

# **Aqáid** **(Beliefs)**



# Lesson 1

## The Fítira of Tawhíd

### Belief in God a Natural Instinct

If we study the history of human beings we will realize that humans have always had faith in a Higher Power and a Creator. This is a part of our instinct (*fitra*) built into our consciousness so much so that we can say that those who deny the existence of God hold an unnatural belief.

Rasulullāh (s) said:

كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُوَلَّدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ ثُمَّ أَبَوَاهُ يَهُودَانَهُ أَوْ يُنَصْرَانَهُ أَوْ يُمَجْسَانَهُ

*Every child is born on the natural instinct (fitra of Islām i.e. to believe in One God only); then it is the child's parents who make the child a Christian or a Jew or a Magian (and so on).*

It is also this natural instinct to believe in One God only - the fitra of Tawhid – that the Qur'ān refers to when it says:

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

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

- Surah ar-Room, 30:30

In other words, no matter what we do, as human beings, we will always instinctively want to believe in God because that is how Allāh made us and the belief in Tawhid is built into us as a natural instinct. Even when an atheist tries to argue using 'science' (such as believing in the evolution theory), you can see that they are forcing themselves to ignore the obvious signs all around them.

For example, those who believe humans evolved from apes and other creatures have never found a single fossil evidence to prove this. In other words, no one has ever found any remains of any creature that was in between two creatures to prove the evolution theory.

Even the atheist who believes the universe started with a 'Big Bang' does not know what caused the Big Bang in the first place or who created the small mass that first exploded. So when asked how something could ever come into existence out of nothing, the atheist has no answer except, 'one day science will find out'.

This stubborn refusal to acknowledge God as the Creator of the universe could be for various reasons. It could be because some people came from religions that taught God was in the form of a body like man and sits somewhere in the heavens on a throne. Obviously such beliefs make no sense to people today so when they reject this idea, they reject God altogether. Other people may reject God because they believe religion causes hatred and war. Others may not believe in God because it would mean they would have to do certain things (that are wājib) or keep away from what is harām.

If people understand God the way Rasulullāh (s) and the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) explained God, very few would reject God. We shall discuss this in later books but in this lesson, we wish to understand the need for religion and why humans cannot live without religion and the belief in God.

At the end of this lesson, there are several anecdotes to show why the belief in One God is a natural human instinct. These anecdotes show how simple it is for anyone to realize that faith in God is as natural as any instinct can be. Even when people don't know who God is, they worship stars, the sun, the moon, animals, fire, trees, idols, etc. This shows that as a natural instinct, people have a need to worship their Creator and Lord and to surrender themselves to a Higher Power. You can read these anecdotes as homework.

## Meaning of Tawhid & Shirk

Believing in God is not sufficient. We must also believe that God is One and Only and there is no other god besides Him. He has no partners, He

is the Only Creator and the Sustainer of the whole universe and He has power over all things. He is Ever-Living and never dies. This belief is called Tawhid (monotheism). In Arabic, God is called Allāh.

The opposite of Tawhid is *Shirk*. It means to believe in or worship anything or anyone besides Allāh. *Shirk* is the greatest sin in Islām. To believe Allāh has a partner means to believe someone or something is equal to Allāh.

The most important message of every Nabi and Rasul was Tawhid – to have faith in One God only and to worship no one but Him. Every time people forgot this or started making idols in memory of their prophets and becoming superstitious, believing that other powers can benefit or harm them, Allāh sent another Nabi to remind people that no one can benefit or harm you without Allāh’s permission and there is no one worthy of being worshipped except Allāh.

Here are some verses of Qur’ān that tell us clearly that *shirk* is a major sin.

﴿وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا...﴾

*Worship Allāh and do not ascribe any partners to Him...*

- Surah an-Nisā, 4:36

﴿لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيحُ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ  
اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا  
لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ﴾

*They are certainly faithless who say, ‘Allāh is the Messiah (Jesus), son of Maryam.’ But the Messiah had said, ‘O Children of Israel! Worship Allāh, my Lord and your Lord. Indeed whoever ascribes partners to Allāh, Allāh shall forbid him [entry into] paradise, and his refuge shall be the Fire, and the wrongdoers will not have any helpers.’*

- Surah al-Māidah, 5:72

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

*And (remember) when Luqmān said to his son, as he advised him: ‘O my son! Do not ascribe any partners to Allāh. Polytheism is indeed a great injustice.’*

- Surah Luqmān, 31:13

## The Unforgivable Sin

﴿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 that any partner should be ascribed to Him, but He forgives anything besides that to whomever He wishes. And whoever ascribes partners to Allāh has indeed fabricated [a lie] in great sinfulness.*

- Surah an-Nisā, 4:48

The verse above tells us clearly that a person who does *shirk* cannot be forgiven. Now we know that Allāh is most kind and most merciful and that Allāh does not need anyone’s worship or obedience. So why does Allāh not forgive *shirk*?

The reason is because a mushrik (person who commits *shirk*) is not able to accept Allāh’s forgiveness or guidance even if it is offered to him or her. *Shirk* takes away a person’s ability to receive Allāh’s blessings and grace. It is not that Allāh does not want to forgive a mushrik or allow him or her into paradise but actually the mushrik himself or herself is incapable of living in paradise or accepting Allāh’s forgiveness. That is why Allāh says He does not forgive *shirk*.

Once we have become Muslims and firmly believe “lā ilāha ilallāh, Muhammadun Rasul Allāh, Aliyyun Waliyullah” (*There is no god but Allāh, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh, Ali is the Wali of Allāh*), we must still be careful not to have “Hidden Shirk” (*Shirk al-Khafiyy*) in our hearts. *Hidden shirk* is when a person worships Allāh on the outside but in his or her heart, he or she loves other things more than Allāh and relies on others more than Allāh for security and happiness.

Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq ('a) once said that if a person said, 'I was only saved because of so-and-so' or 'If it was not for so-and-so I would have been ruined' or 'If it was not for so-and-so I don't know what I would have done' then all these statements means the person has "hidden shirk" in his heart. But a person who truly relies on Allāh only and is free from *shirk* completely should say, "If it was not for Allāh's help through so-and-so, I don't know what I would have done'. Or he should say, 'All thanks be to Allāh who helped me through so-and-so.'

