, and with his own father, the man who crafted the idols worshipped by his people. Once, in order to convince the people that idols were unable to harm or benefit anyone, he broke them to pieces. The angry crowd built a great fire and threw Ibrāheem into it, but Allāh saved His messenger by commanding the fire to be cool and harmless upon him.

Ibrāheem was the father of Prophets Ismā‘eel and Isḥāq. Allāh tested him by showing him in a dream that he must sacrifice his firstborn son, Ismā‘eel. When both father and son showed their readiness to carry out the order, Allāh sent a ram to be sacrificed in place of Ismā‘eel. Later, Ismā‘eel assisted his father in the construction of the Ka‘bah. The Arabs, including Prophet Muḥammad, are descended from Ismā‘eel. The Jews and the many prophets sent to them from among the Children of Israel are descended from Isḥāq and his son, Ya‘qūb, who was also called Isrā‘eel.

Questions:

1. Why did Allāh send prophets and messengers?
2. How many are mentioned in the Qur'ān? How many can you name?
3. Relate the story of Prophet Nūḥ. How did Allāh punish his nation?
4. What do you know about Prophet Ibrāheem?
5. Who were his descendants?



Listen to the advice of Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic...

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ. وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

"O you who have believed, fear Allāh as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims. And hold firmly to the rope of Allāh all together and do not become divided. And remember the favor of Allāh upon you when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favor, brothers. And you were on the edge of a pit of the Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus does Allāh make clear to you His signs that you may be guided." (3:102-103)

وَأِنْ تَطِيعْ أَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يُضِلُّوكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ

"If you obey most of those upon the earth, they will mislead you from the way of Allāh. They follow not except assumption, and they are only guessing." (6:116)

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْعَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا

"And keep yourself patient with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance. And let not your eyes pass beyond them, desiring adornments of the worldly life, and do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his desire and whose affair is ever in neglect." (18:28)

Lesson 14

PROPHETS IN THE QUR'ĀN

Part Two

Prophet Mūsā – Mūsā was from among the Children of Israel who were enslaved by the tyrant, Fir'aun (Pharaoh) in Egypt. By the will of Allāh, he was saved from being killed at birth and was adopted by Fir'aun's wife, so he spent the early years of his life in their household. As a young man, he saw an Egyptian abusing an Israelite and struck him, unintentionally causing his death. With no hope of a just hearing, he became a fugitive and traveled to Madyan, where he met Prophet Shu'ayb and married one of his daughters.

After some years during a journey with his wife, Allāh spoke to Mūsā, telling him that he had been chosen to take His message to Fir'aun and his corrupted people. He reassured Mūsā that He would protect him from harm and supported him by appointing his brother, Hārūn, as a prophet to assist him. He also supported him with miracles as signs of his prophethood. These miracles convinced the magicians of Fir'aun, who became believers in Allāh and consequently were executed for that.

Fir'aun arrogantly claimed that he was the god of his people. He and his establishment were enraged by the da'wah of the two prophets and increased their persecution of the Children of Israel. Finally, Allāh ordered Mūsā to lead his people out of Egypt, and by a miracle He caused the Red Sea to divide, allowing them to escape. When Fir'aun and his soldiers pursued them, the sea returned to its natural state, drowning them all. Thus, Allāh saved those who had been oppressed and punished their oppressors.

But instead of being grateful to Allāh, the Children of Israel began to commit shirk and often disobeyed Mūsā and Hārūn. They challenged them, even demanding to see Allāh. On account of their repeated defiance they were denied entrance to the promised land for forty years. Throughout the many trials he endured and to the end of his life, Prophet Mūsā proved his determination, strength of character and devotion to Allāh.

Prophet 'Eesā – The last in a series of prophets who were sent to invite the Children of Israel back to belief and righteousness was 'Eesā, the son of Maryam (Mary). His mother gave birth to him while a virgin, by the will of Allāh. While still in the cradle, 'Eesā spoke, announcing his prophethood. The claims of his divinity made by Christians after his death were never uttered by him, and the Qur'ān refutes them. Allāh, the Almighty, supported 'Eesā by enabling him to perform certain miracles, but even so, most of the Jews denied him, rejected his message and became his enemies.

They went on to plot against him, accusing him of treason against the Roman state, and persuaded the governor that he should be eliminated. But while his enemies were preparing to crucify him, Allāh assured him that He would raise him up to Himself instead. A criminal who resembled ‘Eesā was seized by the Romans and crucified in his place. The Qur’ān confirms that Prophet ‘Eesā himself was not crucified.

During his lifetime, ‘Eesā foretold the coming of a messenger after him who would be called Aḥmad, which is another name for Muḥammad. And Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ informed us that ‘Eesā will return to the earth to restore truth and justice not long before the Last Day.

Prophet Muḥammad – Even before his prophethood, Muḥammad was known as *al-Ameen* (the Trustworthy). He was from the tribe of Quraysh, born in the "Year of the Elephant." He grew up as an orphan and tended sheep as a boy. He had no formal education, but his intelligence and honesty made him widely respected as a young man. It was because of this that Khadijah, a noble businesswoman and widow, proposed to marry him. They remained contentedly married for 25 years until her death, and she was the first person to accept his call to Islām.

Allāh's final messenger to mankind is described only occasionally in the Qur’ān, but he is addressed throughout it since the revelation contains instruction to him, and through him to all people. However, every detail of his life has been preserved in the verified narrations which make up the ḥadīth literature. This information has been carefully collected and thoroughly analyzed for accuracy by both early and later scholars specialized in the field, and is the basis of the authentic Sunnah. Another source of information is the books of *seerah*, or the Prophet's biography, which are not unlike history books. Many important lessons can be learned from a detailed study of the Prophet's life, but only a brief summary can be given in this book.

Questions:

1. How did Allāh support Prophet Mūsā when He sent him to Fir’aun?
2. Did anyone believe the message brought by Mūsā and Hārūn?
3. How did the Children of Israel escape from Fir’aun and his army?
4. To whom was Prophet ‘Eesā sent and why?
5. How did his enemies plot against ‘Eesā? Did they succeed?
6. Was the coming of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ expected? Explain.

READING AND MEMORIZATION

SŪRAH AL-FEEL

(The Elephant – 105)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ ﴿١﴾ أَلَمْ تَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ
فِي تَضْلِيلٍ ﴿٢﴾ وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ ﴿٣﴾ تَرْمِيهِمْ
بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ ﴿٤﴾ فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ ﴿٥﴾

Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥeem

1. *Alam tara kayfa fa'ala rabbuka bi-aṣḥābil-feel*
2. *Alam yaj'al kaydahum fee tadhleel*
3. *Wa-arsala 'alayhim ṭayran abābeel*
4. *Tarmeehim-biḥijaratim-min sijjeel*
5. *Faja'alahum ka'aṣfim-ma'kūl*

Meaning:

1. Have you not considered how your Lord dealt with the companions of the elephant?
2. Did He not make their plan into misguidance?
3. And He sent against them birds in flocks,
4. Striking them with stones of hard clay,
5. And He made them like eaten straw.

Allāh reminds us of how He protected His House from harm while the polytheists and all their revered idols were helpless.

Abraham al-Ashram was a ruler of Yemen and the commander of an army led by a great elephant which had come to destroy the Ka'bah in Makkah. He wanted to replace it with a cathedral he had built in Yemen. His army of 60,000 men advanced unopposed until it reached the outskirts of Makkah. The Quraysh, powerless to resist, could only hide in the nearby mountains. The way was now clear for the army to enter the city and attack the Ka'bah.

But Allāh, the Almighty, willed otherwise. Every time they urged the elephant toward Makkah, it refused to advance by command of its Lord. Allāh then sent flocks of birds carrying stones which they dropped on the aggressors, tearing their skins and infecting them with disease. Many of them perished on the spot, and others, including Abraham, fled in panic and died on the way back.

Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ was born later in that same year. It is known as "the Year of the Elephant."

Lesson 15

ḤADĪTH

The duty assigned by Allāh to Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ was not only to convey the message that He revealed but to explain it and put it into practice as an example to be followed by mankind.

وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

"And We revealed to you, [O Muḥammad], the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them and that they might give thought." (16:44)

The Ṣaḥābah who heard his sayings and witnessed his actions related and recorded them in minute detail. These instructions and examples are available in a vast collection of ḥadīth literature. But only narrations which have been carefully traced and screened by qualified ḥadīth scholars and found to be authentic (ṣaḥeeḥ) or acceptable (ḥasan) are acknowledged as the basis of Sunnah. And these ḥadīths alone are acknowledged by religious scholars as evidence that something is a part of the religion or that it is ḥarām (unlawful).

A ḥadīth is comprised of two parts: its text and its chain of narrators. Even when the text seems logical, it needs a verified chain of narrators known for exceptional memory and scrupulous honesty that goes back directly to the Prophet ﷺ to be accepted as valid. Obviously, a ḥadīth shown to be weak, doubtful or forged cannot be authoritative, nor can it be attributed to Allāh's Messenger ﷺ. We must be sure of the soundness of any ḥadīth before quoting it to others. It is sinful to spread anything untrue about the Prophet ﷺ because people will think it is part of their religion and be misled. The most reliable collections of ḥadīth are those compiled by al-Bukhārī and Muslim. Many other collections have been reviewed by ḥadīth specialists who graded each of their narrations as ṣaḥeeḥ, ḥasan or dḥa'eef (weak).

Through study of the accepted ḥadīths we can become familiar with the Sharī'ah (Islāmic law) and the Sunnah. But in many cases, it is not sufficient to merely read a ḥadīth or memorize it. Scholars of *fiqh* (jurisprudence) must often consider the particular conditions or circumstances which led the Prophet ﷺ to do or say what he did before deriving a ruling from a ḥadīth.

The study of ḥadīth is important because it is the second source of legislation after the Qur'ān. In a number of Qur'ānic verses we find the order to obey Allāh and the Messenger. And Allāh has said:

مَنْ يُطِعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ

"Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allāh." (4:80)

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

"And establish prayer and give zakāh and obey the Messenger that you may receive mercy." (24:56)

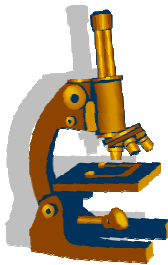
Sometimes a ḥadīth clarifies or gives details about a general statement in the Qur'ān. For example, the Qur'ān orders ṣalāh but does not tell us how to pray. We know this from the Prophet ﷺ, who said, "Pray as you have seen me praying." The Ṣaḥābah noted the exact method of his prayer and taught it to the people.

The authority of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ is derived directly from the Qur'ān. Not only must Muslim believers obey what the Prophet ordered and prohibited, but they should do their best to follow his example of conduct and behavior in every situation. Allāh, the Exalted, has stated that by doing so, one will earn His love and pleasure as well as His generous reward in the Hereafter.

Allāh's Messenger ﷺ said,

**"DEEDS ARE [JUDGED] ONLY BY INTENTIONS,
AND EVERY MAN SHALL HAVE WHAT HE INTENDED."**

(Narrated by al-Bukhāri and Muslim)



Questions:

1. Which kinds of ḥadīth are accepted by scholars as valid evidence and which are rejected?
2. What is necessary for a ḥadīth to be graded as acceptable?
3. Which ḥadīth collections are most reliable?
4. Why is the study of ḥadīth important?

From the Prophetic Ḥadīths

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

- ❖ *"Indeed, Allāh, the Exalted, has imposed [religious] obligations, so do not neglect them. And He has set limits, so do not overstep them. And He has prohibited things, so do not violate them. And He has kept silent about [certain] things out of mercy to you, not forgetfulness, so do not search them out."* (Ad-Daraqutni – ḥasan)
- ❖ *"Righteousness is good morals, and wrongdoing is that which wavers within yourself and you would not like people to discover."* (Muslim – ṣaḥeeḥ)
- ❖ *"Fear Allāh wherever you are and follow up a bad deed with a good one; it will wipe it out, and deal with people by good moral character."* (At-Tirmidhi – ḥasan-ṣaḥeeḥ)
- ❖ *"Whoever of you sees a wrong, let him change it by his hand; and if he is not able, then with his tongue; and if he is not able, then in his heart, and that is the weakest of faith."* (Muslim – ṣaḥeeḥ)
- ❖ *"Allāh has overlooked for me from my nation [what is done in] error and forgetfulness and what they are compelled to do."* (Ibn Mājah and al-Bayhaqi – ḥasan)
- ❖ *"Keep Allāh in mind – He will keep you from harm. Keep Allāh in mind – you will find Him before you. When you ask, ask Allāh; and when you seek help, seek it from Allāh. Know that even if the [whole] nation assembled in order to benefit you with something, it could not benefit you except by something Allāh had already decreed for you; and if they assembled in order to harm you with something, they could not harm you except with something Allāh had already decreed upon you. The pens have been lifted, and the pages have dried."* (At-Tirmidhi – ḥasan-ṣaḥeeḥ)
- ❖ *"The lawful is clear and the unlawful is clear, and between the two of them are doubtful matters about which many people do not know. So he who avoids doubtful matters has sought to clear himself in regard to his religion and his honor, but he who falls into doubtful matters [then] falls into the unlawful, like the shepherd who pastures around a private area, all but grazing therein. Undoubtedly, every sovereign has private property, and indeed, the private property of Allāh is His prohibited matters. Undoubtedly, within the body is a morsel of flesh which, when it is good, the whole body is good; but when it is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt. Indeed, it is the heart."* (Al-Bukhāri and Muslim – ṣaḥeeḥ)
- ❖ *"Whoever relieves a believer of a distress from the distresses of this world – Allāh will relieve him of a distress from the distresses of the Day of Resurrection. And whoever facilitates a matter for one in financial difficulty – Allāh will facilitate for him matters in this world and the Hereafter. And whoever covers the fault of a Muslim – Allāh will cover his faults in this world and the Hereafter. Allāh is in aid of [His] servant as long as the servant is in aid of his brother. And whoever follows a path seeking knowledge therein – Allāh will facilitate for him a path to Paradise."* (Muslim – ṣaḥeeḥ)

Lesson 16

FROM THE SEERAH

Part One

Muḥammad ﷺ was much discontented with the polytheism practiced by his people. Although they believed in Allāh and traced their ancestry to Prophet Ibrāheem, they also worshipped idols and had placed many of them inside and around the Ka'bah. After his marriage to Khadijah, Muḥammad often retired to the cave of Ḥirā' to contemplate and try to know the truth about his Lord. The angel, Jibreel, brought the first revelation to the Prophet ﷺ during one of these periods in the cave. It was the first five verses of Sūrah al-'Alaq:

أَفْرَأُ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ – خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ.
أَفْرَأُ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ – الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ – عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ.

"Recite in the name of your Lord who created – created man from a clinging clot. Recite, and your Lord is the most generous, who taught by the pen. Taught man that which he knew not." (96:1-5)

From that time on, Prophet Muḥammad's life was one of continuous struggle to carry out the noble duty placed upon him by Allāh, the Exalted. The message he carried was that of every former prophet – that there is no god except the one who created the universe and who sustains all things, and that worship and obedience is due to Him alone.

The first believers in his message were those nearest him – his wife Khadijah, his young cousin 'Ali, his servant Zayd, his close friend Abu Bakr, and a few others who knew him. Then Allāh ordered him to warn all the people and make the message public.

The revelations which came to the Prophet ﷺ during the Makkan period dealt mainly with matters of belief – the unity and exclusiveness of Allāh, His absolute power and ability, and His mercy. It informed of the judgement, the rewards and punishments of the Hereafter, and the personal responsibility of every soul. It taught morality, piety, patience, the spirit of sacrifice, and dependence upon Allāh. It comforted the believers in hardship, giving examples of the difficulties faced by the earlier prophets in their struggle to re-establish the worship of Allāh on earth. And finally, it reassured them that Allāh, in His wisdom, does what is best. The early sūrahs came in powerful language aimed at awakening the hearts of men which had long been unconscious.

At first, the reaction among the Quraysh in Makkah was ridicule. Then it became open persecution of the small but growing group of Muslims. This was because the polytheistic traditionalists felt a threat to their established way of life and to the authority they derived from that social order. The Prophet ﷺ restrained his followers from striking back and counseled patience and forbearance in the face of

hardship until such a time as Allāh would show them the way. Complete trust in Allāh and the reward of the Hereafter disciplined the Muslims and strengthened their will. In spite of increasing problems, the Prophet never ceased to seek out and speak to any who would listen to him.