In other words, even when we are sick and we take medicine or we are hungry and we eat food or we have a need and someone or something helps us, we should know and realize that the blessing is actually from Allāh but He gives it to us through someone or something. So we should first thank Allāh and then thank the person through whom Allāh helped us. Allāh tells us:

﴿...وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ﴾

*... and hold fast to Allāh. He is your Master - an excellent Master and an excellent Helper.*

- Surah al-Hajj, 22:78

Read the following anecdotes as homework. Your teacher may ask you to tell one of these stories in class or to organize skits for some of them:

## Anecdotes on Belief in God a Natural Instinct

### The Spinning Wheel

One day, Rasulullāh (s) was out with some of his companions (*ashāb*) when they came across an old woman working at a spinning-wheel. As she was spinning yarn, she was praising Allāh for all His blessings. Rasulullāh (s) stopped to ask her about her health.

Then he said to her, 'Tell me, what made you believe in Allāh?'

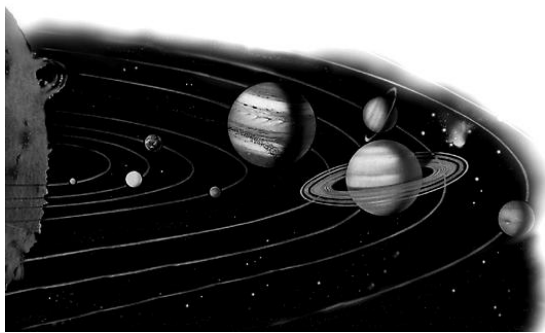


On hearing this, the woman stopped working on the spinning-wheel, thought for a while and then replied:

‘O Messenger of Allāh! You see this spinning-wheel? As long as I move it, it spins. As soon as I stop turning it, it stops. If such a simple thing cannot function unless someone keeps it going, how is it possible for the whole universe to work so well without Someone driving it? There must be Someone to run it. Someone

who must be controlling every detail. That can only be Allāh, who is the Creator and the Master of Everything!’

Rasulullāh (s) was very pleased with the old woman's reply and told his companions to learn from her faith and to have as strong a faith in Allāh as she did.



### **Imām Ja’far as-Sādiq (‘a) and the Atheist**

An atheist asked Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq (‘a) to convince him of the existence of Allāh. When Imām as-Sādiq (‘a) came to know that the man sailed in the seas very often, he asked him, ‘Have you ever been caught in a fierce storm in middle of nowhere, and thought you were going to drown and lose your life?’ ‘Yes!’ replied the man. Then the Imām (‘a) asked again, ‘And at that time, when there was complete despair, was there not a glimmer of hope that perhaps someone or something, by some miracle, could still save you?’

‘Yes,’ said the man again. ‘That Power,’ said the Imām (‘a), ‘in which you had a glimmer of hope and that saved you, is Allāh!’

The atheist was an intelligent man. He knew the truth when he heard it.





### A Boat Out of Nothing

Long ago there lived a wise King who ruled over a kingdom in which some of the people believed in Allāh and some did not.

To resolve the argument once and for all, the wise king arranged for a debate between the believers in God and the non-believers.

When the time arrived for the great debate, the people representing the non-believers arrived at the court but a wise old man who was going to represent the believers did not show up.

Everyone waited and waited but the old man still did not come. The non-believers said that he would not turn up because he had no arguments for his belief in God.

At last, the wise old man arrived. Everyone wanted to know why he was so late. So the King asked him to explain the reason for his delay.

The man explained that he had left home in time but in order to get to the King's court he had to cross a river. When he reached the river there was no boat to cross.

Everyone in the court listened attentively. The man continued with his story.

He then told everyone that while he was waiting for a boat, some planks of wood and some nails suddenly started coming out of the water by themselves and floating around. Then just by coincidence, all the pieces of wood moved into just the right position and the nails also went into the wood in just the perfect places until a boat formed all by itself.

But it took a while for this boat to make itself and the old man had to wait, so he was late.

All the non-believers were very angry and called the old man a liar.

The wise old man asked the non-believers why they did not believe his story of the boat being made by itself, while they wanted everyone to believe that this whole world and everything in it had been made by itself, since they did not believe in Allāh as the Creator?

None of the non-believers could answer the wise old man, and so the believers in Allāh won the debate!

## **Do Barbers Exist?**

One day a man went to a barber's shop to have his hair cut and his beard trimmed as always. He began to talk to the barber and somehow they began talking about religion and God.

'Look man,' said the barber, 'I don't believe that God exists.' 'Why is that?' asked the man and the barber said, 'Well, it's so easy. You just have to go out into the streets and look to realize that God does not exist. Tell me, if God exists, would there be so many sick people? Would there be abandoned children? If God exists, there would be no suffering or pain. I can't think of loving a God who allows all of these things.'

The man thought for a moment but he did not respond immediately because he did not want to start an argument. When the barber finished cutting his hair and trimming his beard, the man paid him and left the shop.

Just after he left the barber shop, he saw a man in the street with long hair and a beard. It was very untidy and a long time since he had his hair cut. He looked dirty and unkempt.

The customer rushed back into the barber shop again and said to the barber, 'Guess what? Barbers don't exist!'

'How can you say they don't exist?' asked the surprised barber, 'I am here and I am a barber. Why I just worked on you?!'

'No!' the customer exclaimed. 'Barbers don't exist, because if they did there would be no people with long, dirty hair and beards like that man who is outside.'

'Ah!' said the barber, 'you are wrong. Barbers do exist. What happens is that people do not come to me so I can help them.'

'Exactly!' said the man. 'That's the point! God does exist. What happens is that people refuse to go to Him and do not look for Him. They pretend they are independent and do not need Him; and when they suffer, instead of going to Him they turn away from Him and insist He does not exist!'

## **The Tiger's Footprints**

There once lived a farmer who always prayed all his salāh on time. One day he saw a sick man lying on the roadside. He helped him up and took him home to look after him.

The next morning when the farmer woke up to pray salāh, he woke up his guest who said he did not want to pray. The man said that he could not see Allāh so how could he pray to One whom he could not see. The farmer did not say anything.

The next day the man was feeling better and wanted to go home. The farmer walked with him across the fields. Suddenly they saw footprints. The man told the farmer that they were the footprints of a tiger.

'Nah! I don't believe that!' said the farmer, 'I can't see a tiger here!'

The man looked surprised and said, 'you are just being stubborn and silly. Aren't these footprints enough to tell you that a tiger was here not long ago?'

The farmer said, 'Dear brother! When you saw the footprints you believed that a tiger had passed here; so are not the moon, the sun, the flowers, and the trees enough signs to make you believe that there must be One who made them?'

The man thought for a while and said, 'Yes! You are right! We cannot see Allāh with our eyes because He doesn't have a physical body. But we can understand from all the things around us that He has created them and that He exists. Every creation of Allāh is a sign pointing to Him!'