Hoping to put an end to the disruption of their established social order, the influential people of Makkah attempted to dissuade the Prophet by offering him wealth and authority in return for the abandonment of his call for worship of Allāh alone and criticism of their traditions, in particular, polytheism. When this attempt failed, they renewed persecution, torturing some of the believers, even to death, in the hope of making them renounce their faith.



The Prophet then gave permission for his followers to seek refuge in Abyssinia, where they were received sympathetically by the Christian ruler, an-Najāshi. He refused to send them back to the Quraysh. Frustration at their failure to stop the Muslims led the Quraysh of Makkah to boycott the extended family of Muḥammad and any who supported them. Deprived of food and supplies for

over two years, they endured extreme hardship. After the boycott was lifted, many of those who had been in Abyssinia returned, only to face renewed persecution later on.

Having also suffered great personal loss at the death of his protecting uncle, Abu Ṭālib, and his wife and companion, Khadijah, the Prophet ﷺ made a journey for the purpose of da'wah to the neighboring city of Ṭā'if. He was treated badly and driven out of the city. Exhausted and injured, his only fear was that Allāh might be displeased at the failure. But he had not failed in his duty, which was to convey his Lord's message and nothing more.

In order to test the faith of those who had professed belief in His Messenger ﷺ and in order to show His favor upon him after the severe trials he had endured, Allāh chose to honor the Prophet ﷺ through the miracle of the Isrā' (night journey) to Jerusalem and Mi'rāj (ascension). From Jerusalem he was raised to the heavens during the same night, and there he was shown some of the greatest signs of Allāh. It was there also that the five daily prayers were made obligatory upon all Muslims.

Details of the journey were related to the people the following morning. The Prophet ﷺ was asked by the disbelievers to describe Jerusalem, as evidence for them, which he did accurately. He also informed them of a caravan on its way to Makkah, which arrived at the predicted time. In spite of that, most of them refused to believe. The Muslims, however, had no doubt about what their Prophet had told them.

During the pilgrimage season some people from the northern city of Yathrib heard the Prophet speaking. They embraced Islām and swore allegiance to him. They then returned with the message to their city, where more people entered the faith. Islām spread within Yathrib, and the following year a delegation was sent to pledge that they would defend the Prophet just as they did their own families.



Questions:

1. What was the first revelation from Allāh to Prophet Muḥammad?
2. Who were the first to accept Islām?
3. What was the subject matter of the Makkan revelations?
4. How did the majority of the Quraysh respond to the message of Islām?
5. Where did the Muslims first seek refuge from persecution?
6. What miraculous event occurred after the death of Khadījah?
7. How did Allāh prepare a place of security for the Muslims?
8. Who was the Prophet's companion during the Hijrah?

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

"Amazing is the affair of a believer; all of it is good, and that is for no one but the believer. When he is touched with benefit, he is grateful and that is best for him. And when he is touched by misfortune, he is patient and that is best for him." (Narrated by Muslim)

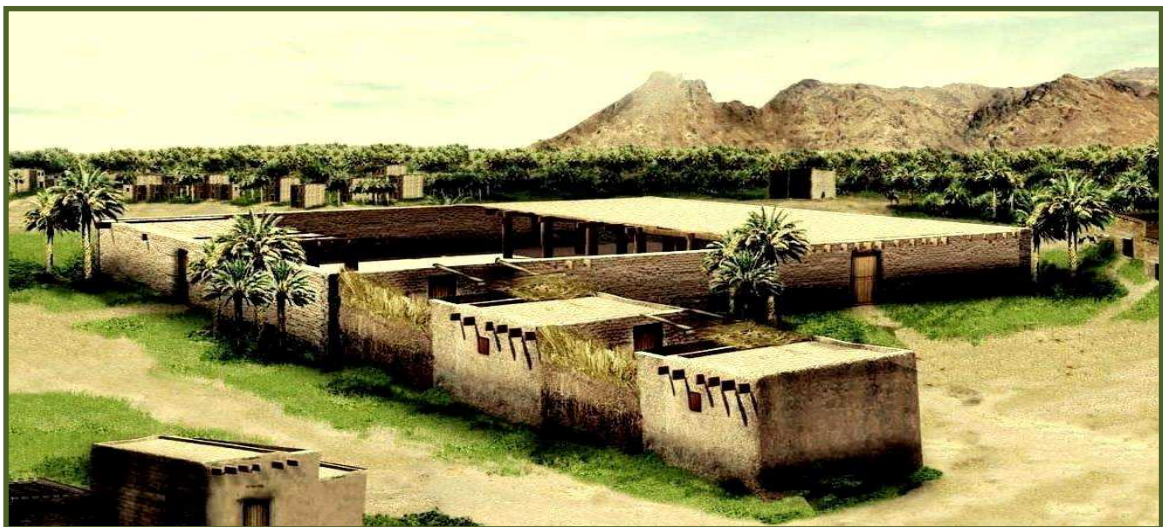
Lesson 17

FROM THE SEERAH

Part Two

After thirteen years of oppression in Makkah, the faithful now had a community of their own, which became an Islāmic state under the leadership of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. The divine legislation was eagerly awaited and immediately established in the community of believers. Now, different matters were being dealt with in the revelation. Relationships with other people were defined. The believers were warned by Allāh against both external enemies and internal weaknesses. This meant that the style of the revelations in Madīnah was different from that of the Makkan sūrahs. Moreover, the Qur'ān was revealed to the Prophet in portions according to the needs and requirements of specific circumstances, giving certainty to the believers that Allāh was indeed with them throughout every situation. And while the Qur'ān was the constitution of the first Islāmic state, its truths and its legislation remain applicable to every age. That is the enduring miracle of Allāh's final Prophet ﷺ.

One of the first things the Prophet did upon settling in Madīnah was to establish a bond of brotherhood between the Anṣār (Muslims of Madīnah) and the Muhājireen (emigrants from Makkah) on an individual basis, which replaced the ties of tribe or class in the Islāmic community. Treaties were made with the Jews of Madīnah and others with the aim of maintaining peace and security in the area, and plans were made for the defense of their city against attack. During this period, the order came from Allāh changing the direction of prayer from Jerusalem back to the Ka'bah in Makkah.



Those Muslims who were unable to emigrate from Makkah had become the object of escalating vengeance by the Quraysh, but still no order to fight had come from Allāh. In desperation, the oppressed people called out to Allāh to save them from the ever-increasing persecution. Finally, permission was given for the Muslims to fight because of the injustices done to them.

Thus began an era of jihād to liberate mankind from the tyranny of other men and establish the word of Allāh upon the earth. The Muslims planned to strike at the Makkan caravans which were essential to the continued prosperity of the Quraysh. They hoped at the same time to recover a small portion of what they had been forced to leave behind. Sensing the danger, the Quraysh sent out an army from Makkah. The result was the Battle of Badr. Upon seeing the Muslims vastly outnumbered, the Prophet ﷺ implored Allāh for support, and He reinforced them with a thousand angels. The victory at Badr established the Muslim community as a political entity and gained for it prestige among the neighboring tribes.

One year later, burning with desire for revenge, the Prophet's enemies amassed an army three times larger than before. The Prophet ﷺ decided it was best to face them in his own territory, so the armies met at Mount Uhud. In the Battle of Uhud, the Muslims, whose numbers were again small in comparison, fought valiantly. They were on the verge of victory when a section of the army, using their own judgement and disobeying the Prophet's orders, caused a weakness in the ranks which was exploited by the enemy. This led to a setback for the Muslims, the loss of many lives, and the wounding of the Prophet ﷺ. It was a costly mistake but a valuable lesson for the believers.

Two years later the Quraysh amassed an even larger force and made alliances with Jewish and other tribes. News of this reached the Muslims. In defense of Madīnah, the Prophet and his companions spent many days and nights digging a trench around the city which kept the attacking armies at bay for almost a month. However, there were enemies from within – hypocrites professing Islām but secretly working against the state. After a tense and difficult period in which their defense was nearly broken, Allāh sent a violent wind against the disbelievers, compelling them to withdraw. This encounter, known as the Battle of al-Khandaq or al-Aḥzāb, was the last attempt by Quraysh to destroy the Muslim base.

In the following period, the Jews, who had broken their treaty with the Prophet ﷺ, had to be subdued as well as the polytheistic tribes which were a continuing threat. But many neighboring tribes, hearing of the "new" religion and sending emissaries to inquire about it, embraced Islām. This period also witnessed several of the Prophet's marriages, all of which were contracted for political and social reasons or out of mercy for widows who had suffered for the cause of Islām.

In the sixth year after the Hijrah, the Prophet and a large company of Ṣaḥābah (his companions) set out for Makkah with the intention of performing 'Umrah. The Quraysh sought to prevent them. Following negotiations, a ten year truce, called the Treaty of al-Ḥudaybiyyah, was established. In return for certain guarantees, the Prophet ﷺ agreed to postpone the 'Umrah until the following year. Greatly disappointed, the Ṣaḥābah reluctantly followed the Prophet's directive. But this truce was, in fact, a formal recognition of the Muslim state and of the right of all people to practice and invite others to the religion. The Qur'ān referred to it as a "clear victory," and the Ṣaḥābah, who had first considered it a concession, later came to understand its benefit and wisdom. During this period, the Prophet ﷺ increased his da'wah activities and many tribes entered Islām. He also sent messages with emissaries to rulers of neighboring nations and empires, inviting them to Islām. Some of them responded favorably while others did not.

Within less than three years, the Quraysh had violated the treaty. Their attempts to deceive the Prophet about it failed, and a Muslim army of 10,000, led by Allāh's Messenger ﷺ, marched toward Makkah. This time, the Prophet met no resistance. He entered the city whose people had been a source of abuse and injury for twenty years. Bowing humbly, he gave thanks to Allāh. Then he told his former enemies, "Go, for you are free." This opened the hearts of the people to Islām. After observing that justice was truly established, they came to the Prophet ﷺ, asking for forgiveness and declaring their support. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ entered the Ka'bah, removed all the pictures, and destroyed the idols. The House of Allāh was now purified once again for the worship of Allāh alone.

In the tenth year of the Hijrah, a great multitude of Muslims accompanied the Prophet ﷺ to Makkah to perform the rites of Ḥajj. It was then that he gave what is known as his "farewell address" in which he clarified and confirmed many aspects of the law and in which he called for justice to all people. He requested those present to pass on what he had said to those who were absent, asking them, "Have I conveyed the message?" Upon hearing their unanimous reply to the affirmative, he said, "O Allāh, witness it."

The religion was now complete and no new legislation was revealed. Early in the eleventh year, Allāh's Messenger ﷺ became ill and ordered Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer. He died on the twelfth day of Rabee' al-Awwal in that year at the age of sixty-three. His teachings live on in the authentic Sunnah.

صلى الله
عليه وسلم

May the blessings and peace of Allāh be upon our Prophet, Muḥammad, and on his family and companions and all who follow his guidance until the Day of Recompense.

Questions:

1. What distinguishes the Qur'ānic verses revealed after the Hijrah?
2. How did the Prophet ﷺ secure stability in Madinan society?
3. Name the three major battles between the Muslims and Quraysh.
4. In which battle did the Muslims suffer a setback, and why?
5. What was the result of the Treaty of al-Ḥudaybiyyah?
6. What did Allāh's Messenger ﷺ do upon the conquest of Makkah?
7. What did the Prophet ﷺ instruct during his Ḥajj?
8. When did the Prophet ﷺ pass away?



Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ said,

"No people assemble in one of the houses of Allāh reciting the Book of Allāh and studying it among themselves but that tranquility descends upon them, mercy envelops them, the angels surround them, and Allāh mentions them among those with Him."

(Narrated by Muslim)

READING AND MEMORIZATION

SŪRAH AL-HUMAZAH

(The Scorer – 104)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ۝ الَّذِي جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُ ۝
يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُ أَخْلَدَهُ ۝ كَلَّا ۚ لَيُنْبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ ۝
وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ ۝ نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمَوْقَدَةُ ۝ الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ
عَلَى الْأَفْعِدَةِ ۝ إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّوَصَّدَةٌ ۝ فِي عَمَدٍ مُمَدَّدَةٍ ۝

Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥeem

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Waylul-li-kulli humazatil-lumazah | 6. Narullāhil-mūqadah |
| 2. Alladhee jama'a malaw-wa'addadah | 7. Allatee taṭṭal'iu 'alal-af'idah |
| 3. Yaḥsabu anna mālahū akhladah | 8. Innahā 'alayhim-mu'ṣadah |
| 4. Kalla, layumbadhanna fil-ḥuṭamah | 9. Fee 'amadim-mumaddadah |
| 5. Wa ma adrāka mal-ḥuṭamah | |

Meaning:

1. Woe [i.e., destruction] to every scorer and mocker
2. Who collects wealth and [continuously] counts it.
3. He thinks that his wealth will make him eternal.
4. No! [But] he will certainly be thrown into the Crusher.
5. And what may make you know what is the Crusher?
6. [It is] the fire of Allāh, [eternally] fueled,
7. Which mounts directed at the hearts.
8. Indeed, it [i.e., Hellfire] will be closed down upon them
9. In extended columns.

Islām prohibits gossip, backbiting and the ridicule of others by speech or gesture of the body. Such behavior angers Allāh, and He has prepared a severe punishment in the Hellfire for those who engage in it.

People who only respect others for what they possess look down on those who have less than themselves. They are obsessed with obtaining more and more wealth, with hoarding it and calculating, thinking that possessions and property alone will bring them security and wellbeing. But worldly prosperity cannot save wrongdoers from death or from Allāh's punishment.

A Muslim should work hard to earn whatever he can lawfully but not become overly preoccupied with wealth and property. Whatever he possesses should not be cherished in his heart but rather, available in his hand to use in ways that are pleasing to Allāh.

Lesson 18

RESPECT AND CONCERN

Allāh's Messenger ﷺ warned that no one who had in his heart an atom's weight of pride would enter Paradise. Then he explained by saying, *"Pride is the prevention of right and looking down upon people."*

(Narrated by Muslim and at-Tirmidhi)

Looking down on someone means to imagine that he/she is unworthy of respect and deserves neglect or even humiliation. For a Muslim, such an attitude is sinful. It is neither proper nor permissible for a Muslim to view his brother in Islām as inferior to himself, no matter what his nationality, race or social status.

And it is unlawful to belittle another Muslim because of a sin he may have committed. Perhaps that person has repented or will repent in the future and be forgiven by Allāh, while the one who looks down on him will not be forgiven for his pride.

Although a believer may feel anger when Allāh is disobeyed and may need to admonish an offender or even boycott him for a time, he must beware of any feeling of superiority, which is a blameworthy vanity.

People often judge others mistakenly according to what is apparent to them, and criticism can turn into scorn or ridicule. Those Muslims who have a superficial understanding of Islām may make the mistake of imitating others in this respect and thus expose themselves to Allāh's anger. Some individuals are conceited and feel superior because of excessive pride in their knowledge, their work or their position of leadership.

In the Qur'ān, Allāh, the Exalted, has commanded:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِنْ نِسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهُنَّ

"O you who have believed, let not a people ridicule another people; perhaps they may be better than them. Nor let women ridicule other women; perhaps they may be better than them." (49:11)

And His Messenger ﷺ added, *"It is sufficient evil for a person to look down on his brother Muslim."* (Narrated by Muslim) He meant that the evil of this sin is enough to earn for someone both a reputation for bad character and punishment in the Hereafter.

A person puffed up with arrogance has an irresponsible attitude toward others. He sees them as undeserving of his attention and of simple kindnesses; he will not visit one who is ill, comfort one who is troubled, or congratulate one who has been blessed with a favor. He will not concern himself with their feelings and needs. He will not oppose injustice against them or give them their rights. In fact, he does not even see that they have any rights.