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# EVIDENCE OF THE CREATOR

Sufi Comics  
Arif & Ali

O IMAM ALI, WHAT EVIDENCE IS THERE OF AN ALMIGHTY CREATOR?

THE FECES OF A CAMEL LEADS ONE TO BELIEVE...

... THAT A CAMEL HAS PASSED ALONG WAY

FOOTPRINTS ON SAND ...

INDICATES A MAN HAS TREKED ON THE PATH

LOOK AT THIS GRAND UNIVERSE! WITH ALL ITS CREATURES...

BOTH BIG....

AND SMALL...

IT IS EVIDENCE OF AN ALMIGHTY CREATOR!

## Lesson 2

# Shaytán & Sín

### Allāh's Good News and Warning

One of the most important messages of the Qur'ān (and in fact of every Nabi) is Allāh's Promise to allow into Paradise (Jannah) for eternity, those who have faith in Allāh, who do not associate partners with Him, who believe in all His Books, Prophets, Angels and who keep away from all that is harām and do all that wājib.

Another important message from Allāh is His Warning to punish the evil. Their punishment is to live forever in the Fire of Hell (Jahannam) and it will be the abode for every proud and arrogant person who refuses to believe in Allāh despite knowing the truth and who prefers this world's life instead of the Hereafter.

Rasulullāh (s) came to do both: give us good news of Allāh's promise and to warn us of Allāh's punishment. For this reason, the Qur'ān calls him "The Giver of Good News" (Bashir or Mubashshir) and the Warner (Nadhir):

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

*We did not send you except as a bearer of good news and warner to all mankind, but most people do not know.*

- Surah Sabā, 34:28

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا﴾

*O Prophet! Indeed We have sent you as a witness, as a bearer of good news and as a warner.*

- Surah al-Ahzāb, 33:45

### Concept of Sin and Temptation

A sin is any act of disobedience to Allāh. In Arabic this is called "Dhanb" and the plural is "Dhunub". Committing a *dhanb* is harām meaning

forbidden. And keeping away from a dhanb is wājib meaning obligatory (i.e. a must).

The reason why Allāh forbids us not do certain things and calls them “*Dhunub*” is because they are bad for our souls. When we commit *Dhunub*, we harm ourselves. It makes no difference to Allāh but it reduces our chances of making it to Jannah unless we repent. That is why Allāh says in the Qur’ān:

﴿...فَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ﴾

*So it was not Allāh who wronged them, but it was they who used to wrong themselves.*

- Surah at-Tawbah, 9:70

Some scholars (‘ulama) divide all sins into two groups: major sins (*adh-dhunub al-kabira*) and minor sins (*adh-dhunub as-saghira*). They say any sin for which Allāh has clearly promised the Fire of Hell in the Qur’ān (such as murder or disobeying parents or *shirk*) is a major sin. And any sin for which the punishment is mentioned in hadith but not in Qur’ān is a minor sin.

However, all the scholars agree that committing a minor sin repeatedly is a major sin. In other words, a person who commits a minor sin should not take it lightly but should immediately repent and ask Allāh to forgive him or her.

Sometimes a person commits a sin because of temptation. Allāh however is always willing to forgive a person and to allow him or her to start all over again. To do this, we must first have regret in our hearts for committing the sin. Then we must pray to Allāh to forgive us.

Allāh loves a person who constantly asks Him to forgive his or her sins and is always afraid of disobeying Him. And Allāh does not love a person who is too proud to ask for forgiveness and just ignores the sins he or she commits.

## How Much Influence Does Shaytān Have on Us?

We all know that Shaytān is our enemy and loves to see us commit sins so that we can all go to Hellfire with him. Many Muslims believe that it is Shaytān who makes us do evil and commit sins. But is that really true?

Allāh tells us in the Qur'ān to beware of Shaytān:

﴿يَا بَنِي آدَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ كَمَا أَخْرَجَ أَبَوَيْكُم مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ ... إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا  
الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

*'O Children of Adam! Do not let Shaytān tempt you, like he expelled your parents (Nabi Adam ('a) and Sayyida Hawwa ('a)) from paradise ... We have indeed made the devils friends of those who have no faith.'*

- Surah al-'Arāf, 7:27

But the Qur'ān also clarifies that Shaytān cannot force us to commit sins. Instead, what happens in this world is that when we forget Allāh, Shaytān is able to whisper ideas of sins in our ears and hearts. Then we think about it and feel tempted. At this point, we still have the choice to remember Allāh and ask Allāh for help and to ignore Shaytān. However if we love the world and its pleasures, we listen to Shaytān and he continues to embellish (i.e. decorate) the sin for us until we go ahead and commit the sinful act. Then we realize what we have done and feel very sorry that we disobeyed Allāh.

That is why Allāh teaches to seek His protection from the whispers of Shaytān:

﴿قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ . مَلِكِ النَّاسِ . إِلَهِ النَّاسِ . مِن شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ . الَّذِي  
يُوسَسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ . مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ﴾

*Say, 'I seek the protection of the Lord of humans, King of humans, God of humans, from the evil of the sneaky tempter who puts temptations into the chests of humans, from among the jinn and humans.'*

- Surah an-Nās, 114:1-6



In other words, we have to remember that we are responsible for our actions. We cannot blame Shaytān for the sins we commit. Shaytān only acts like a ‘broker’ or a ‘salesman’. He packages a sin, “gift-wraps” it in our eyes and ears and makes it look beautiful to us so that if we love the world more than Allāh, we are tempted to go towards the sin:

﴿فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِنْ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

*Why did they not plead (for forgiveness) when Our punishment overtook them?! But their hearts had hardened, and Shaytān had made to seem decorous to them what they had been doing.*

- Surah al-An‘ām, 6:43

﴿وَإِذْ زَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَإِنِّي جَارٌ لَكُمْ فَلَمَّا تَرَأَتِ الْفِئْتَانِ نَكَصَ عَلَى عَقَبَيْهِ وَقَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِنْكُمْ إِنِّي أَرَى مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ﴾

*And (remember) when Shaytān made their deeds seem decorous to them, and said, ‘No one shall overcome you today from among all mankind, and I will stand by you.’ But when the two armies sighted each other, he (Shaytān) fled, saying, ‘Indeed I am free of you. I see what you do not see. Indeed I fear Allāh, and Allāh is severe in punishment.’*

- Surah al-Anfāl, 8:48

On the Day of Judgement, when we blame Shaytān for our sins, Allāh will allow Shaytān to say he had nothing to do with it and therefore we will have to take the blame ourselves:

﴿وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعَدَ الْحَقُّ وَوَعَدْتُكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا أَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي فَلَا تَلُمُونِي وَلُومُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ مَا أَنَا بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُصْرِخِيَّ إِنِّي كَفَرْتُ بِمَا أَشْرَكْتُمُونِي مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ﴾

*When the matter is all over, Shaytān will say, 'Indeed Allāh made you a promise that was true and I [too] made you a promise, but I failed you. I had no authority over you, except that I called you and you responded to me. So do not blame me, but blame yourselves. I cannot respond to your distress calls, neither can you respond to my distress calls. Indeed I reject your taking me for [Allāh's] partner before. There is indeed a painful punishment for the wrongdoers.'*

- Surah Ibrāhim, 14:22

We may therefore conclude: Shaytān plays a role in sins but is not the primary cause of our sins. If Shaytān could force us to commit sins then it would be against the justice ('adālah) of Allāh to punish us for something we have no control over. But Allāh can punish us if we disobey Him and then refuse to do istighfār and tawbah because ultimately the decision is always ours. We have the freewill to act as we like in this world but we must know the role that Shaytān plays in our lives, the consequences of sinning and how to protect ourselves from the temptations of Shaytān by constantly seeking protection with Allāh.

# Lesson 3

## Qur'ān & Hadīth

### Qur'ān, Hadith and Hadith al-Qudsi

Muslims rely on two major sources for their spiritual guidance and understanding of the Islām: the Qur'ān and hadith. Hadith is also further categorized as Hadith al-Qudsi or Hadith an-Nabawi.

- a) Qur'ān:** The Qur'ān is a divine Book whose words as well as meanings are revealed from Allāh. The Qur'ān is a miracle in itself. It is preserved by Allāh Himself from ever being corrupted or changed and it challenges all humans and jinns to ever produce anything like it. The Qur'ān was revealed to Rasulullāh (s) by the angel Jibrāil over a period of 23 years. It consists of 114 surahs (chapters). No Muslim can doubt in the authenticity of the Qur'ān and still remain a Muslim.
- b) Hadith:** Hadith is often translated as “Tradition” in English. It refers to the sayings of Rasulullāh (s). The words are Rasulullāh (s)'s but the meaning is Allāh's because Rasulullāh (s) was a Messenger (Rasul) from Allāh. The infallible (ma'sum) Imāms from the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) also narrated hadith but everything they said as hadith was from Rasulullāh (s) through the previous Imāms. For example, if we hear of a hadith from Imām Ali ar-Rida ('a) it means that the hadith is actually what Imām ar-Rida ('a) heard from his father Imām al-Kādhim ('a) who heard from his father and so on until Imām Ali b. Abi Tālib ('a) who heard it from Rasulullāh (s).

After Rasulullāh (s) passed away, the early caliphs and especially the Caliph Umar b. al-Khattāb did not allow people to record hadith and therefore a lot of the sayings of Rasulullāh (s) were lost. Thereafter the corrupt leaders from the Banu Umayya and Banu Abbās forged many hadith in the name of Rasulullāh (s) just to convince people to be in their favour and not to oppose their rule. The Umayyad Caliph Mu'āwiya was known to pay people to make up false 'hadith' especially against Imām Ali ('a). Therefore not every hadith is to be trusted.

When we hear of a hadith from Rasulullāh (s) or an Imām (‘a), we rely on hadith experts to look at who the hadith has come from and who are the people who narrated it and wrote it down, in order to be sure if the hadith is authentic (*sahih*) or not.

- c) **Hadith al-Qudsi:** Hadith al-Qudsi is a hadith in which Allāh Himself speaks in the 1<sup>st</sup> person. This means the words and the meanings are both from Allāh. However it is not a part of the Qur’ān and therefore not intended to be a part of the miracle. This means a hadith al-qudsi can also be authentic or forged and has to be studied carefully. You can tell a hadith al-qudsi right away because it always ends with “Rasulullāh (s) said that Allāh says:.....”. Any hadith in which you find Allāh speaking directly to a Nabi, such as “O Dāwud!...’ or ‘O Muhammad!...’, you should know immediately that this is a hadith al-qudsi.

It is very important that we don’t confuse hadith al-qudsi with the Qur’ān. Here is an example of a hadith al-qudsi:

Rasulullāh (s) has said that Allāh (s.w.t.) says:

*One who tries to reach Me, knows Me.*

*One who knows Me, wants Me.*

*One who wants Me, seeks Me.*

*One who seeks Me, finds Me.*

*One who finds Me, serves Me.*

*One who serves Me, remembers Me.*

*And one who remembers Me, I remember him with My Mercy.*

## Tahrif of Qur’ān

The word ‘Tahrif’ means ‘Distortion’ or ‘Change’. To believe in the tahrif of the Qur’ān means to believe that the Qur’ān we have with us at present is not the original, complete revelation of Allāh to Rasulullāh (s).

Some Muslims accuse the Shi’ah of believing in tahrif of Qur’ān. They say the Shi’ahs believe that the present Qur’ān is not complete and many things in it are missing or have been changed.

Now there are ahādith (plural of hadith) in many Sunni and Shi'ah books about tahrif but actually no Muslim believes in the authenticity of these ahādith and some scholars try and interpret the ahādith differently.

It is important for us to know and believe with absolute certainty that the Qur'ān is the final message to mankind and it is protected from tahrif i.e. it can never be altered, whether by adding something or removing something or deleting something.

Shi'ah Muslims therefore do **not** believe in the tahrif of Qur'ān. The belief of the Shi'ah Muslims is that the Qur'ān is complete with not a single letter added or missing.

Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ﴾

*Indeed We have sent down the Reminder (i.e. the Qur'ān), and indeed We will protect it.*

- Surah al-Hijr, 15:9

What the Shi'ahs do believe is that the present Qur'ān may not be arranged in the exact order that Rasulullāh (s) had arranged it. We know that Imām Ali ('a) had compiled a copy of the Qur'ān himself and it was arranged in the exact order as intended by Rasulullāh (s). Imām Ali ('a) also wrote his own comments and explanations to all the verses of the Qur'ān i.e. when each ayah was revealed, why it was revealed (called *sabab an-nuzul* in Arabic), and any explanations from Rasulullāh (s) about the āyāt of Qur'ān. This copy of the Qur'ān by Imām Ali ('a) is not with us and when Imām al-Mahdi ('atfs) returns, he will introduce it to mankind.