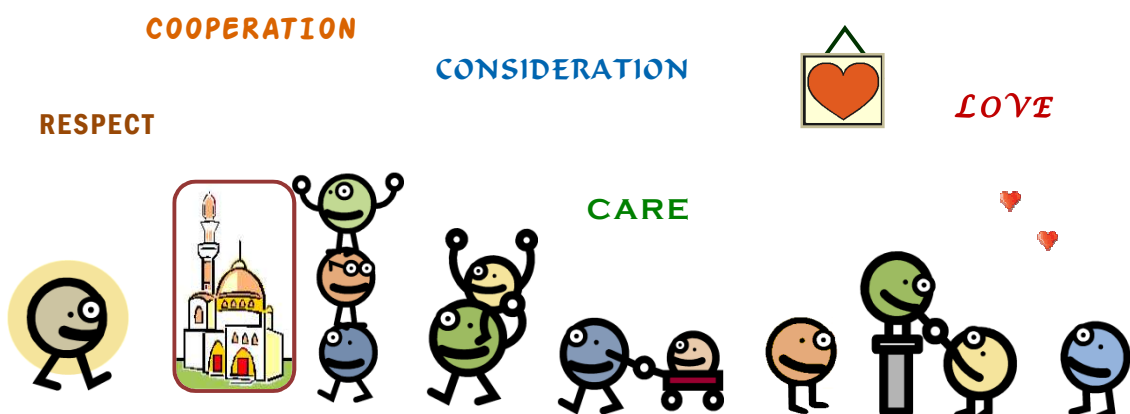
A Muslim who knows and believes in what Allāh has declared in the Qur'ān and what His Messenger ﷺ has said on the subject of pride and arrogance will be humble and modest before Allāh when dealing with his brothers and sisters in faith. He will admit that whatever he enjoys of wealth, intelligence, abilities and opportunities is due to Allāh's favor rather than his own merit. And he will realize that through these blessings his behavior and conduct are being tested by Allāh.

A true believer will feel concern for all humanity. He will oppose injustice and oppression no matter who the victim happens to be. He will make sincere efforts to rectify wrong done to others and uphold the right of all people, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, to respect and honor. He feels particular affection for his fellow Muslims everywhere and does his best to help them, knowing that his Lord is aware of his every word and deed. And Allāh loves him for that and will reward him generously.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ taught us to spread greetings of salām (peace) among our brother Muslims. He also encouraged us to tell those we love because of their righteousness, "I love you for Allāh." And when a Muslim says that to you, reply to him by saying, "May He for whom you have loved me love you." It is a du'aa' (supplication) from our Prophet's Sunnah.

Questions:

1. How did the Prophet ﷺ define "pride"?
2. Can a good Muslim feel superior to others? Cite a ḥadīth as evidence.
3. Recite an āyah (verse) from the Qur'ān about ridicule of others.
4. To whom do we owe our possessions and abilities?
5. What is the responsibility of a Muslim toward his brothers?
6. What does a Muslim say to those he loves? What is the reply?



Lesson 19

MORE ABOUT ZAKĀH

In Book One you learned about zakāh, the third pillar of Islām. The system of zakāh ordained by Allāh, the Exalted, is the ideal way to meet the needs of poorer sections of society without causing hardship to the rich.

Not every kind of wealth or property is subject to zakāh. The main categories stipulated in Islāmic law are:

- ❖ Gold, silver and currencies representing their value
- ❖ Merchandise held for sale
- ❖ Freely grazing livestock
- ❖ Non-perishable agricultural produce

Zakāh is due from every Muslim possessing the *niṣāb* for these particular kinds of wealth, but not for anything else. "Niṣāb" refers to the minimum amount of any type of wealth from which zakāh is due. If one owns less than the niṣāb, no zakāh is required of him. The niṣāb must be in excess of commonly recognized basic needs such as food, clothing, living quarters, transport, the tools or instruments of one's trade, etc. The amount of wealth comprising the niṣāb should also have been in the owner's possession for a complete lunar year before zakāh is due, with the exception of agricultural produce, whose zakāh is to be given at the time of harvest.

The niṣāb, or amount on which zakāh is due from each type of wealth, is:

- ❖ For cash and savings, the niṣāb has been recently calculated at an equivalent of approximately one thousand U.S. dollars. The sum of zakāh due on this amount and whatever exceeds it is 2.5%. Income spent within the year is not subject to zakāh, only what has been saved for a year's time. And anything put aside for the payment of a debt is not included in zakāh calculations.
- ❖ For silver, the niṣāb is an estimated market value of 595 grams. The amount due on this quantity or more is 2.5% of its current value.
- ❖ For gold, the niṣāb is an estimated market value of 85 grams. The zakāh due on the niṣāb of gold and what exceeds it is 2.5%. Scholars differ over whether or not women's gold jewelry is included, but all agree that there is no zakāh on precious stones.
- ❖ For merchandise and commercial commodities which have not been sold one lunar year after their possession, zakāh is due when their market value reaches the niṣāb for currency. It includes anything obtained specifically for sale, whether real estate, machinery, equipment, clothing or any other articles, large or small. Its rate is

2.5%, the same as for monetary savings. There is no zakāh on land, buildings or other property, even that which is rented out, unless it was obtained for the purpose of future sale.

- ❖ Cattle, camels, sheep and goats are the only animals on which zakāh is due, and only if they are freely grazing animals. Those consuming feed supplied by man and whose upkeep involves expense are not subject to zakāh unless they were obtained for resale. From a specified number of each kind, one animal is given as zakāh.
- ❖ Zakāh is due at the time of harvest on approximately 675 kilograms of such staple crops as grains and dates, which may be stored for a long period. It is not due on perishable fruits and vegetables. The zakāh due is 10% from a harvest that was irrigated naturally without labor or expense, and 5% when irrigation canals are dug and pumps or sprinklers employed. When a crop is watered partially by natural means and partially through human effort, scholars agree that the rate for zakāh becomes 7.5%.

Those eligible to receive zakāh are Muslims, and they are limited to eight categories which are mentioned in Sūrah at-Tawbah, āyah 60 of the Qur'ān. These are:

1. **The poor** – A poor man is one who does not possess the niṣāb after covering the year's expenses for himself and his family.
2. **The needy** – The needy are usually considered to be a particular type of poor: those who are too proud or too shy to ask for help, so that most people are unaware of their condition.
3. **Zakāh employees** – These are state employed collectors, whose wages were formerly paid from zakāh funds by the government. Today however, the gathering and distribution of zakāh is done by individuals and organizations, which are not permitted to take zakāh.
4. **For bringing hearts together** – The recipients in this category are people whose support is sought or who can influence others for the benefit of Islām. It may also include new converts who are in need of financial support.
5. **To free captives** – Muslim captives may include prisoners of war, those imprisoned unjustly and slaves.
6. **Those with insurmountable debt** – These are Muslims who are burdened with debts impossible for them to pay, even in the long term.
7. **For the cause of Allāh** – This category includes contribution to a legal jihād called by an Islāmic state or endorsed by qualified scholars. It also includes da'wah (propagation). Imāms, teachers and aid workers residing temporarily or permanently in non-Muslim countries can be supported through zakāh when da'wah activities consume the time they would otherwise have used for earning a living.

8. **The traveler** – A traveler who is stranded with insufficient funds to enable him to return home (perhaps due to loss or theft) may be given from zakāh in case he is unable to find anyone who will lend him the means of return. Eligibility in this category is due to his temporary condition of poverty.

Further details about zakāh may be found in books about fiqh (Islāmic jurisprudence), or when in doubt, you may ask an imām or scholar.

Zakāt al-Fiṭr

Zakāt al-fiṭr is a religious obligation that differs from the zakāh discussed above. It is due at the end of Ramadhān, although it may be given a few days earlier, and consists of a measure of approximately 2.5 to 3 kilograms of staple food or its price. It is required from the head of a Muslim family on behalf of each member in a household that has sufficient food for 24 hours. To be acceptable to Allāh it must be distributed by the morning of 'Eid al-Fiṭr before the people go out for the 'Eid prayer.

Its purpose is to purify Muslims from any minor sins or improper behavior they might have committed unintentionally while fasting Ramadhān, and also to enable the poor to enjoy their 'Eid without having to work or search for food. Its recipients are the same eight categories listed for the zakāh of wealth, although the poor and needy have the greatest right to zakāt al-fiṭr.

Questions:

1. Which kinds of wealth are subject to zakāh?
2. What is the meaning of "niṣāb"?
3. What percentage is required in zakāh from gold, silver, cash savings and unsold merchandise? Which kinds of wealth differ from this ruling?
4. When must the zakāh be paid on these kinds of wealth? Is the due date the same for all kinds?
5. Name the categories of Muslims who may receive zakāh and explain the meaning of each.
6. What is zakāt al-fiṭr, when is it due, and to whom should it be given?



Man gets and forgets but Allāh gives and forgives.

Lesson 20

ŞADAQAH

Şadaqah is a general term referring to anything that is done or given for the acceptance of Allāh and seeking His reward. The concept of şadaqah is wider than that of charity. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ mentioned numerous forms of şadaqah in authentic ḥadīths as examples and illustrations, among them: charities from one's property, helping someone in distress, bringing about a just settlement between two parties, lifting something for a weak person, directing the blind, helping the deaf to understand, visiting the ill, feeding the hungry, clothing the poor, removing harmful objects from the road, planting a seed or shoot, a kind word or smile, benevolence in the home, praising and glorifying Allāh, and even refraining from wrong. There is no limit, for the Prophet ﷺ confirmed on several occasions, *"Every good deed is a şadaqah."* (Al-Bukhāri and Muslim) And he said, *"Whoever directs to something good will have the same reward as the one who does it."* (Muslim)

The Qur'ān and Sunnah strongly encourage the voluntary expenditure of both wealth and effort in the cause of Allāh as a means to earn His approval and reward. Allāh, the Exalted, has said:

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ وَلَهُ أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ

"Who is it that would loan Allāh a goodly loan so He will multiply it for him and he will have a noble reward?" (57:11)

This means that when we give or spend something to help someone here on this earth, our Lord, who is free of any need, considers it as a loan and a favor to Him which He will repay many times over onYawm al-Qiyāmah. Allāh is most generous and encourages His servants to be generous as well. His Messenger ﷺ informed us, *"No morning comes upon the people but that two angels descend, and one of them says, 'O Allāh, give one who spends [on others] replacement,' while the other says, 'O Allāh, give one who withholds ruin.'"* (Muslim)

Anyone who finds a Muslim in urgent need should help according to his ability without regard to nişāb or the passing of a year. Scholars agree that when the zakāh given by the community is insufficient to cover basic necessities for the poor or when Muslims are struck by calamities, there is an obligation upon the wealthy which is limited only by relief of the suffering. The fourth caliph of Islām, 'Alī bin Abi Ṭālib said, "Allāh has imposed on the rich from their properties an amount sufficient for the poor. So if they go hungry or unclothed or suffer hardship, it is because of what the rich withhold, and Allāh will have the right to call them to account on the Day of Resurrection and punish them for it." Obviously, stinginess is a trait greatly disliked by Allāh.

Those most deserving of ṣadaqah are our family members. And those eligible for voluntary ṣadaqah are not restricted to the categories of recipients for obligatory zakāh. In fact, voluntary ṣadaqah, unlike zakāh, may be given to non-Muslim relatives in need, and can serve as a means of da'wah to them.

When the intention is sincere, Allāh will be pleased with our ṣadaqah, accept it and reward us greatly. But we must be careful not to ruin the ṣadaqah and make it unacceptable to Allāh by any of the following:

- ✗ Earning, accepting or giving what is unlawful (ḥarām)
- ✗ Showing off or seeking a worldly benefit such as praise or recognition
- ✗ Harming the recipient by belittling him, making him feel indebted, speaking of the ṣadaqah in front of others or expecting a favor from him in return

Questions:

1. Name some kinds of ṣadaqah. Are all of them financial?
2. Why did Allāh describe ṣadaqah as a loan?
3. What is the duty of a Muslim toward his brothers in need?
4. What ruins and invalidates a person's ṣadaqah?

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Lighter Moments...

- ❖ Nothing ruins the truth like stretching it.



- ❖ Fighting for principles is easier than living up to them.



- ❖ Always forgive your enemies. Nothing annoys them more!



- ❖ A conclusion is the place where you get tired of thinking. So always think positive!



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

SŪRAH AT-TAKĀTHUR

(Increase – 102)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلْهَكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ ﴿١﴾ حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ ﴿٢﴾ كَلَّا سَوْفَ
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣﴾ ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤﴾ كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ
عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ ﴿٥﴾ لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ﴿٦﴾ ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ
الْيَقِينِ ﴿٧﴾ ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٨﴾

Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥeem

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>Alhākumut-takāthur</i> | 5. <i>Kallā, lau ta'lamūna 'ilmal-yaqeen</i> |
| 2. <i>Hattā zurtumul-maqābir</i> | 6. <i>Latarawunnal-jaheem</i> |
| 3. <i>Kallā, sawfa ta'lamūn</i> | 7. <i>Thumma latarawunnahā 'aynal-</i> |
| 4. <i>Thumma kallā, sawfa ta'lamūn</i> | <i>yaqeen</i> |
| 8. <i>Thumma latus'alunna yawma'idhin 'anin-na'eem</i> | |

Meaning:

1. Competition in [worldly] increase diverts you
2. Until you visit the graveyards.
3. No! You are going to know.
4. Then [again], no! You are going to know.
5. No! If you only knew with knowledge of certainty...
6. You will surely see the Hellfire.
7. Then you will surely see it with the eye of certainty.
8. Then you will surely be asked that Day about [life's] comforts.

Most people become absorbed in the affairs of this world to the point that they forget about the Hereafter. They spend their lives collecting wealth and pursuing pleasures while neglecting their prayers and other duties. Only at the time of death do they realize the extent of their error.

Allāh warns us against making the same mistake. He informs us that after death everyone will have certain knowledge of all that was promised in the Qur'ān. People will see the Hellfire with their own eyes. The righteous will be overjoyed for having been saved from it, and the heedless who neglected their responsibilities and committed crimes will be compelled to enter it.

We will all be questioned at the time of judgement about the blessings Allāh granted us – how we used them and whether or not we shared them. If we remember this, we will surely improve our conduct and amend our lives.

Āyahs to Think About...

لَخَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ خَلْقِ النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

"The creation of the heavens and earth is greater than the creation of mankind, but most of the people do not know." (40:57)



إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُمَسِّكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ أَنْ تَزُولَا وَلَئِنْ زَالَتَا إِنْ أَمْسَكَهُمَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا

"Indeed, Allāh holds the heavens and the earth, lest they cease. And if they should cease, no one could hold them [in place] after Him. Indeed, He is Forbearing and Forgiving." (35:41)



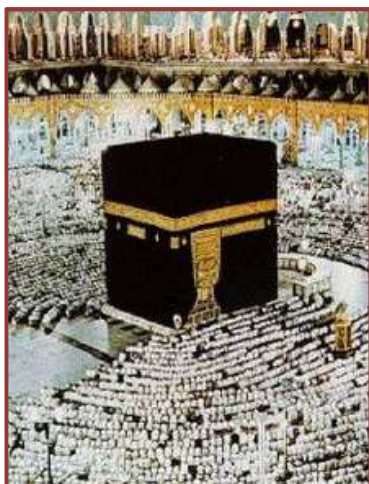
Lesson 21

WORSHIP IN ISLĀM

In the Qur'ān, Allāh, the Exalted, informed us of the purpose of our creation:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me." (51:56)



Islām is a person's fulfillment of his mission in life and the purpose of his creation. We know that Allāh is not in need of our worship, yet He is pleased when His servants obey Him and appreciates their efforts. We are the ones who benefit when we earn His approval and reward. So how does a Muslim continually worship Allāh? If the concept of worship was limited to religious duties like prayer and fasting alone, no one would be able to worship all the time. However, worship in Islām includes not only ṣalāh, zakāh, ṣaum, ḥajj, ṣadaqah, du'aa'

and recitation of the Qur'an, but also everything that is pleasing to Allāh of words, deeds, attitudes and intentions.

The worship of Allāh means constantly remembering Him, and it encompasses everything in life. It is obedience to Him in all He ordered – truthfulness, honesty, fulfilling promises and contracts, encouraging what is right and preventing what is wrong, opposing injustice, respect and kindness to parents and relatives, good treatment of neighbors, of orphans, the needy, servants and animals, teaching knowledge, guiding and counseling, preventing harm from any creature or bringing it benefit – all these are forms of worship. Every act which removes sadness, lightens an affliction, relieves pain, compensates a loss, relieves a burden of debt, or aids the weak is a part of the religion. And it is an act of worship rewarded by Allāh as long as it is intended for His acceptance.