## The Qur'ān as an Eternal Miracle

We have said the Qur'ān is an eternal miracle. It is unchanged and also unchallenged. The Qur'ān challenges people to bring its like if they dare and it also challenges people to find any faults in it:

﴿أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا﴾

*Do they not ponder on the Qur'ān? Had it been from [someone] other than Allāh, they would have surely found much discrepancy in it.*

- Surah an-Nisā, 4:82

﴿وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ. فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ﴾

*And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down to Our servant, then bring a surah like it, and call your helpers besides Allāh, should you be truthful. And if you do not - and you will not - then beware of the Fire whose fuel will be humans and stones, prepared for the faithless.*

- Surah al-Baqarah, 2:23-4

﴿أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا مَنْ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

*Do they say, 'He has fabricated it?' Say, 'Then bring a surah like it, and call whomever you can, besides Allāh, should you be truthful.'*

- Surah Yunus, 10:38

The Qur'ān is therefore a miracle in more than one way: language and style, prophecies, scientific revelations, the best code of life and its relevance today even 1400 years later.

## Language

The language of the Qur'ān is of such high standard that even the Arabs in the time of Rasullāh (s) who took pride in their skills in language and literature, were unable to match it. Repeatedly they confessed when they heard the āyāt of the Qur'ān, 'these are not the words of a human being' (*mā hādha kalām al-bashar*). The Qur'ān has its own unique style that is neither poetry nor prose.

Some people try to find grammar mistakes in the Qur'ān but that is very silly. The fact is, the Arabic language has only survived because of the

Qur'ān and all Arabic grammar rules were created from studying the Qur'ān. So when we see our grammar rules do not agree with the Qur'ān, it is actually the fault of those who made the rules from the Qur'ān and not a mistake in the Qur'ān!

We should make an effort to study the Arabic language and to recite the Qur'ān in Arabic in order to appreciate the beauty and miracle of the Qur'ān and the power and conviction with which it speaks. When we read the Qur'ān in Arabic, it leaves no doubt in our minds and hearts that the Speaker is not human yet He knows the nature of human beings very well. In other words, we are convinced that the Author of the Qur'ān is none other than our Creator, the Mighty and Glorious Lord of the Universe!

### Prophecies

The Qur'ān made several prophecies, all of which came true. For example, Surah 111 curses Abu Lahab and his wife and foretells that they will both be destined for Hell.

﴿تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ. مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ. سَيَصْلَىٰ نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ.  
وَأَمْرَأَتُهُ حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ. فِي جِيدِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّنْ مَّسَدٍ﴾

*May the hands of Abu Lahab perish, and may he perish! Neither his wealth will help him, nor what he had earned. Soon he will enter the blazing fire, and his wife [too], the firewood carrier, with a rope of palm fibre around her neck.*

- Surah al-Masad, 111:1-5

Abu Lahab was the uncle of Rasulullāh (s) but an ardent enemy of Rasulullāh (s) as well. Most Makkan polytheists accepted Islām before Rasulullāh (s) passed away. If Abu Lahab wanted to prove the Qur'ān wrong, the easiest way for him was to recite the Kalima. Even if he would have done this in pretension, it would have challenged the prophecy of the Qur'ān. Yet Abu Lahab and his wife died with hatred for Rasulullāh (s) and in opposition to Islām.

Another example was the Qur'ān's prediction about the Romans victory over the Persians. During the time of Rasulullāh (s) the Romans and the

Persians were seen as the world's 'superpowers'. The Persians were also polytheists. When they defeated the Romans, the Arab mushrikun (polytheists) were very happy because they thought they would now have the help of the Persians to stop the spread of Islām. But the Qur'ān predicted that even after defeat, in a few years the Romans would overcome the Persians; and that is exactly what happened:

﴿غَلَبَتِ الرُّومُ. فِي أَدْنَى الْأَرْضِ وَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ غَلَبِهِمْ سَيَغْلِبُونَ. فِي بضعِ سِنِينَ...﴾

*Byzantium (i.e. the Romans) has been vanquished in a nearby territory, but following their defeat they will be victors in a few years....*

- Surah Room, 30:2-4

### **Lack of Discrepancies**

We have seen the āyah (verse) of Qur'ān challenging people to find a fault in the Qur'ān (4:82).

Think about this: The Qur'ān was revealed over 23 years. 12 years in Makkah and 11 years in Madina. If Rasulullāh (s) was not really a messenger from Allāh and if he was making the Qur'ān up himself, it would be impossible for him to remember everything he had said over 23 years and we would have found so many contradictions in the Qur'ān. But despite the gradual revelation, there is no contradictions in the Qur'ān. This in itself is a miracle for anyone who reflects!

### **Code of Life**

The Qur'ān is a book of guidance. It gives the framework for humans to live on and how to be successful both in this world and the Hereafter. The central theme of Tawhid teaches humans to be free and to surrender to Allāh alone so that they are not submissive to anyone or anything else. The Qur'ān teaches humans to be free of superstitions and myths that hold them hostage. The Qur'ān teaches moderation and the perfect balance that ensures humans are not driven by greed and selfishness but also enjoy Allāh's blessings and benefit from the life of this world without losing the Hereafter. No other book or religion contains the perfect Code of Conduct for humans that remains relevant in all times and ages.



## Science

Unlike religions that have a long history of being opposed to science and human progress, the Qur'ān in fact is ahead of science. The more humans research and discover scientific facts, the more they prove the Qur'ān to be a miracle. From human development to animal life, from how the universe functions to the ocean tides and the mountains.

Here are some examples from the Qur'ān of scientific nature. Though these verses were revealed 1400 years ago, science continues to prove the Qur'ān is right:

### Stages in the Development of a Human Being

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّنَ الْبُعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِّنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِّنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِّنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِّنْ مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَنُقِرُّ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِنَبْلُغُوا أَشَدَّكُمْ...﴾

*O people! If you are in doubt about the resurrection, [consider that] We indeed created you from dust, then from a drop of fluid, then from a clinging mass (embryo), then from a fleshy tissue (fetus), partly formed and partly unformed, so that We may manifest [Our power] to you. We establish in the wombs whatever We wish for a specified term, then We bring you forth as infants, then [We rear you] so that you may come of age.*

- Surah al-Hajj, 22:5

### On Clouds, Hail and the Water Cycle

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُزْجِي سَحَابًا ثُمَّ يُؤَلِّفُ بَيْنَهُ ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُ رُكَامًا فَتَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلَالِهِ وَيُنزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ جِبَالٍ فِيهَا مِنْ بَرَدٍ فَيُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَصْرِفُهُ عَنِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ يَكَادُ سَنَا بَرْقِهِ يَذْهَبُ بِالْأَبْصَارِ﴾

*Have you not regarded that Allāh drives the clouds, then He composes them, then He piles them up, then you see the rain falling from its midst? And He sends down hail from the sky, out of the mountains that are in it,*

*and He strikes with it whomever He wishes, and turns it away from whomever He wishes. The brilliance of its lightening almost takes away the sight.*

- Surah an-Nur, 24:43

﴿اللَّهُ الَّذِي يُرْسِلُ الرِّيَّاحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا فَيَبْسُطُهُ فِي السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ وَيَجْعَلُهُ كِسْفًا  
فَتَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلَالِهِ...﴾

*It is Allāh who sends the winds. Then they raise a cloud, then He spreads it as He wishes in the sky, and forms it into fragments, then you see the rain falling from its midst.*

- Surah Room, 30:48

In conclusion then, we can see that truly the Quran will remain a guide for humanity till the end of this world. The more closely we look into the āyāt (verses) of the Qur'ān, the more it will reveal its secrets to us because the Qur'ān is not confined for the people of one period. Its message is for all humans in all periods of time and its wisdom extends even beyond this world and covers the world to come.

# Lesson 4

## Infallibility (‘Ismah)

### Concept of ‘Ismah

‘Ismah (infallibility) is the Islāmic concept that those who are appointed by Allāh to guide others must be sinless and must never disobey Allāh. Most Sunni Muslims believe that prophets are sinless only when they are receiving revelation (*wahy*) from Allāh so that they do not make any mistake when delivering the revelation to people.

Shi’ah Muslims believe that even the words and actions of prophets (that are called his hadith and sunnah) are very important in understanding Islām and therefore a Nabi or Rasul is always ma’sum (sinless). Shi’ah Muslims also believe that the daughter of Rasulullāh (s), Sayyida Fātima (‘a) and the twelve Imāms from the Household (Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) of Rasulullāh (s) are ma’sum and together with Rasulullāh (s) they form the fourteen ma’sumeen.

Of course other pious members of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) were also free of sin but when we say these fourteen are the ma’sumeen we mean their being sinless (or infallible) is a requirement of religion because of their position and role in Islām.

### Meaning of ‘Ismah

The word *‘ismah* means a protection or a covering. It is therefore a special grace (*lutf*) of Allāh that is given to a person so that he is able to keep away from sins out of his or her own free will. A person who is given this gift of ‘ismah is called a ma’sum (female: ma’suma) and the plural is ma’sumeen.

It is important to understand that a ma’sum is not forced by Allāh or unable to commit sins but he or she keeps away from sin by his own power and freewill. A ma’sum keeps away from sin because of his or her deep understanding of how sin harms the soul of a person and also because a ma’sum is aware and conscious of Allāh’s presence at all times. This is just like ordinary people who have the freewill to hurt their

bodies but they don't do it because they know how painful and harmful it will be. People commit sins because they don't realize how much they are harming their souls. If they knew that, they would not even think of committing a sin.

One can also think of 'ismah in this way: it is within your power to go naked in the streets. But have you ever thought of doing so? No. Why? Because it is far below your dignity to behave like that. Similarly a ma'sum does not even think of sin because it is far below his or her dignity.

### Necessity of 'Ismah

A ma'sum Nabi, Rasul or Imām does not even sin by mistake. Allāh makes sure that it never happens and protects them from such mistakes.

Why is it necessary for Allāh to protect them so much? And what do we mean when we say it is a necessity of Islām that a Nabi or Imām should be ma'sum?

The answer is that Allāh sent the anbiya ('a) and aimmah ('a) to guide people to the Right Path (Sirāt al-Mustaqim) and to become role models and examples to follow. He also asked people to listen to all their words and watch all their actions so that they may be guided by it. For example, Allāh tells us about Rasulullāh (s):

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

*In the Messenger of Allāh there is certainly for you a good example (to follow), for those who look forward to Allāh and the Last Day, and remember Allāh much.*

- Surah al-Ahzāb, 33:21

Now if a Nabi or Imām sometimes made mistakes or committed sins even by accident, how would we know what to follow and what to ignore?

That is why Allāh also tells us about Rasulullāh (s):

﴿وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ. إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ﴾

*Nor does he speak out of [his own] desire: it is just a revelation that is revealed [to him].*

- Surah an-Najm, 53:3-4

So Islām's goal of guidance to humankind could not be achieved if the guides themselves had not been sinless (ma'sumeen).

Also, suppose a man who commits sins like ordinary people claimed that he has been sent by Allāh to lead the people to the Right Path, how would the people be sure that he is saying the truth?

Allāh also says in the Qur'ān:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ...﴾

*We did not send any messenger but to be obeyed by Allāh's leave...*

- Surah an-Nisā, 4:64

Now if the anbiyā were to be obeyed and followed - and we know that Allāh does not want us to follow wrongdoers - how can we obey the anbiyā unless they are sinless and free from committing errors and sins?

When Allāh (s.w.t.) told Nabi Ibrahim ('a) that He was appointing him as an Imām, Nabi Ibrāhim ('a) asked if his children will also be made Imām. Allāh replied that the wrongdoers from his descendants will never be given this honour:

﴿وَإِذْ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

﴿ذُرِّيَّتِي قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

*And when his Lord tested Ibrahim with certain words, and he fulfilled them, He said, 'I am making you the Imām of mankind.' Said he, 'And from among my descendants?' He said, 'My pledge does not extend to the unjust.'*

- Surah al-Baqarah, 2:124

This proves that Allāh only chooses those who are ma'sum to represent Him as guides to the human race.

Some Muslims quote examples from the Qur'ān to show that the anbiya made mistakes. For example, the story of Nabi Adam ('a) eating from the forbidden tree.

There are however many reasons to explain why Nabi Adam ('a) never committed a sin. Firstly, when Nabi Adam ('a) was told not to go near a tree, it was not in this world. So there was no shari'ah and laws of halāl and harām there.

Secondly, Allāh told the angels He was going to create a khalifa **on the earth**:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

*When your Lord said to the angels, 'Indeed I am going to set a khalifa on the earth,' they said, 'Will You set in it someone (i.e. humans) who will cause corruption in it, and shed blood, while we celebrate Your praise and proclaim Your sanctity?' He said, 'Indeed I know what you do not know.'*

- Surah al-Baqarah, 2:30

So Nabi Adam ('a) only became a Nabi after coming to the earth.

Thirdly, when Nabi Adam ('a) was in the Garden before coming to the earth, Shaytān misled him by swearing in the name of Allāh. Nabi Adam ('a) was the first human being. He had never heard anyone say a lie and he never imagined anyone could swear falsely in Allāh's Name.