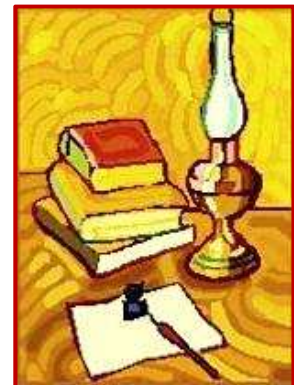
Such deeds are not merely recommended but are ordered as part of a Muslim's daily obligations. The ordinary worldly things a believer does in the course of his life for himself and his family also become acts of worship when certain conditions are present: **1)** that the work or deed is lawful in Islām, **2)** that it is done to benefit himself, his family or his society, **3)** that it is done carefully and honestly and **4)** that it does not divert him from his primary religious obligations. When a Muslim observes all of this conscientiously with the intent to please Allāh, his life is filled with true worship. In fact, the right intent makes his whole life into worship.

This kind of worship can be practiced at any time by any Muslim according to his abilities and is not limited to the rich, the powerful or the highly educated. Beyond the obligatory (fardh) duties of Islām, one may choose from many additional forms of worship which will earn him the acceptance and pleasure of his Creator. A good Muslim is one who enthusiastically enters lawful fields of life, excelling in production, precision and skill. And while he does that, he earns the reward of a worshipper.

Thus, the Muslim believer is a source of benefit, blessing and mercy within his society. He practices good work, promotes it and directs others to it. His charitable deeds are not limited to humanity alone but include all of Allāh's creation. He becomes close to Allāh through his kindness, even to animals and birds. Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ stated, *"For every living creature is a reward."* (Al-Bukhāri) He also said, *"There is no Muslim who plants a plant or a seed from which a person, animal or bird will eat but that it will be counted for him as a charity."* (Al-Bukhāri and Muslim)

Since worship in Islām is so comprehensive, you might wonder which kind is best and most pleasing to Allāh. Some think that the best worship is the most difficult, but that is not necessarily so. And some see the best worship as that which benefits others and is not limited to the self. But most scholars maintain that the best worship is the priority of the moment, such as ṣalāh when its time has come, da'wah when the opportunity arises, assisting someone when needed, and so on. Priority worshippers do not restrict themselves to a particular kind of worship or prefer it over others. Their aim is simply to seek the acceptance of Allāh at all times, and therefore they worship accordingly.

The difference between a believer and others is that a believer has shifted from obeying his own preferences to the obedience of Allāh in what He prefers. The believer lives to obtain the approval of his Lord. His aim is to please Him, become close to Him and earn His reward, so he will not miss any opportunity to do so.



Questions:

1. What is the purpose of our creation?
2. Is a Muslim's life divided between worship and other activities? Explain.
3. How can we worship Allāh outside of our religious obligations?
4. How do all our deeds become worship? Mention the conditions.
5. Which kind of worship is best?

Lesson 22

REPENTANCE

Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, has told us:

وَأَنَا لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَىٰ

"Indeed, I am the Perpetual Forgiver of whoever repents and believes and does righteousness and then continues in guidance." (20:82)

All human beings commit errors and sins during their lives. Some commit serious major sins, and by so doing risk entering the Hellfire unless they sincerely repent. But believers, who remember Allāh and do their best to avoid displeasing Him, do not usually commit grave sins. They sometimes forget, however, and make mistakes or commit minor sins. Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ warned us that deliberately persisting in a small sin is dangerous as well because with time it will add up until it becomes equal to a big sin. Repentance (*tawbah*) is required for all sins, great or small, visible or hidden. It means coming back to Allāh.

When someone commits a sin, it means he has forgotten Allāh, at least temporarily, and followed the path of Shayṭān (Satan). The more and the greater sins he commits, the further he drifts away from Allāh and from His mercy. No believer would like to be in such



a situation because he knows the consequence of disobedience to his Lord. And Allāh, the Most Generous, loves His servants, so He gives them plenty of opportunities to correct errors and escape

their consequences. He has asked us to turn back to Him and repent sincerely whenever we have done something wrong. And when we do that, He has promised to forgive us, whether the sin was large or small. Allāh's Messenger ﷺ said, *"Indeed, Allāh is happier with the repentance of His servant than one of you would be if he came across his camel after he had lost it in a wide open land."*

(Al-Bukhāri and Muslim)

So, what is repentance and how does a person repent? The repentance of a disbeliever or a polytheist is by accepting and entering Islām. The Prophet ﷺ said, *"Islām destroys what came before it, and repentance destroys what came before it."* (Al-Bukhāri)

For a Muslim who has sinned there are a few reasonable conditions to be fulfilled in order for his repentance to be accepted by Allāh:

- ✓ Regret and sorrow must replace the desire and acceptance which allow a sin to continue. One should be fearful of the severe penalty in the Hereafter which can only be avoided through Allāh's mercy. A sincere believer will wish that he had never committed that transgression and urgently seek means to amend the situation.
- ✓ The sinful act must be stopped because repentance is not possible while the sin is still being committed. The offender must cease immediately with determination not to return to that offense ever again. If, however, through human weakness and in spite of serious effort he should fall into the same sin once more, he will have to repent again and renew his resolve to avoid it. Allāh never refuses sincere repentance.
- ✓ An apology is due to Allāh. Sins act as a barrier between the offender and his Lord. Therefore, he must seek Allāh's forgiveness through repeated prayer and supplication, humbly admitting his weakness, his need for mercy and protection, and the evil of what he has done, imploring Allāh to accept his repentance and return him to His grace out of His infinite generosity.
- ✓ The relationship between the wrongdoer and his Lord must be corrected, and the rights of other human beings restored. Any damage caused must be amended as much as possible. In most cases involving obligations to Allāh, the conditions of regret, stopping the sin and apology are the only requirements for forgiveness. In addition, a person can also undertake extra deeds of righteousness such as additional prayers, fasting or charities to improve his condition and help offset the wrong he had done.

As for injury caused to another party, the damage must be rectified or adequately compensated whenever possible, or forgiveness of the other party obtained. For example, if property has been taken in an unlawful manner or damaged, it must be returned or replaced. If that is not possible, something comparable should be done to benefit the wronged party. In case of harm done by word of mouth, one must make the utmost effort to right this wrong by seeking forgiveness of the victim. But if that person is unaware of what was spoken about him and an admission might lead to further problems, the offender should take care to speak well of him on future occasions and make much du‘aa’ to Allāh for his benefit.

Questions:

1. Do believers commit sins?
2. What is the meaning of "tawbah"?
3. What conditions are necessary for acceptable repentance?
4. If someone has harmed another person, what must be done for Allāh to accept his repentance?



Allāh's Messenger ﷺ advised:

"Be in this world as a stranger or traveler."

(Narrated by Muslim)

This means a Muslim should always remember that the world he lives in is but a temporary stopover on the way to his final home in the Hereafter. Therefore, he should not give too much importance to possessions and pleasures in this life. For if they do not leave him first, he will surely leave them behind one day.

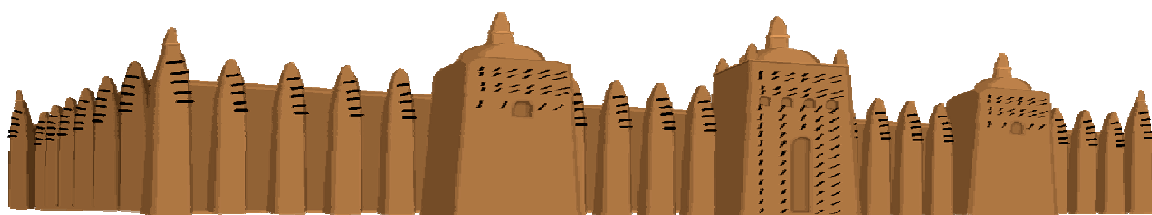


The intelligent believer seeks what will assist him in the preparation of the best permanent home. He will take from this world out of its dwellings, possessions and companions whatever will ease his passage to the next. Like a traveler, he will not carry more than he requires during his journey in order not to be overburdened and perhaps prevented from reaching his destination.

This life is not merely a transition. It is an opportunity. Allāh's worldly favors are also the means to obtain His approval and reward, so earn them lawfully, take them in moderation, and use them in the best way possible. But do not become overly attached to them because they are only on loan...

Be prepared to depart for your final destination at any time. Send provisions on ahead of you in the form of good deeds. You will find them awaiting you on arrival, and everything else will be left behind.

Focus on your destination rather than a temporary station along the way. Would you refurnish a hotel room in which you were going to spend a single night???



SŪRAH AL-QĀRI'AH

(The Striking Event – 101)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْقَارِعَةُ ﴿١﴾ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ﴿٢﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ﴿٣﴾ يَوْمَ
يَكُونُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ ﴿٤﴾ وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ
كَالْعِهْنِ الْمَنْفُوشِ ﴿٥﴾ فَأَمَّا مَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ﴿٦﴾
فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَاضِيَةٍ ﴿٧﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ﴿٨﴾ فَأُمُّهُ
هَآوِيَةٌ ﴿٩﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا هِيَ ﴿١٠﴾ نَارٌ حَامِيَةٌ ﴿١١﴾

Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥeem

1. *Al-qāri'ah*
2. *Mal-qāri'ah*
3. *Wa mā adrāka mal-qāri'ah*
4. *Yawma yakūnun-nāsu kal-farāshil-mabthūth*
5. *Wa takūnul-jibālu kal-'ihnil-manfūsh*
6. *Fa-ammā man thaqulat mawāzeenuh*
7. *Fahuwa fee 'eeshatir-rādhīyah*
8. *Wa ammā man khaffat mawazeenuh*
9. *Fa-ummuhū hāwīyah*
10. *Wa mā adrāka mā hiyah*
11. *Nārun ḥāmiyah*

Meaning:

1. The striking event
2. What is the striking event?
3. And what can make you know what is the striking event?
4. [It is] the Day when people will be like moths, dispersed
5. And the mountains will be like wool, fluffed up.
6. Then as for he whose scales are heavy [with good deeds],
7. He will be in a pleasant life.
8. But as for he whose scales are light,
9. His refuge will be an abyss.
10. And what can make you know what that is?
11. [It is] a Fire, intensely hot.

In this sūrah, Allāh, the Exalted, describes some of the awesome occurrences that will take place at the Final Hour and mentions the account and the judgement. "Al-Qāri'ah" is another name for Yawm al-Qiyāmah, and it means something which strikes, causing a deafening noise. It also carries the meaning of an overwhelming calamity, and refers to the destruction of the entire universe on the Last Day – something unimaginable.

After having been expelled from their graves, people will be running about in panic and confusion like moths around a lamp. They will see the mountains, once solid, beginning to disintegrate, appearing like soft wool. Then everyone will be gathered before Allāh for the judgement.

In order to convince people of the justice of their final destiny, their deeds will be weighed on perfectly balanced scales. A person's good deeds will carry weight and earn him a place in Paradise. But bad deeds will lighten the scale and show that the wrongdoer is worthy of punishment. He will be confined to the pit of Hellfire.



From the Du'aa' of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ

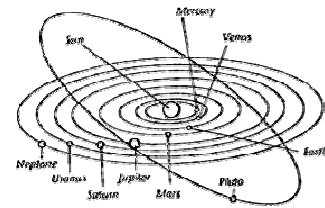
- ❖ *"O Allāh, set right my religion, which is the safeguard of my affairs; and set right my world, wherein is my living; and set right my hereafter, to which is my return. And make life for me an increase in all good, and make death for me a relief from every evil."* (Muslim)
- ❖ *"O Allāh, I seek refuge in You from failure, laziness, cowardice, the weakness of old age and stinginess. And I seek refuge in You from the torment of the grave and from the trials of life and death."* (Al-Bukhāri and Muslim)
- ❖ *"O Allāh, I seek refuge in You from discord, hypocrisy and bad manners."* (Abu Dāwūd)
- ❖ *"O Allāh, I seek refuge in You from knowledge that does not benefit, from a heart that is not subdued, from a soul that is not satisfied, and from a supplication that is not answered."* (Muslim)
- ❖ *"O Allāh, make not our affliction in our religion, and make not the world our greatest concern nor the sum of our knowledge."* (At-Tirmidhi and al-Hākim)
- ❖ *"O Allāh, make the best of my days the Day when I meet You, the best of my life its conclusion, and the best of my deeds the final ones."* (Al-Bukhāri and Muslim)
- ❖ *"I seek refuge in Your acceptance from Your anger and in Your pardon from Your penalty. I seek refuge in You from You. I cannot adequately praise You; You are as You have praised Yourself."* (Muslim)

Lesson 23

PRECISION

صَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَتَقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ

**"It is the work of Allāh, who perfected
all things." (27:88)**



Allāh, the Exalted, created His creation with precision according to His will. The universe operates exactly as He determined it, everything running according to His decree for a specified term. And when Allāh revealed the Qur'ān, it was in precise language expressing specific meanings. Any alteration in its wording or sentence structure would not convey those meanings with the same accuracy. Allāh is perfect, so everything He does is perfect and precise.

In His wisdom, Allāh created man with imperfections in order to test him here on earth. He gave every person certain trusts, obligations and responsibilities and asked him to exert effort to fulfill them to the best of his ability. The finest example of this was Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. He was a human being who was sent by Allāh to teach and demonstrate the ideal way of life. Our Prophet ﷺ said, *"Indeed, Allāh likes, when one of you does a deed, that he does it with precision."* (Al-Bayhaqi – ḥasan)

When a Muslim strives to obey Allāh and please Him, he will do his best to excel in everything he does.

- He will be precise in his religious duties, performing them well and on time.
- He will be precise in his work, doing it honestly and skillfully.
- He will be precise in his study, researching every matter carefully.
- He will be precise in his appointments and dealings with others, not delaying or misleading.
- He will be precise in his speech, expressing himself clearly and openly.
- He will be precise in his manners and morals, leaving no room for doubt or suspicion.
- And he will be precise in taking account of himself before he is called to account by Allāh on the Day of Judgement.

The Muslim believer always tries to improve himself in order to please Allāh and does his best to rectify and amend any errors he might commit. Thus, he becomes worthy of the trust given him by his Creator; he is loved by Him and rewarded abundantly in the Hereafter. And at the same time, he earns a good reputation among his associates for integrity and high quality work.



When you practice precision in your ṣalāh, in your school work, in your profession and in everything you do in order to please Allāh, it is a kind of worship that He appreciates and loves. So make it a habit and you will find great benefits here in this life, even before the rewards of the next one.

Questions:

1. What quality is observed in Allāh's creation?
2. How does Allāh test man?
3. How does Allāh want us to perform our religious duties?
4. Give some examples of precision in work.
5. Give examples of precision in social relations.
6. What are some benefits of precision?

Allāh, the Almighty, has said:

**"WHAT CAN BE
BEYOND THE
TRUTH EXCEPT
ERROR?"** (10:32)



The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

The signs of a hypocrite are three: when he speaks he lies, when he makes a promise, he breaks it, and when he is entrusted [with something], he betrays.

(Al-Bukhārī and Muslim)



Lesson 24

PATIENCE

Allāh has promised eternal reward in the Hereafter to those who were patient through the trials of this earthly life while seeking His approval:

إِنَّمَا يُوفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

"Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account." (39:10)

This means that due to His unlimited generosity, Allāh will not even keep track of the amount of reward He gives a patient person. It will go on and on.

Because this life is a test for every human being, we must expect to have some difficulties and hard times. Allāh said:

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ

"Do the people think that they will be left to say, 'We believe' and they will not be tried?" (29:2)

In order to be successful in this test, we must obey Allāh in everything He ordered, which includes being patient. Patience (ṣabr) has been defined as restraint – restraining the tongue from complaint and improper speech, and restraining the body from improper action.

Patience is of three kinds:

1. Patience to obey Allāh in what He has ordered – Patience for obedience is required because human beings naturally seek comfort and ease and dislike exertion. Laziness and preoccupation with the world need to be overcome.
2. Patience to refrain from disobedience – Each temptation toward what is ḥarām must be resisted forcefully. The most difficult in this category is keeping away from sins which are committed secretly and those committed easily, such as backbiting, and which are not always criticized by others.
3. Patience in the face of problems and afflictions – This category includes everything that happens against a person's will, such as the loss of property, the death of a loved one, an illness or disability, or harm done to him by others. Patience in such matters and acceptance of Allāh's will with knowledge of His wisdom is proof of true faith. That does not mean it is wrong to dislike what happened because feelings of loss, frustration and pain are a normal part of life. But a person's reaction is what will be judged by Allāh. In the words of the Prophet ﷺ, *"Allāh will not punish for tears in the eyes nor for sadness in the heart, but He will punish for this [pointing to his tongue] or grant mercy."* (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

In times of trial one should always turn to Allāh for support and assistance. Complaint to Allāh and supplication (du‘aa’) for help is not a sign of impatience but is a form of worship showing reliance on Allāh. This pleases Allāh and earns the believer both relief and reward.

The Prophet ﷺ confirmed, *"Du‘aa’ is worship."* (Aḥmad and Abu Dāwūd - ḥadīth ṣaḥeeḥ) Someone asked him, "Which people are most severely tried?" He ﷺ answered, "The prophets, then the righteous, then those following them in degree. A man is tried according to his religion. If there is firmness in his religion, then his trial is increased; but if there is weakness in his religion, it is lightened. Indeed, ordeals remain with the servant until he walks upon the earth having no sin left upon him." (At-Tirmidhi – ḥadīth ḥasan-ṣaḥeeḥ)

You may be helped to be patient during trials by the following:

- ❖ Remember the immense reward awaiting those who practice patience. Imagine yourself receiving a compensation so great as to make you forget all you have suffered.
- ❖ Trust that you are close to Allāh during this period, that your du‘aa’ is being heard, and that He will support you during the difficulty.
- ❖ Do not despair. You have the ability to endure whatever comes your way because Allāh has told us:

لَا يَكْلِفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

"Allāh charges no soul except [with that] within its capacity." (2:286)

- ❖ Trust that there is good in the matter according to the perfect knowledge of Allāh. Perhaps the trial was an expiation for sins, and it could have been much worse. There may even be some worldly benefits, such as the strengthening of character or a lesson learned. In any case, the reward will surely be greater than the adversity.
- ❖ Appreciate the many blessings that you still have in spite of your misfortune. There are always countless reasons to be grateful to Allāh, and there are many people whose afflictions are greater. The Prophet ﷺ said, *"Look to those with less than you and do not look to those with more than you, for this makes you less likely to underestimate Allāh's blessings upon you."* (Muslim)
- ❖ Be tolerant of other people and forgive their mistakes. Expect that there will always be some who will hurt and wrong you. But this is a challenge to be met with strength of character and good morals. In the Qur’ān, Allāh informed us:

وَجَعَلْنَا بَعْضَكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ فِتْنَةً أَتَصْبِرُونَ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ بَصِيرًا

"And We have made some of you as trial for others – will you have patience? And your Lord is ever Seeing." (25:20)

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of patience or *ṣabr*?
2. What are some of the ways we are tested in this life?
3. Name the three kinds of patience and explain each.
4. Who are given the most difficult trials, and why?
5. How can a Muslim help himself to be patient in times of difficulty?
6. Cite a verse from the Qur'ān about patience.



Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ was asked, "Which deeds are liked most by Allāh?" He replied, "Those done most regularly, even if they are few." (Narrated by al-Bukhārī)

Āyatul-Kursi

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ described this verse as the greatest one in the Qur'ān, perhaps because it contains some of the greatest attributes of Allāh. The meaning of "kursi" is a chair or footstool. It is beneath Allāh's Throne, which is much higher and greater.

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

"Allāh, there is no god but Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of existence. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is before them and what will be after them, and they encompass not a thing of His knowledge except for what He wills. His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth, and their preservation tires Him not. And He is the Most High, the Most Great." (2:255)

READING AND MEMORIZATION

SŪRAH AL-‘ĀDIYĀT

(The Racers – 100)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَالْعَدِيَّتِ ضَبْحًا ﴿١﴾ فَالْمُورِيَّتِ قَدْحًا ﴿٢﴾ فَالْمُغِيرَاتِ صُبْحًا ﴿٣﴾
فَأَثَرْنَ بِهِ نَقْعًا ﴿٤﴾ فَوَسَطْنَ بِهِ جَمْعًا ﴿٥﴾ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ
لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُودٌ ﴿٦﴾ وَإِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَإِنَّهُ لِحُبِّ
الْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٨﴾ أَفَلَا يَعْلَمُ إِذَا بُعْثِرَ مَا فِي الْقُبُورِ ﴿٩﴾
وَحُصِّلَ مَا فِي الصُّدُورِ ﴿١٠﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّهُم بِهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّخَبِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾

Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥeem

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. <i>Wal-‘ādiyāti dhubḥā</i> | 5. <i>Fawaṣṭna bihi jam‘ā</i> |
| 2. <i>Fal-mūriyāti qadḥā</i> | 6. <i>Innal-insāna lirabbihee lakanūd</i> |
| 3. <i>Fal-mugheerāti ṣubḥā</i> | 7. <i>Wa-innahū ‘alā dhālika lashaheed</i> |
| 4. <i>Fa-athar na bihi naq‘ā</i> | 8. <i>Wa-innahū liḥubbil-khayri lashadeed</i> |
| 9. <i>Afalā ya‘lamu idhā bu‘thira mā fil-qubūr</i> | |
| 10. <i>Wa ḥuṣṣila mā fiṣ-ṣudūr</i> | |
| 11. <i>Inna rabbahum bihim yawma’idhil-lakhabeer</i> | |

Meaning:

1. By the racers, panting,
2. And the producers of sparks [when] striking
3. And the chargers at dawn,
4. Stirring up thereby [clouds of] dust,
5. Arriving thereby in the center collectively.
6. Indeed, mankind, to his Lord, is ungrateful.
7. And indeed he is to that a witness.
8. And indeed, he is, in love of wealth, intense.
9. But does he not know that when the contents of the graves are scattered
10. And that within the breasts is obtained –
11. Indeed, their Lord with them that Day is [fully] Acquainted.

Allāh, the Almighty, swears by the horses of those who fought for His cause as they raced to attack the enemy, their hoofs igniting sparks as they galloped over rocky terrain. And He swears by the steeds charging into the midst of the enemy camp in a surprise attack at dawn. These are the horses of jihād. They carried riders who defended the Muslims against those who sought to defeat them and put an end to their religion. The horses described and praised by Allāh are of the best quality and have been given the best care in order to be ready for this occasion. Allāh expects Muslims to always be well prepared with the best means possible for every occasion and every threat, and not to be caught unaware.

In this sūrah, Allāh swears by the horses of jihād that the natural tendency of mankind is to be heedless and ungrateful to his Lord. Man confirms this by his speech and his actions. In addition, he is much concerned with obtaining and accumulating wealth and possessions. Allāh warns believers against giving in to this tendency. Our *ummah* (nation) declined only after Muslims became overly interested in worldly comforts and neglected the duties of da'wah and jihād.

After that, Allāh reminds us that there will come a time when everyone will be called to account for what he did and what he neglected. All men will be expelled from the earth on Yawm al-Qiyāmah, and the secrets their hearts held in this world will become known. Then Allāh, who knows the most precise details about every individual, will judge each one accordingly.

We must return once again to the sunnah of our Prophet ﷺ and accept our responsibilities as the Ṣaḥābah and their students did. Muslims must again surpass others in every area, not for worldly gain but to defend and promote the religion of Allāh. In addition to fiqh and shari'ah, they must become specialists in physical sciences and technology, in social sciences, in education, economics, politics, history, languages and every beneficial field. These are the instruments of jihād today, just as horses were in the past.

We need Muslims who specialize... for Allāh's cause.



Lesson 25

LESSONS FROM THE QUR'ĀN

Part One

From Sūrah Aali 'Imrān:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ. رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ.

"It is He [Allāh] who has sent down to you the Book; in it are verses that are precise – they are the foundation of the Book – and others unspecific. As for those in whose hearts is deviation, they will follow that of it which is unspecific, seeking discord and seeking an interpretation [suitable to them] while no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allāh. But those firm in knowledge say, 'We believe in it. All of it is from our Lord.' And no one will be reminded except those of understanding, [who say], 'Our Lord, let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us and grant us from Yourself mercy. Indeed, You are the Bestower.'" (3:7-8)



Often Muslims wonder how it is that some people can read the Qur'ān and not become believers. Those people may argue with Muslims by quoting certain phrases from the Qur'ān without a proper understanding. Or they might even deliberately quote words out of context to cause doubt and confusion. Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, has informed us in several verses that the Qur'ān guides sincere and openminded people to Islām and that it increases the faith of believers. But He also tells us that it increases the disbelief of the confirmed disbelievers who have chosen to oppose the truth.

Most verses of the Qur'ān were revealed in clear, self-evident words. These are its essence and foundation, and they are the explicit reference for matters of ḥalāl and ḥarām and for religious obligations. There is nothing vague about them, even when the meanings are translated into another language. But there are other verses whose meanings are not so obvious to everyone. They might be known by scholars or specialists but not ordinary people. Or they might be known to Allāh alone and no one else. But they are one of the means by which people's belief is tested.

A believer is certain that all the words of Allāh are truth, even those not fully understood by him. That is because he has understood enough to be convinced that there is nothing erroneous in the Qur'ān. He is firm in his knowledge that **"All of it is from our Lord."** If he cannot find the meaning elsewhere in the Qur'ān or in the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, he simply says, "Allāh knows best." The believer continually asks Allāh to keep him on the straight path leading to His approval. He supplicates: **"Our Lord, let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us and grant us from Yourself mercy. Indeed, You are the Bestower."** (3:8)

But a stubborn disbeliever will always be looking for faults in the Qur'ān, and because he cannot find any, he will have to fabricate them. He may make use of faulty translations, or he might take part of an āyah and give it a deceptive implication, or perhaps he will remove an āyah from its historical context and then generalize about it in a negative way. His aim is always to keep others from knowing the truth about Islām so they will not be attracted to it.

Allāh has informed us about such people who exist in every age and every place. He described them, saying, **"As for those in whose hearts is deviation, they will follow that of it which is unspecific, seeking discord and seeking an interpretation [suitable to them], while no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allāh."** They use their own interpretations to spread falsehood about Islām, doing their best to prevent its true doctrine from being known. That is why Muslims must be alert to such strategies and obtain a sound knowledge of their religion in order to refute the claims of enemies and to defend the truth. This is our duty, and it is a form of jihād for the cause of Allāh.

In another sūrah, Allāh, the Exalted urges everyone to consider:

أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ كَمَنْ زُيِّنَ لَهُ سُوءُ عَمَلِهِ وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ

"So is one who is on clear evidence from his Lord like one to whom the evil of his work has been made attractive and they follow their [own] desires?"
(47:14)

Questions:

1. How does the Qur'ān affect believers?
2. How does it affect disbelievers?
3. Are all the āyahs in the Qur'ān clear to everyone? Explain.
4. How do some dishonest disbelievers try to keep people away from Islām?
5. What is the remedy for this?



Lesson 26

LESSONS FROM THE QUR'ĀN

Part Two

From Sūrah an-Nisā':

لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلِمَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا عَلِيمًا

"Allāh does not like the public mention of evil except by one who has been wronged. And ever is Allāh Hearing and Knowing." (4:148)



Many āyahs in the Qur'ān contain Allāh's guidance in relation to social matters and dealings with other people. Allāh expects Muslims to be examples of good conduct, careful not to harm anyone unjustly and supportive of one another in times of ease and difficulty. This contributes to the stability of society and wellbeing of its members.

The tongue, when used improperly, can become a cruel weapon which may injure feelings, harm reputations and cause mistrust and hostility among people. That is why Allāh has forbidden evil speech of all kinds: cursing and obscenity, ridiculing and insulting, gossip and backbiting, lying and false accusation. A Muslim should not discuss the sins of people, even his own, before others.

But Allāh is just and fair, so He has allowed an exception to this rule, and that is when someone has been harmed or treated unjustly. Scholars have cited the following as the only acceptable reasons for mentioning wrongdoing:

- When complaint to an authority is necessary in order to restore justice
- When complaint to an authority is necessary in order to prevent or put a stop to crime or unlawful activity
- When seeking a fatwā (ruling) about something from a religious scholar
- In order to warn someone of harm that could befall him through association with certain parties
- When someone commits the sin openly or boasts about it – by so doing he has removed from himself his right to Allāh's protection.

Except for those valid reasons, Allāh, the Almighty is greatly angered by those who publicize the faults and failures of others, and He will punish them for it. That is why He concluded the āyah with a warning that He is Hearing and Knowing. Nothing escapes Him of our deeds and motivations, and we will be judged for them all.

The consequence of such sins may even be felt here in this world. Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ warned, *"Do not backbite Muslims or pursue their faults. For he who pursues the fault of his brother Muslim – Allāh will pursue his fault, and when Allāh pursues his fault, He will expose him even if he should be inside his own house."* (Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd – ṣaḥeeḥ) Spreading rumors is extremely dangerous. The Prophet ﷺ said, *"Sufficient it is as a sin for a person to talk about everything he has heard."* (Abu Dāwūd – ṣaḥeeḥ) He meant it is a sin sufficient to land that person in the Hellfire.

And Allāh's Messenger ﷺ praised those Muslims who avoid this kind of behavior, saying, *"From the excellence of a person's Islām is his leaving alone what does not concern him."* (At-Tirmidhi – ḥasan-ṣaḥeeḥ) And he ﷺ informed us that we will be rewarded for keeping the secrets of our brothers in Islām and trying to help them to reform privately through advice and other constructive methods. According to the ḥadīth: *"Whoever covers the fault of a Muslim – Allāh will cover his faults in this world and the Hereafter."* (Muslim)

And in the next āyah, Almighty Allāh, who pardons so many of our errors although He is able to punish us for them, directs us to something better than exposing the faults of others, by saying:

إِنْ تُبْدُوا خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ أَوْ تَعْفُوا عَنْ سُوءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا قَدِيرًا

"If [instead] you show some good, or conceal it or pardon an offense – then indeed, Allāh is ever Pardoning and Able." (4:149)

Our Prophet ﷺ said:

"He who believes in Allāh and the Last Day should say what is good or keep quiet." (Al-Bukhāri)



Questions:

1. Why has Allāh given us guidance relating to social matters?
2. What kinds of speech are forbidden by Allāh?
3. When is it permissible to mention wrongdoing?
4. What is the result of gossip and useless criticism?
5. What is the result of concealing people's faults?

Lesson 27

ISLĀMIC CHARACTER

Allāh created people and ordained for them a system by which to live. He sent complete and final instructions through His Messenger, Muḥammad ﷺ. When people adhere to this system and obey the laws of Allāh, they live together in peace and security; they love one another and cooperate in righteousness as one body. But when they go against the system and disobey the laws of Allāh, there are conflicts, wars and disasters, and there is hatred, envy, resentment and all the diseases that can afflict a human heart.

A high moral standard is clearly the purpose of Islāmic legislation. The Messenger ﷺ declared, *"I have been sent to perfect the noble traits of character."* (Al-Bukhari) And he said, *"The most beloved of Allāh's servants to Him is the best of them in character."* (Aṭ-Ṭabarāni – ṣaḥeeḥ) That is why he himself was the best of all people in manner, and when describing him in the Qur'ān, Allāh said, **"Indeed, you are of a great [moral] character."** (68:4) When asked about the Prophet's manner, his wife, 'Ā'ishah said, "His character was the Qur'ān." She meant that he lived according to the Qur'ān's teachings.

So, what is good character? Good character is what produces lawful, reasonable and praiseworthy conduct. Thus, it is an effective kind of da'wah to Islām when observed in a Muslim by others. A person of good character is one who does not antagonize people, one who is close to people but not interfering, one who strives to satisfy people, who is modest, righteous and truthful. He is of few words but many deeds, not overly curious, kind, pleasant, sincere, dignified, patient, contented, appreciative and sympathetic. He is neither rash nor resentful nor stingy nor envious. He does not curse, insult or backbite. He is open and friendly; he loves the worshippers of Allāh and hates the enemies of Allāh; his contentment and anger is solely for the cause of Allāh.

Islāmic character shows in deep faith and strong attachment to Allāh, in honesty, compassion and generosity, in moderation and diplomacy, in steadfastness and patience, in confidence and courage balanced with wisdom, and generally, in treating others as one would like to be treated himself. The Prophet ﷺ confirmed, *"Whoever would like to be saved from the Fire and enter Paradise should meet death believing in Allāh and the Last Day, and he should do to people as he would like done to him."* (Muslim)

Islām contains all of the commonly known moral virtues. With balance and proportion it assigns a suitable place and function to each of them in the total scheme of life. No sphere of life is exempt from the application of Islām's moral principles. But Islāmic morality requires something additional – the sincere intention to please Allāh.