Whenever we hear of any "mistakes" made by the anbiya, they are not actually sins that affect their position as spiritual guides. Instead such actions are called *Tark al-Awla* which means "Leaving the Better Option". It is possible for a Nabi to do this and for Allāh to correct him or remind him but as such, a Nabi cannot commit sins. We shall learn more about Tark al-Awla in Book 8.

## Types of 'Ismah

There are two types of infallibility ('ismah): general ('āmmah) and specific (khāssah).

**Al-'Ismah al-'Aammah:** This is a general kind of “sinlessness” that is accessible to everyone. For example, the angels are sinless in this sense. They don't commit sins but it is not out of choice. Similarly, newborns and very young children are also called “ma'sum” in this sense. Even if we protect ourselves from certain sins, we can be said to be “ma'sum” in a limited sense. For example, if you never steal or backbite, we could say you are infallible (ma'sum) from stealing and backbiting. There have always been some very pious individuals in Islām who did everything wājib and kept away from all harām matters. But they may have made mistakes when they were young and they learnt to become pious with time, knowledge and experience. Also, when such pious individuals keep away from sin, it is very good but if they didn't, it would make no difference to us or the rest of mankind. Their 'ismah is only for their own sake. So their 'ismah is also part of this general sinlessness (al-'ismah al-'āmmah).

**Al-'Ismah al-Khāssah:** This is a special and specific kind of infallibility that is a requirement of Islām for any prophet or Imām to have. This 'ismah is special because it affects everyone else as well. And it can be further divided into two categories: the 'ismah of all the anbiya and rusul besides Rasulullāh (s), the Last Messenger; and the 'ismah of Rasulullāh (s) and the thirteen ma'sumeen ('a) from his family (Ahl al-Bayt) ('a).

The other anbiyā and rusul besides the fourteen ma'sumeen ('a) of Islām, may sometimes make a choice that is not the best even though it is not a sin (i.e. tark al-awla). But the fourteen ma'sumeen ('a) do not commit even tark al-awla. They are Allāh's most perfect creation and about whom Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

﴿... إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا﴾

*Indeed Allāh desires to repel all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification.*

- Surah al-Ahzāb, 33:33

## Lesson 5

# Taqiyya

### The Concept of Taqiyya

Taqiyya means to hide one's faith and not to let others know what you really believe. Islām allows us to do this if our lives are in danger or we fear others may harm us.

We know taqiyya is allowed in Islām because Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

﴿لَا يَتَّخِذُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقَاةً...﴾

*The faithful should not take the faithless for allies instead of the faithful, and whoever does that Allāh will have nothing to do with him, **except when you are wary of them out of caution.***

- Surah Aal-i Imrān, 3:28

The condition for taqiyya is that when we hide our faith it should not put the life of another Muslim in danger nor should it misguide others or put Islām in danger.

Some Sunni Muslims believe taqiyya was only allowed in the early days of Islām when Muslims were few and they were being tortured but now it is harām to practice taqiyya. Other Sunni Muslims believe taqiyya is still allowed but only with non-Muslims if a person is living in their midst and fears for his life.

The Shi'ahs on the other hand believe taqiyya can be practiced even today. The condition is not whether it is practiced against another Muslim or non-Muslim. The condition is that as long as Islām is not harmed and another person's life is not in danger, then it is wājib to save your life even if you have to lie and hide your true faith.

Some Sunni Muslims accuse the Shi'ah Muslims of hypocrisy because they practice taqiyya against them (Sunni Muslims). But what we have to realize is that over the last 1400 years of Muslim history, the Shi'ah have



always been persecuted, tortured and killed by the ruling Banu Umayya and Banu Abbās rulers and the Shi'ah had to hide their faith and love for the Ahl al-Bayt (a') in order to save their lives. Even today, there are sects such as the Wahābbi who teach their followers that it is good to kill the Shi'ah.

Our Imāms therefore taught us to be wise: when Islām is in danger then you should even sacrifice your life. But when there is nothing to be gained, then it is foolish to put yourself in harm's way and risk your life. Instead, we should hide our faith, which is the meaning of taqiyya.

The famous Sunni scholar at-Tabari defined taqiyya as, 'to say with the tongue (against what one believes) while the heart rests comfortably in faith (*imān*). As long as one does not believe what one says and it is only out of fear of people, but the heart rests in faith, then there is no harm and he has not committed a sin.'<sup>1</sup>

### Difference from Nifāq

Those who accuse the Shi'ah of hiding their true faith and beliefs say the Shi'ahs are being hypocrites (*munafiqeen*) by practising taqiyya because they are saying and doing things other than what is in their hearts.

However nothing is further from the truth. Taqiyya is actually the exact opposite of Nifāq (hypocrisy).

A hypocrite (*munāfiq*) *pretends to follow the right path* but in his heart he believes in the wrong things and *he pretends to have faith only to cheat others* and take wrong advantage of them.

A person who practices taqiyya *pretends to follow the wrong path* but in his heart he believes in the truth and *he pretends only out of fear* and to preserve his or her life.

In other words the Shi'ah are not allowed to practice taqiyya unless they fear for their safety. But if they are in danger, then naturally who the person threatening them should not matter, whether it a non-Muslim or a Muslim who believes it is lawful to harm or kill Shi'ahs.

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<sup>1</sup> Tabari, *Jām'i al-Bayān*, 3:28

Furthermore, some well known Sunni scholars have also supported the belief in Taqiyya. The famous Sunni scholar and mufassir (commentator) of the Qur'ān, Nawawi wrote that Hasan al-Basri said, 'Taqiyya is permitted for the faithful (mu'mineen) until the Day of Resurrection because repelling harm from oneself is obligatory (wājib) as much as possible.' Nawawi also wrote in his tafsir of Qur'ān that during the time of Rasulullāh (s) there was a man who claimed to be a prophet of God. He was known as Musaylama al-Kadhāb (the Liar). Musaylama once captured two companions of Rasulullāh (s) and said to one of them, 'Do you bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God?' He said, 'Yes, yes, yes.' He asked again, 'And do you testify that I am the messenger of God?' He said, 'yes'. So he released him. Then he called the other and asked him, "Do you bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God?" He said, 'Yes'. Then he asked, 'Do you testify that I am the messenger of God?' and he replied, 'I am deaf' so he had him killed. This news reached Rasulullāh (s) and he said, 'As for this one who was killed, he went by his conviction and proved himself, so blessings on him. And for the other, he took advantage of what Allāh has permitted him and there is no harm on him'.<sup>2</sup>