Awareness of the Creator's perfect knowledge of all things, including every soul's innermost thoughts and intentions, insures both public and private morality in a true believer. Such qualities as obedience, honesty, patience, modesty, gratitude, generosity and courage are strengthened by the remembrance of Allāh and awareness of His judgement to come. Faith produces determination to obey Allāh and gives the Muslim an objective greater than worldly interests. It draws him toward concepts superior to those of the material world and gives him the ability to resist its superficial appeal.

Changing bad manners to good ones and acquiring new qualities that make up good character is always possible with effort and some discipline of the soul. Suppressing anger and forgiving are important disciplines. Everyone makes mistakes; so just as one would like to be pardoned and forgiven, he should also pardon others, meaning that he should cease blaming those who offend him. A person who forgives will be forgiven by Allāh, so the reward is of the same type as his deed, although much greater.

The Prophet ﷺ said, *"Treat people with good manners."* (At-Tirmidhi – ṣaḥeeḥ) He advised lenience, excusing others and avoiding revenge, and said, *"If someone insults you and describes you with a fault you do not have, do not describe him with a fault he does have. Rather, let him earn the sin, and you will have the reward; and do not curse anyone."* (Ibn Ḥibban – ṣaḥeeḥ) And he ﷺ said, *"Through good character the believer can reach the rank of one who [regularly] fasts and prays at night."* (Abu Dāwūd – ṣaḥeeḥ)

Questions:

1. How was the character of the Prophet ﷺ?
2. What are some signs of a Muslim's good character?
3. How does belief in Allāh affect character?
4. Quote a ḥadīth about good character.
5. Is it possible to improve one's character? Explain.

Stay on top of the world...
with good character.

(It will get you a high place in Paradise, too !!)



Lesson 28

LESSONS FROM THE ḤADĪTH

Part One

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, *"What I have forbidden to you – avoid, and what I have ordered you – do of it what you are able."*

(Al-Bukhāri and Muslim)

Two of the main principles of Islām are defined in these words. First is the avoidance of all which is ḥarām, without exception. The Prophet ﷺ forbade to his ummah everything forbidden by Allāh, and his order to avoid it is without exception. And second, the order to obey has been limited to the extent of a person's ability. Allāh said in the Qur'ān:

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ

"Fear Allāh as much as you are able." (64:16)

The reason is that there is no inability involved in stopping something, while there could be inability when intending to do something. And not everyone is equal in ability. Some are able to do certain things more easily than others. And some have disabilities which prevent them from carrying out or completing a task, although they would like to. Allāh judges people only for what they are able to do and not for what is beyond their ability. He said:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

"Allāh does not charge a soul except [within] its capacity." (2:286)

Moreover, the Mighty and Majestic Lord does not compare our deeds to those of other people. Some are able to accomplish more than others or do a particular task better than others because of talents or skills bestowed on them by their Creator. And some, as hard as they may try, do not have the resources or the competence to do as much as others. Allāh is completely aware of what every person can do. He knows who strives and exerts his best effort, and He knows who is lazy and does far less than he is able to do. He measures and judges the deeds of each one according to his own individual capability, while taking into full account the intention behind them.

So every Muslim must obey Allāh in what He ordered to the best of his ability. Even the basic pillars of Islām take ability into consideration. For example, those unable to perform wudhū' or ghusl can substitute tayammum. In prayer, there are allowances for those who are ill, disabled or traveling. Zakāh is not due from those in need; in fact, they become its recipients. The fast of Ramadhān may be broken and postponed in certain cases of illness or difficulty. And Ḥajj is obligatory only upon those who are physically and financially able. Since obedience is ordered to the extent of one's ability, there is no hardship in the practice of Islām.

The scholars point out that because there is no exception to the prohibition of ḥarām and no allowance for anyone to continue in committing sins, it means that ceasing what is forbidden is more important and more virtuous than performing voluntary acts of worship and should take priority over them. There are Muslims who enthusiastically perform pre-dawn prayers and do supplementary fasting, yet they lack the resolve to desist from such forbidden behaviors as cheating, backbiting or disobedience to parents. In reality, repenting and giving up sins is an obligatory act of worship which is both pleasing to Allāh and averts punishment in the Hereafter. It requires that the Muslim struggle against his own desires and practice patience and firmness in avoiding a particular sin.



Generally, avoidance of ḥarām is an obligation which takes precedence over supplementary worship. Hence, the saying of some of the Ṣaḥābah: "To return a coin taken unlawfully is better than giving a hundred thousand in ṣadaqah." That is because the obligation always takes priority over a voluntary deed, and it is what pleases Allāh most.

Questions:

1. What is the Islāmic ruling about what is prohibited (ḥarām)?
2. What is the Islāmic ruling about what has been ordered by Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ?
3. How does Allāh measure our deeds?
4. Which is more important – supplementary worship or repenting from sins, and why?

Words of Allah, the Exalted...

وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتُهَا وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ

"And whatever thing you have been given – it is [only for] the enjoyment of worldly life and its adornment. And what is with Allāh is better and more lasting; so will you not use reason?" (28:60)

مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

"No disaster strikes except by permission of Allāh. And whoever believes in Allāh – He will guide his heart. And Allāh is Knowing of all things." (64:11)

Lesson 29

LESSONS FROM THE ḤADĪTH

Part Two

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, ***"He who innovates something in this matter of ours that is not a part of it – it will be rejected."***

(Al-Bukhārī and Muslim)



This ḥadīth warns against innovation (bid'ah) in all matters of religion. The word "matter" here means religious practice and law. "Rejected" means that it will not be accepted from that person by Allāh and will not be rewarded. It is a clear prohibition against making any changes in the religion or additions to it, for any valid religious practice must be based upon a proof from the Qur'ān or authentic Sunnah. That is because Almighty Allāh completed and perfected the religion of Islām, and did not omit from it anything beneficial to man. He said:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

"This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islām as religion." (5:3)

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ

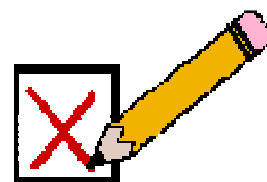
"And this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow [other] ways and be separated from [Allāh's] way." (6:153)

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ explained further when he said, ***"Beware of newly devised affairs [in religion], for every new thing is a bid'ah [innovation], and every bid'ah is misguidance."*** (At-Tirmidhi – ḥasan-ṣaḥeeh) The word "bid'ah" means an innovation, invention or novelty. It is a fabricated religious practice which has no basis in the Sharī'ah. "Newly devised matters" refers to matters pertaining to the religion only and does not include everyday worldly affairs. In fact, all new inventions and discoveries by man that serve his lawful worldly interests are permissible as long as they are not specifically prohibited in the Qur'ān or Sunnah or are known to be harmful. Allāh sent His Messenger ﷺ to make lawful all good things of this world and prohibit the bad.

Although most Muslims are aware of the specific prohibitions stated in the Qur'ān and ḥadīth literature, fewer people give attention to deviations that have crept into the sphere of worship. Often, an ignorant majority has been led by custom and tradition to believe that certain innovations are valid and good. But Islāmic scholars have indicated that anyone who claims an act to be obedience to

Allāh or a means of drawing near to Him must produce evidence of that, just as anyone who claims that something is ḥarām must produce evidence of it. That is because nothing can be prohibited except what Allāh prohibited, and nothing can be part of the religion except what Allāh has made so, since He neither forgets nor fails in what He wills.

Valid evidence for any claim must come from the Qur'ān, from a sound ḥadīth, or from what is derived from them by the jurists. Arguments based upon weak or forged narrations, assumptions without proof, personal opinions or dreams are all unacceptable and are invalid as a source of religious belief and practice.



Any act of worship performed with the sincere intention of drawing near to Allāh must first be one that was ordained by Him, either through the Qur'ān or through His Messenger ﷺ. Then it must be done correctly – precisely in the way demonstrated or instructed by the Prophet ﷺ because the Sunnah was established to guide within the framework of the Qur'ān. These two conditions are stipulated for its acceptance by Allāh, who said:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allāh an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allāh and the Last Day and remembers Allāh often." (33:21)

Questions:

1. What is bid'ah? Does it apply to both religious and worldly matters?
2. Why are innovations in religion not accepted by Allāh?
3. What is necessary to confirm that something is a valid religious practice?
4. Besides sincere intention, what condition must be fulfilled to make worship acceptable?

DEALING WITH OPINIONS

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah advised his student, Ibn al-Qayyim, saying: "Do not let your heart be like a sponge soaking up every idea or opinion that comes to it, but make it like a glass through whose surface opinions pass but do not settle. Otherwise, if all those uncertainties settle in your heart, it will be overwhelmed by them."

READING AND MEMORIZATION

SŪRAH AZ-ZALZALAH

(The Earthquake – 99)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا ۝ وَأُخْرِجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا ۝
وَقَالَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا لَهَا ۝ يَوْمَئِذٍ تُخْبِرُ أَخْبَارَهَا ۝
بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا ۝ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصْدُرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِّيُرَوْا
أَعْمَالَهُمْ ۝ فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ۝ وَمَنْ
يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ۝

Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥeem

1. *Idhā zulzilatil-ardhu zilzālahā*
2. *Wa-akhrajatil-ardhu athqālahā*
3. *Wa qālal-insānu mā lahā*
4. *Yawma'idhin tuḥaddithu akhbārahā*
5. *Bi-anna rabbaka awḥā lahā*
6. *Yawma'idhiy-yaşdurun-nāsu ashtātal-liyuraw a'mālahum*
7. *Faay-ya'mal mithqāla dharratin khayray-yarah*
8. *Wa may-ya'mal mithqāla dharratin sharray-yarah*

Meaning:

1. When the earth is shaken with its [final] earthquake
2. And the earth discharges its burdens
3. And man says, "What is [wrong] with it?" –
4. That Day it will report its news
5. Because your Lord has inspired it.
6. That Day the people will emerge separately to be shown their deeds.
7. So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it,
8. And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.

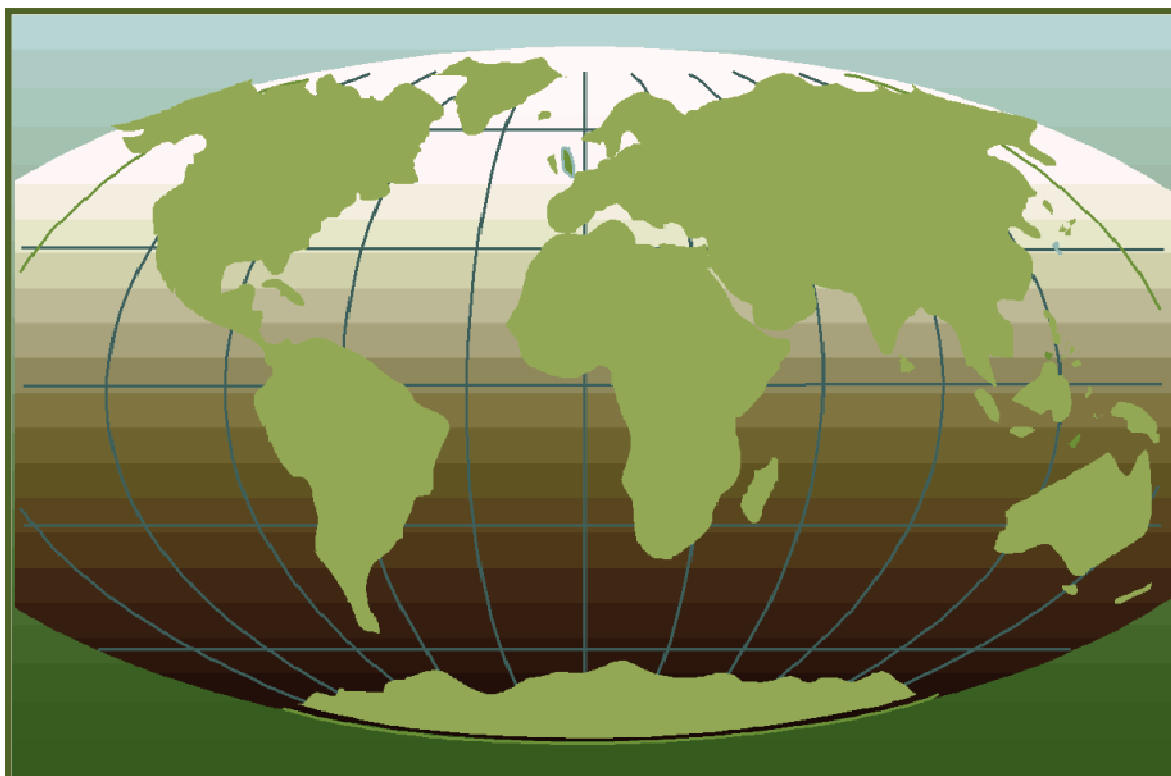
This sūrah describes a scene from Yawm al-Qiyāmah, the condition of the earth and its people at the time of resurrection. Like the rest of the universe, the earth will then undergo drastic changes by the command of Allāh, its Creator. The entire earth will be shaken violently and expel everything within it, including the generations of people buried within it. All those people will be recreated and restored

to life in the same state in which they died: as believers or non-believers, virtuous or wicked. Finding the earth in turbulence, they will be in wonder and shock, crying out in dismay, "What is the matter with it?" But soon enough they will realize that this is the Qiyāmah that had been promised by Allāh.

When Allāh commands it, the earth will testify to everything that took place upon it during the first creation. The Prophet ﷺ once recited, **"That Day it will report its news."** Then he said to his companions, *"Do you know what its news is? It will witness what every man and woman did on its surface. It will say, 'He did such and such on a particular day,' and that is its news."* (At-Tirmidhi – ḥasan-ṣaḥeeḥ)

On Yawm al-Qiyāmah, all people will emerge from the earth individually and be separated into groups according to their beliefs and deeds in the former life. They will be fearful and anxious about the judgement and their final destination. Those who denied and disobeyed Allāh will be the most terrified, for they will now be certain of His punishment.

Then they will all stand before the Creator to account for everything they did in this world. Allāh will judge each person with complete and perfect justice. His deeds will be weighed right before his eyes, and he will see for himself exactly what he deserves. Nothing great or small will be overlooked. Everyone will see even as little as an atom's weight of his good and evil deeds and intentions being placed upon the balance and included in his account. Therefore, we should never think of any word, deed or intent, good or bad, as insignificant.



Lesson 30

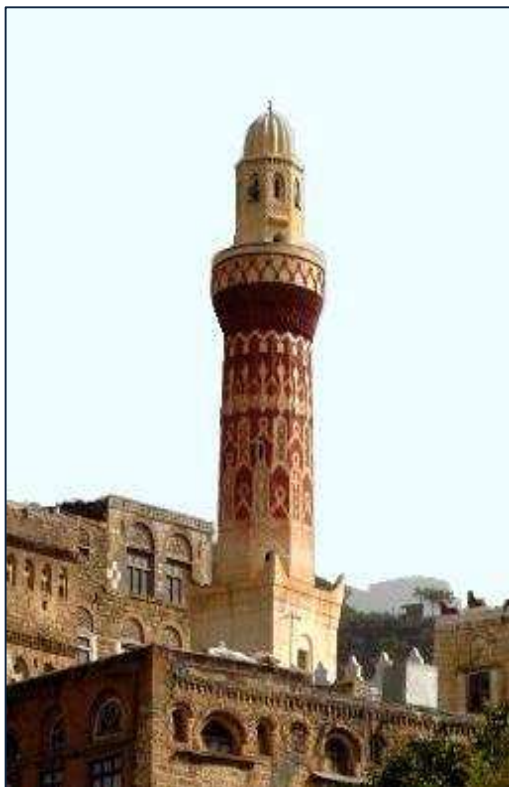
ISLĀMIC HISTORY

1. The Period of Caliphate (11-41 AH)

After the death of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ, the head of state was chosen by a consensus of the Ṣaḥābah. Book One gave brief mention of the four rightly guided caliphs, Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq, 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb, 'Uthmān bin 'Affān and 'Ali bin Abi Ṭālib. The period of their rule is called "the rightly guided caliphate." The Prophet ﷺ had said, *"You must adhere to my sunnah and the sunnah of the rightly guided caliphs."* (Aḥmad, Abu Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhi – ṣaḥeeḥ) He had known that those caliphs would be from among the Ṣaḥābah who were most trustworthy and knowledgeable in the religion as well as in the affairs of state.

The Prophet ﷺ had foretold that the period of caliphate would be thirty years, and after that there would be hereditary rule. This prophecy became fact. Upon the death of 'Ali, his supporters chose his elder son al-Ḥasan as caliph, but a large faction of Muslims continued to support Mu'āwiyah bin Abi Sufyān. Within months al-Ḥasan gave up the caliphate to Mu'āwiyah in order to avoid civil strife and prevent further bloodshed among the Muslims.

The period of the rightly guided caliphs witnessed great steps toward the spread of knowledge and the spread of Islām. The two



superpowers of the time, the oppressive empires of Persia and Byzantium, were treating the peoples they conquered harshly and burdening them with heavy taxes. During the period of caliphate, Muslims were able to end Persian dominance and to liberate Syria, Palestine, Egypt, parts of North Africa and parts of Asia from the Byzantines. They treated the people of these lands according to Islāmic law, with justice and clemency. Exploitation and oppression ceased, and security was established for all. This enabled Muslims to practice da'wah freely and teach the true religion to the inhabitants, who were greatly impressed by the justice of Islām and entered it in multitudes.

Among the major military victories of this period were those of al-Qādisiyyah (15 AH) and Nahāwand (16 AH) defeating the Persians, and the battle of Yarmūk (15 AH) defeating the Byzantines. In addition, there were other major achievements under the rule of the rightly guided caliphs, such as the compiling and standardization of the text of the Qur'ān, the building of cities, military bases and a naval fleet, the documentation of administrative and financial affairs, and the construction of masjids, which became centers of learning.

The social and economic conditions of the territories improved, and those who newly embraced Islam had the same rights and duties as all other Muslims. Those who chose to keep to their own religions paid a tax called the jizyah, which exempted them from zakāh and also from military service. A modest land tax also gave both Muslims and non-Muslims the right to plant and profit from the land, and this was seen by the people as very reasonable and advantageous.

The rightly guided caliphs sent a selected group of Ṣaḥābah into the territories that had come under Islāmic rule to teach and educate the people. Of primary importance was knowledge of the Qur'ān. Abu Bakr took pledges from the tribes that they would teach it to their women and children, and 'Umar gave preference in funding to those who memorized the Qur'ān over those who did not. The four caliphs also emphasized the learning and teaching of the Prophet's sunnah and seerah in order to extract lessons and examples from them. Masjids were the main centers of education, but additional schools were opened for children during 'Umar's caliphate to teach them reading and writing.



Questions:

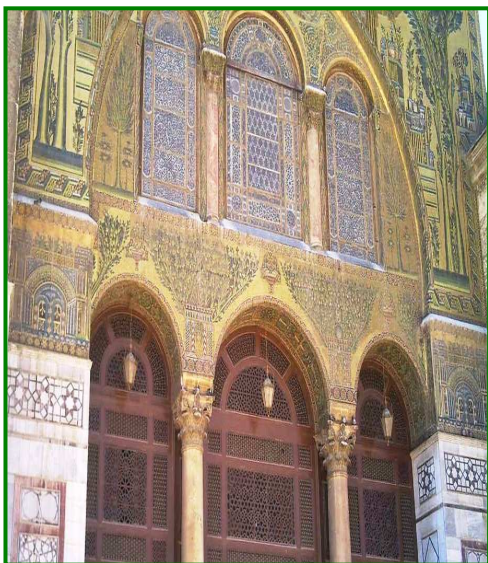
1. How did the first four caliphs obtain their authority?
2. Who were the major enemies of the Islāmic state at that time?
3. How far did Islāmic rule spread during the rightly guided caliphate?
4. How did the rightly guided caliphate end?

2. Umayyad Rule (41-132 AH)

Al-Ḥasan bin 'Alī conceded the caliphate to Mu'āwiyah bin Abi Sufyān in the year 41. The caliphate of Mu'āwiyah (from 41 to 60 AH) was a relatively stable period. He strove to unify the Muslim ummah and directed the continuing struggle against the Romans. He chose his assistants from those who were intelligent, qualified, competent and religious. He was known for his resourcefulness, forbearance and wisdom. Damascus was the seat of his caliphate, which lasted almost twenty years.

Mu'āwiyah died in the year 60 AH. Before his death, and fearing the outbreak of civil strife, he arranged for the succession of his son, Yazeed. The people of Syria pledged loyalty to Yazeed, but many in Ḥijāz and Iraq considered him unfit to rule. Hence, the Islāmic state entered a period of internal problems which continued until the time of 'Abdul-Malik bin Marwān bin al-Ḥakam, when the two main opponents of the Umayyads, al-Ḥusayn bin 'Alī bin Abi Ṭālib and 'Abdullāh bin az-Zubayr were defeated and killed. The Shi'ah movement, which

began as a political reaction against the opponents of 'Alī, was fueled intensely by the unfortunate martyrdom of al-Ḥusayn.



The caliphate of 'Abdul-Malik bin Marwān lasted twenty-one years, during which he re-unified the state and put an end to political opposition. He was succeeded by his son, al-Waleed, followed by his younger son, Sulayman. Before his death, Sulayman left a will designating his cousin, 'Umar bin 'Abdul-'Azeez, as his successor.

'Umar was unique to the Umayyad dynasty. His mother was a granddaughter of 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb, whom he resembled in many respects. He was honest and just, and came to be known as "the fifth rightly guided caliph." He invited the Asian kings and rulers to Islām, and a number of them embraced it, followed by their peoples. 'Umar demanded that the Umayyads return to the treasury everything they had previously taken without right. He investigated the people's complaints and restored to them whatever had been seized from them unjustly by his relatives. He warned all officials to be cautious and honest in dealing with state funds and properties and not to use them for personal benefit. He removed harsh employees and

oppressive regional governors and appointed new ones whose conduct was observed carefully. He paid the debts of those in difficulty from the treasury and looked after the welfare of those in prison. He reclaimed land for cultivation, gave loans to farmers and dug wells for them. As a result, the state income was increased as well as that of its citizens.

‘Umar's caliphate lasted only two years and five months. It was a period that saw justice and prosperity in all regions of the state. In fact, prosperity was so widespread that no person eligible to receive zakāh could be found at the time of his death in the year 101 AH.

With the death of ‘Umar bin ‘Abdul-‘Azeez began the decline of the Umayyad dynasty. He was succeeded by a series of Umayyad caliphs, the last of them being Marwān bin Muḥammad, who was killed by the Abbasids in 132.

All of the Umayyads who did not comply with ‘Abbāsīd rule were captured and killed. ‘Abdur-Raḥmān bin Mu‘āwiyah bin Hishām was the only one of them who managed to escape. He fled across North Africa, and finding supporters there, crossed with them over into Spain, where he established Umayyad rule beyond the reach of the ‘Abbāsīds in 138. Under the Umayyads, Spain became a great center of Islāmīc civilization. But the later caliphs weakened, largely abandoning the principles of Islām. This eventually led to their downfall in 422 AH.



Questions:

1. Who was the first Umayyad caliph, and how did he change the system of succession?
2. Who opposed the Umayyads and what was the outcome?
3. Who was the "fifth rightly guided caliph," and what was notable about him?
4. How did Umayyad rule continue in Spain, and how long did it last?

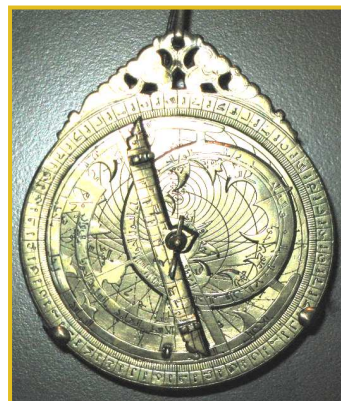
3. 'Abbāsīd Rule (132-656 AH)

Among the groups that had been opposed to the Umayyads were the descendants of al-'Abbās, the Prophet's uncle. They based their claim to the caliphate on this paternal relationship. Asserting that it was a religious right, they began a secret plan to overthrow the Umayyad dynasty. When the rebellion was discovered, armed conflict broke out and the Umayyads were defeated.

The first of the 'Abbāsīd caliphs was their leader, 'Abdullāh bin Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣaffāḥ. He was succeeded by his brother, 'Abdullāh bin Muḥammad al-Manṣūr, who managed to defeat all of his rivals for power. Like the Umayyads, the 'Abbāsīds were intent on keeping the caliphate within the family, and al-Manṣūr authorized his son to succeed him.

The grandson of al-Manṣūr was Hārūn ar-Rasheed. His rule is considered the beginning of the golden age of Islāmic civilization and was the peak of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate. He died in 193 AH and was succeeded by three of his sons. The first century of 'Abbāsīd rule witnessed great advances in economic development and scholarship, and major wars were won against the Byzantines.

After the first century the caliphate became increasingly corrupted and weakened progressively. It continued in this state for over 500 years and finally came under the control of foreign elements, remaining in name only. The 'Abbasid dynasty ended with the fall of Baghdad in 656 when its last caliph was killed by the Mongol invaders.



However, the increasing corruption within the central government had little effect on Muslim society. There was great industrial progress and the economy flourished. New schools, institutions and research centers were being opened and financed generously. Muslim scholars were reaching an all-time high in sciences, literature and jurisprudence. Islāmic ethics still dominated society, and Islām was the main force in the lives of ordinary people. Dedicated Muslims were now spreading the word of Allāh in the Far East and Africa.

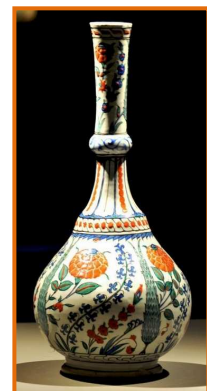
With the weakening of central authority during the later centuries of 'Abbāsīd rule, rival dynasties appeared in North Africa and assertive governors seized power in the eastern territories, declaring their independence. By the year 500, the once unified ummah had become a collection of smaller states. The caliph's authority was eventually limited to the regions of Iraq, but even there powerful ministers had taken control. These divisions and rivalries encouraged the Byzantines to launch repeated attacks to the north. But their lack of success finally led the Byzantine emperor to seek aid from the Pope in Rome. Consequently, Christian armies were recruited from all over Europe for the declared purpose of eliminating the threat of Islām.



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Questions:

1. How did the 'Abbāsīds come into power?
2. Who was the best known of the 'Abbāsīd caliphs, and why?
3. What was the condition of Muslim society during his rule?
4. When did the decline of the 'Abbāsīd dynasty begin, and how long did it last?



4. The Crusades

Great multitudes of Christians gathered in Constantinople to fight the Muslims. They first marched into Asia Minor, defeating Muslim forces there. Then they besieged Antioch for eight months, entered it and killed over 10,000 of its inhabitants. After that they marched south, taking Tripoli and other coastal cities. Finally, in the year 490, they arrived at al-Quds (Jerusalem), which contains al-Masjid al-Aqṣā, the third sacred masjid after those of Makkah and Madīnah. There were only one thousand Muslim fighters to defend the city, while the crusader army was nearly 40,000. After a siege of forty days in which the residents put up a heroic defense, the crusaders broke into the city and massacred 70,000 of its people including women and children.

The conquest of Muslim lands, especially al-Quds, and the massacre of thousands of innocent people left pain and bitterness in the hearts of Muslims. It opened their eyes to the consequences of their internal rivalries and schisms. Within a few years after the occupation of al-Quds, there was an Islāmic awakening and the standard of jihād was raised.

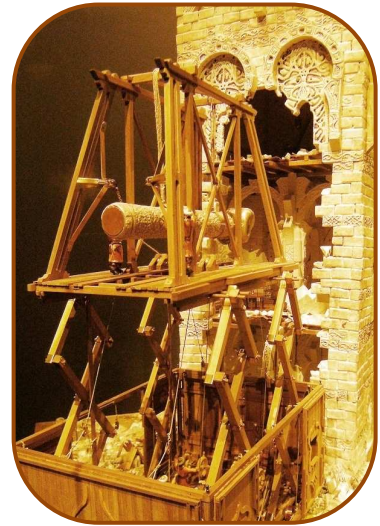
The Muslims began to recapture their lost territories under the courageous leadership of ‘Imād ad-Deen Zengi followed by his son, Nūr ad-Deen Maḥmūd Zengi. Sulṭān Nūr ad-Deen established his authority in Syria, and his armies, led by Asad ad-Deen Sherkoh and his nephew, Ṣalāḥ ad-Deen al-Ayyūbi, reclaimed much of the land. This gave him influence in Egypt as well, but Nūr ad-Deen died without realizing his dream of recovering al-Quds.



That was to be done by Ṣalāḥ ad-Deen al-Ayyūbi. At a young age he had joined his father and uncle in the service of Nūr ad-Deen Maḥmūd. After the death of Nūr ad-Deen in 569, Ṣalāḥ ad-Deen supported the continuation of his family's rule, and they, in turn, allowed him to run the affairs of state. Syria and Egypt were united under his upright leadership, and his influence spread to Iraq, the Ḥijāz and North Africa.

During this period, Ṣalāḥ ad-Deen was also confronting the crusaders. A major victory at Ḥiṭṭeen was followed by a series of other victories that continued until the Muslims had surrounded al-Quds. After a week of siege, the crusaders surrendered the city in the year 583. Although the crusaders had carried out unspeakable massacres against Muslims, Ṣalāḥ ad-Deen adhered to Islāmic principles and treated the Christian inhabitants well. He made a treaty with their rulers allowing the Christians to visit al-Quds at any time as long as they did not carry arms. Ṣalāḥ ad-Deen died in 589.

The crusaders continued their attacks on Egypt and Palestine. One of the rulers of Egypt betrayed the Muslim ummah by giving up parts of al-Quds to the German emperor, but his son, al-Malik aṣ-Ṣāliḥ, was able to take the city back. Al-Malik aṣ-Ṣāliḥ continued in jihād against French invaders until his death. His son then assumed power but was considered incompetent and was assassinated by the Mamlūks, freed slaves who had served his father loyally and were skillfully managing the affairs of state. Hence, they came into power in Egypt and continued the struggle against the crusaders.



In addition to the crusader aggression, savage Mongol tribes invaded Muslim territories from the east, annihilating entire populations and demolishing everything in their path. After the destruction of Baghdad and killing of the last ‘Abbāsīd caliph, they continued westward, leaving behind them a trail of death and destruction and threatening Palestine and Egypt.

The Mamlūks led the armies of jihād against the Mongols. At ‘Ayn Jālūt in Palestine, during Ramadhān of 658, the Mongol invaders were defeated for the first time. Then they were pursued until they were expelled from Palestine and Syria. These territories, now free from Mongol occupation, united with Egypt to face the crusaders. The Mamlūk sultans continued to lead offensives against the crusaders until they, too, were driven out of Palestine and Syria for the last time in the year 690 AH.

Questions:

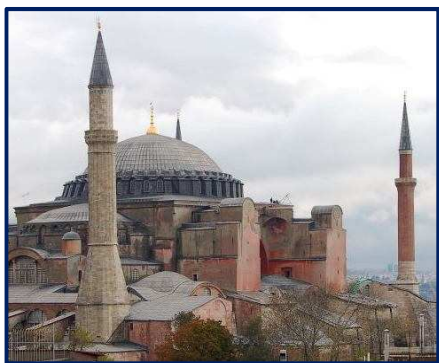
1. What encouraged the Christians to invade Muslim lands?
2. What was the effect of the crusader invasions on Muslims?
3. Who began the military effort to regain Muslim territories?
4. Who was Ṣalāḥ ad-Deen, and what is his best known achievement?
5. Who were the Mamlūks, and what did they accomplish?
6. When and how did the occupation of Palestine and Syria end?

5. The Ottoman Dynasty

Islām entered Turkistan during the Umayyad period. Its tribes embraced Islām enthusiastically and became staunch defenders of the faith. Their leaders gained power during the decline of the 'Abbasid caliphate. Many of the tribes migrated from Turkistan westward to Asia Minor in order to participate in jihād against the Byzantines.

Among the most successful of their generals was 'Uthmān Khān. He established rule over the lands captured from the Byzantines, so the dynasty was named after him (Ottoman from 'Uthmān). His son, Orkhān, continued the military successes of his father. A unique achievement of Orkhān was the recruitment of Christian youths, teaching them Islām and organizing them into an elite division of the army. They became dedicated Muslims whose forces served the state for over 200 years. After him, Orkhān's son and grandson continued to secure Byzantine territories, penetrating into Europe, but the Mongol invasion compelled the Ottomans to turn their attention to the east.

A period of internal rivalries and weakness followed. Sulṭān Murād II was finally able to reunify the state and deal with enemies on both the eastern and European fronts. It was his son, Muḥammad al-Fātiḥ, who succeeded in capturing the Byzantine capitol, Constantinople, in the year 857 AH.



The Ottomans reached the peak of their power in the following century during the rule of Sulaymān II. Most Muslim peoples at that time admired the Ottoman sultans for their military victories which continued throughout the ninth and tenth centuries. Generally, they ruled with firmness and justice. During this period, Arab territories (threatened by foreign invasion and helpless due to the weakness of regional rulers) came under the protective authority of the Ottoman sultans, who were proud to have the honor of defending the sanctuaries of Makkah and Madīnah. Their influence was recognized throughout the Middle East and North Africa.

While concentrating most of their attention on military efforts, the Ottomans and the Muslim ummah in general began to neglect other fields. Islāmīc law, the physical sciences, economics, sociology, and political thought were largely put aside. At the same time that

Europe was beginning to benefit from the knowledge of Muslim scholars and awaken, Muslims were imagining that it was sufficient to sanctify their traditions. The development of the ummah slowed and came to a halt. Ignorance spread, and with it superstitions, *shirk* and *bid'ah*. Many religious scholars of the time failed to clarify such matters or take a firm stand against them.

The Ottoman state was further weakened due to preoccupation of the later sultans with pleasures and luxuries, their dependence upon corrupt subordinates, and various power struggles within the state. Disregard for public welfare led to the emergence of opposition movements in a number of provinces.

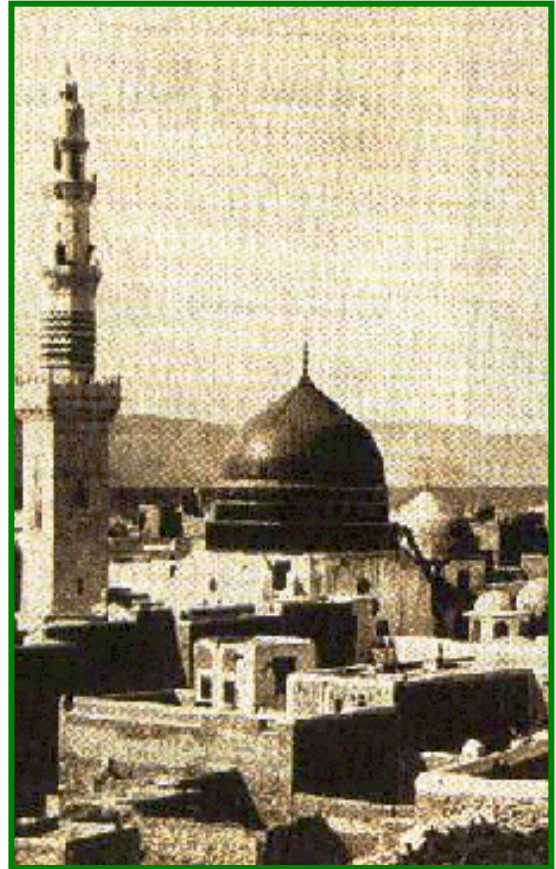
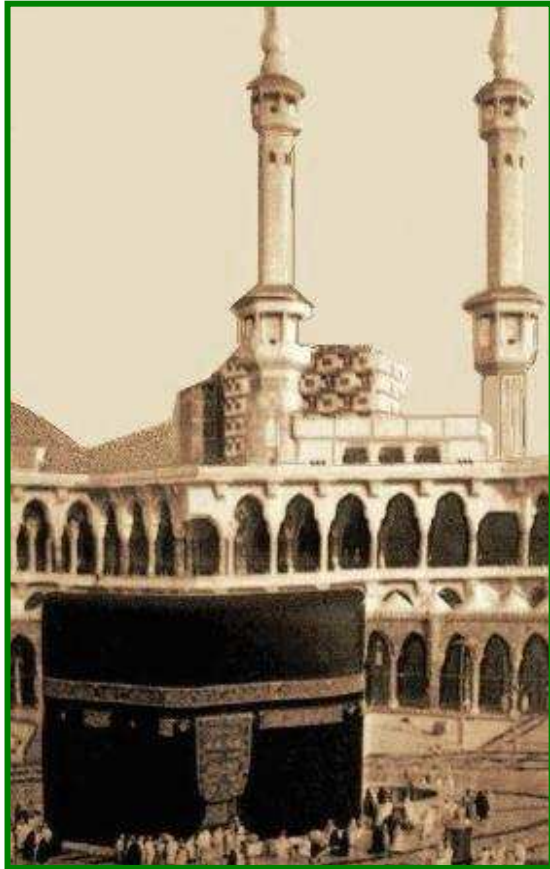
At the same time the ummah had weakened from within, it was being invaded on the eastern and western fronts. The Arab territories in North Africa were neglected and subsequently occupied by the forces of colonialist nations. Political and economic concessions were being granted to European countries, encouraging them to interfere in Ottoman affairs. Dissatisfaction with the corrupted caliphate continued to grow within the territories. Independence movements were encouraged by the Europeans, who were later to occupy and colonize those lands.

Revolt in the Arab east was further fueled by the increasing influence of the zealous Turkish nationalist movement. The end of Ottoman rule was brought about by the leader of that movement, Mustapha Kamāl, who transformed Turkey into a secular state and abolished the Islāmic caliphate in 1343 AH, corresponding to 1924.

The Muslim ummah was now in ruins, without a central government and broken up into small nations. The seeds of internal conflict had been planted and nurtured. Muslims ignorant of their religion were easily recruited for the promotion of western materialistic culture. Attempts at reform, such as the Wāhhābi movement in the Ḥijāz and the Mahdi movement in Sudān, came too late to compete with the rising tide of nationalism. The crusader colonizers had already gotten a foothold in the Islāmic world, but it took them a century to defeat the Muslims militarily, and still another to impose their own values and way of life in the region.

Questions:

1. How was the Ottoman state established, and who was its first ruler?
2. Who led the conquest of Constantinople, and when was it taken by the Muslims?
3. In what field were the Ottomans most successful, and how did their influence spread?
4. What were the main causes of the state's decline?
5. How and when did the Ottoman caliphate end?



6. Lessons of History

There are many obvious lessons to be learned from history. When Muslims feared and obeyed Allāh, they ruled the world; but when the world ruled their hearts in place of Allāh, they were defeated militarily, economically and psychologically. The decline of our ummah reflects this parallel to a precise degree. In the words of the Qur'ān:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ

"Indeed, Allāh will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves." (13:11)

The consequence of actions and events in this world corresponds to the condition of the majority. Allāh says:

وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَا تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً

"And fear a trial which will not strike those who have wronged among you exclusively." (8:25)

The "trial" refers to an affliction or punishment during life upon this earth. When corruption spreads among a people, its consequences will affect everyone. And conversely, when the majority becomes righteous, conscious of Allāh and obedient to Him in all that He ordered, Allāh will cause the entire community to benefit and prosper, even the less righteous among them. The blessing extends to all, as the Qur'ān states:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

"Allāh promised those who have believed among you and done righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession [to authority] upon the earth just as He granted it to those before them, and that He will surely establish for them [therein] their religion which He has preferred for them, and that He will surely substitute for them, after their fear, security, [as long as] they worship Me, not associating anything with Me. But whoever denies after that – then those are the defiantly disobedient." (24:55)

The promise was fulfilled for the Prophet ﷺ and his companions within a short period of time because they were the most upright of people, most adherent to tawhīd, and sacrificed most for the sake of their religion. But when their successors became excessively concerned with worldly pursuits and neglected some of Allāh's commands, their authority lessened accordingly. This principle has been illustrated repeatedly throughout Islāmic history.

To the extent that Muslims apply or neglect the teachings of their religion will be the result. Long before the final stages of the Ottoman caliphate, the ummah had sunk into stagnation and ignorance, not only in religious sciences but in the essential worldly ones as well.

The European colonizers eventually found that continued military occupation of Muslim lands was unnecessary because people were willingly embracing the western way of life, a materialistic culture that attracted them with a promise of freedom and prosperity.

Many Muslims were not even aware that the new ideology had taken the place of their religion. They continue, even today, to believe they can attain salvation merely by pronouncing the shahādah while neglecting other religious obligations and living in any way that suits them. Others, sincere Muslims but lacking adequate knowledge of jurisprudence (fiqh), are erroneously committing terrible crimes in the name of Islām. These are among the current symptoms of the ummah's ailing condition. Not surprisingly, Islām's enemies have seized on plentiful opportunities to blame the religion itself and to subject the entire ummah to one disastrous setback after another. Without doubt, ignorance is among the greatest dangers and evils of our day.

The Messenger ﷺ confirmed, *"When Allāh sends down punishment on a people, it afflicts everyone among them; but then they will be resurrected according to their deeds."* (Al-Bukhāri) So the result of righteousness and of evil in this world is consistent with the actions of the majority of a population, while the account in the Hereafter is an individual one. There, no soul will bear the burden of another, and each will be compensated in full for its own beliefs, efforts and deeds. This gives comfort to every righteous worker who fails to see positive results within his lifetime. He can be sure that his contribution is for the future of the ummah and that his reward is secured with Allāh.

And there is more good news. This principle of cause and effect works upon the earth in both directions, and Allāh's promise remains valid until the final Hour. Whenever the majority of Muslims once again fulfill the conditions set by their Creator, their situation will improve accordingly. That is why da'wah is so important today. Not only to spread the message of truth throughout the world and assist people to worship Allāh in the way He ordained, but also to produce Muslims with knowledge of all aspects of life: the spiritual, physical, social, psychological and moral. Instructive da'wah is necessary in order to improve the negative conditions in which Muslims now live and to free Muslim lands from foreign occupation and authority.

By the will of Allāh and according to this same principle, dissatisfaction, lack of direction and lack of self-worth is now being felt by many people in materialistic societies. Mankind is generally in a state of worry, anxiety and despair. Many live restless and disoriented lives, afflicted with regret over the past, discontent with the present, and fear of the future. A great spiritual famine has taken hold of western

culture. The present political, social and economic systems have neither been able to realize justice nor bring satisfaction to the human soul.

There still remains much misconception and misunderstanding about Islām among non-Muslims. But some are finally beginning to understand the human need for sound belief – not a religion of mere words and rituals, but one which encompasses every aspect of humanity: the mind, the body and the soul. And there is only one religion on earth that includes and satisfies all of these: Islām, the true religion of Allāh.

There is now hardly any place on earth where Islām is totally unknown. More and more people have become curious to find out something about this recently publicized religion in spite of the extremely negative portrayals by western media, or perhaps because of them. In fact, people are embracing Islām today in greater numbers than ever before.

The salvation of our ummah and of humanity will not come about through force of arms. Like the early period of Islām when believers were outnumbered and overpowered, the spread of Islām presently relies on courageous da'wah workers who are confident that their efforts and sacrifices will enable many to achieve a better life on earth and complete happiness in the Hereafter. It is, in fact, the duty of every Muslim according to his means and abilities. Our Lord has told us:

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

"O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allāh is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allāh is Knowing and Acquainted." (49:13)

وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ

"And Allāh will surely support those who support Him. Indeed, Allāh is Powerful and Exalted in Might." (22:40)



Questions:

1. What lessons can be learned from Islāmic history?
2. What has caused many Muslims to neglect their religion?
3. What is the underlying principle behind the growth and decline of the Muslim ummah? Cite at least one āyah of the Qur'ān in support of it.
4. Are people in western materialist societies content? Explain.
5. Why is da'wah important in the present day?

Allāh, the Exalted has said:

قُلْ لَا يَسْتَوِي الْخَبِيثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ الْخَبِيثِ

"Say, 'Not equal are the evil and the good, although the abundance of evil might impress you.'" (5:100)



كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ عَمِلَ مِنْكُمْ سُوءًا بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَنَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

"Your Lord has decreed upon Himself mercy – that any of you who does wrong out of ignorance and then repents after that and corrects himself – surely, He is Forgiving and Merciful."

(6:54)



GLOSSARY OF BASIC ARABIC TERMS

Adhān	The call to prayer
‘Aqeedah	Creed, belief, doctrine
‘Aṣr	Late afternoon
Bid‘ah	Innovation in the religion
Āyah (pl. āyāt)	A sign or a verse of the Qur’ān
Da‘wah	Invitation, inviting people to Islām
Du‘aa’	Supplication
<u>D</u> ha‘eef	Weak (ḥadīth)
<u>D</u> huḥā	A morning sunnah prayer
‘Eid	Festival, feast day, celebration
Fajr	Dawn
<u>F</u> ardh	Obligation, obligatory duty
Fiqh	Islāmic jurisprudence, understanding
Ghusl	Complete bath
Ḥadīth	Narration about the Prophet ﷺ
Ḥajj	Pilgrimage to the Ka‘bah in Makkah
Ḥalāl	Lawful, permissible
Ḥasan	Good, sound, acceptable (ḥadīth)
Ḥarām	Unlawful, prohibited
Hijrah	Emigration
Iḥrām	The state of consecration for Ḥajj or ‘Umrah
Injeel	Gospel
Imām	Leader of the Muslims
Īmān	Faith, belief
Iqāmah	The call to line up for prayer
‘Ishā’	Evening
Islām	Submission to the will of Allāh
I’tidāl	Returning to the standing position after rukū’
Jamā‘ah	Congregation, group
Janāzah	Funeral

Jihād	Effort and exertion for the cause of Allāh
Jibreel	The angel, Gabriel
Julūs	The sitting position in prayer
Ka‘bah	The sacred House in Makkah
Khalīfah	Caliph, ruler of the Muslim state
Khuṭbah	Sermon, speech, address
Kusūf / khusūf	Solar / lunar eclipse
Maghrib	Sunset
Masjid	Mosque
Mu‘adh-dhin	The caller to prayer
Muṣḥaf	The Arabic volume of the Qur’ān
Nabi	Prophet
Nafl (pl. nawāfil)	Extra voluntary acts of worship, such as prayers, fasts, etc.
Niṣāb	The amount of wealth at which zakāh becomes obligatory
Niyyah	Intention
Qadhā’	Repayment, making up a missed act of worship; also: divine decision, decree
Qadar	Divine predetermination, destiny
Qiblah	The direction of the Ka‘bah
Qiyāmah	Resurrection
Rak‘ah	Unit of prayer
Rasūl	Messenger
Rawātib (s. rātibah)	Sunnah prayers associated with the fardh
Rukn (pl. arkān)	A pillar or essential part
Rukū‘	Bowing at the waist
Ṣabr	Patience
Ṣadaqah	Anything done or given for the acceptance of Allāh
Ṣaḥābah (s. ṣaḥābi)	Companions of the Prophet ﷺ
Ṣaḥeeḥ	Correct, authentic, sound
Sahu	Forgetfulness
Salām	Peace, a greeting of peace
Ṣalāh	Prayer

Salātul-Jumu'ah	The Friday congregational prayer
Ṣaum, ṣiyām	Fasting, a fast
Seerah	The Prophet's biography
Shahādah	Declaration of faith in Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ
Sharī'ah	The body of Islāmic law
Shirk	Association of another with Allāh
Sūrah	A chapter of the Qur'ān
Sunnah	The method, practice or recommendation of the Prophet ﷺ
Sujūd, sajdah	Prostration
Ṭahārah	Purity
Taḥiyyatul-masjid	A sunnah prayer upon entering a mosque
Takbeer	Saying "Allāhu akbar"
Taraweeḥ	Sunnah prayers during the nights of Ramadhān
Tashahhud	Recitation of the shahādah during prayer
Tawbah	Repentance
Tawḥeed	Confirmation of the oneness of Allāh
Tayammum	Substitute ablution
Ummah	Nation, community, people
<u>Ṭ</u> uhr	Noon
Wājib	A required act of worship
Witr	The single rak'ah concluding night prayers
Wudhū'	Ablution
Yawm	Day
Zabūr	The Psalms
Zakāh	An obligatory yearly expenditure due from the excess wealth of a Muslim