The Sunni mufassir Tha'labi narrated from Ibn Musayyib who said: A man came to Rasulullāh (s) in Madina and said: 'I think I have ruined myself!' 'What is it with you?' asked Rasulullāh (s). 'The Quraysh tortured me until I testified to what they believe in.' he lamented. 'How was your heart (at the time)?' asked Rasulullāh (s). He said, 'At peace (with Islām and not in doubt)' 'So if they repeat the same then you repeat the same', commanded the Prophet (s). And he said that thrice.<sup>3</sup>

And other Sunni scholars narrate from A'isha the wife of Rasulullāh (s) that a man related to Rasulullāh (s) came to see him and requested permission to enter and Rasulullāh (s) remarked at how evil he was. Then he allowed him to enter and spoke well to him. When he left, A'isha asked him, 'Messenger of Allāh, after what you said of him, you spoke so nicely to him?' So he replied, 'O A'isha, the worst of men is one whom people avoid, out of being wary of his evil.'

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<sup>2</sup> Nawāwi, *Marāh Labid*, on Qur'ān 3:28

<sup>3</sup> Tha'labi, *al-Kashf wa al-Bayān*, Qur'ān 3:28

And finally, the most authentic hadith source for Sunni Muslims – Sahih Bukhāri – narrates from Abu Darda (a companion of Rasulullāh (s)) who said, ‘we used to smile at people’s faces while in our hearts we cursed them.’ And in a similar report from Ibn Abi Dunya, he said, ‘we used to laugh with them’ and other such traditions.<sup>4</sup>

Imām Ja’far as-Sādiq (‘a) said, ‘Rasulullāh (s) used to say: “He that has no taqiyya has no religion (deen).”’

## When Taqiyya is Harām

When we say ‘practising taqiyya’ we mean pretending like those around you and in whose midst you are even though your belief and practice is different from theirs. The rules of taqiyya however are as follows:

1. Taqiyya should be practised only if one is afraid of being harmed by those around him or her. It is harām to practice it just to ‘fit in’ e.g. with non-Muslims or their culture and especially it is harām to practice it to deceive fellow Muslims if there is no danger to one’s life, property or reputation.
2. Taqiyya is harām if by saving your life you put the life of another Muslim in danger.
3. Taqiyya is harām if by saving yourself you put Islām in danger and the true message of Allāh may be lost or changed forever.
4. Taqiyya is harām if you are a religious or spiritual leader and others look up to you for guidance and if by practising taqiyya, those who follow you may be confused in their religion and may go astray. For this reason, a Nabi or Imām does not practice taqiyya. For example, it was harām for Imām Husayn (‘a) to pledge allegiance to Yazid out of taqiyya, only to save his life. This would confuse many Muslims and they too would believe it is ok to pledge allegiance to a sinful tyrant like Yazid.

If however, a person fears for his or her own safety and neither Islām nor the lives or faith of other Muslims would be in danger, then a person must see if any good would come out of speaking the truth and not

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<sup>4</sup> Alusi, *Ruh al-Ma’āni*, 3:28

practising taqiyya. If some good will come out of it, then they have a choice of either standing for the truth and even sacrificing their lives for it or saving their lives through taqiyya. And if nothing beneficial will come out of it then of course it is wājib to practice taqiyya.

There are many examples in history when prominent companions of Rasullāh (s) and the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) could have practised taqiyya but instead they chose to speak the truth before the tyrant even though they paid for it with their lives. History recorded their courage and faith and how they exposed the tyrants forever. For example, Yāsir and Sumayya, the parents of Ammār bin Yāsir, who were the first martyrs of Islām; or the companions of Imām 'Ali ('a) who were tortured and killed after him for saying the truth and speaking in favour of Imām 'Ali ('a), such as Maytham at-Tammār and Rushayd al-Hijri who were killed by 'Ubayd Allāh b. Ziyād; and Kumayl b. Ziyād and Qanbar who were killed by Hajjāj b. Yusuf ath-Thaqafi.

## Examples from Qur'ān

The following verses of the Qur'ān support the practice of Taqiyya:

﴿مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ  
بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

*Whoever gives up faith in Allāh after his faith - **except someone who is forced while his heart is at rest in faith** - those who open up their chests to unfaith, upon such shall be Allāh's wrath, and there is a great punishment for them.*

- Surah an-Nahl, 16:106

﴿لَا يَتَّخِذُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ  
اللَّهِ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقَاةً...﴾

*The faithful should not take the faithless for allies instead of the faithful, and whoever does that Allāh will have nothing to do with him, **except when you are wary of them out of caution.***

- Surah Aal-i Imrān, 3:28

﴿وَقَالَ رَجُلٌ مُؤْمِنٌ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَكْتُمُ إِيمَانَهُ أَتَقْتُلُونَ رَجُلًا أَنْ يَقُولَ رَبِّيَ  
 اللَّهُ...﴾

*Said a man of faith from Fir'aun's clan, **who concealed his faith**, 'Will you  
 kill a man for saying, "My Lord is Allāh," ...*

- Surah Ghāfir, 40:28

The last āyah (verse) above refers to a man who was a cousin of Fir'aun and used his influence to protect Nabi Musa ('a) without letting Fir'aun know that he was believed in Nabi Musa ('a). He is known in Islāmic history as 'The Faithful from the Family of Fir'aun' (*Mu'min Aal Fir'aun*). The wife of Fir'aun was also a believer in Nabi Musa ('a). Her name was Āsiya and she too hid her faith until when Nabi Musa ('a) was in danger. Then both Āsiya and *Mu'min Aal Fir'aun* revealed their true faith and Fir'aun had both of them killed.

## Examples from History (Tārikh)

### Ammār Yāsir

During the early days of Islām in Makkah, when Abu Jahl heard that Ammār and his parents (Yāsir and Sumayya) had become Muslim, he was very angry. With a group of other polytheists, he went to Ammār's house and burnt it down. Then the men took Ammār and his father Yāsir and mother Sumayya and tied them with ropes in a desert area outside Makkah and began torturing them.

They whipped them until they bled and even burnt them with torches of fire but this family remained firm in their faith. Then they put rocks on their chests and left them under the hot sun at noon time.

Finally, 'Ammār saw his parents being killed brutally before his own eyes and under extreme stress, he agreed to what the polytheists wanted him to say just so they would let him go. Some of the Muslims began to say, 'Ammār has become faithless' but Rasulullāh (s) defended him saying, 'Never! Ammār is filled with faith, from his head to his toes.' And when 'Ammār came to the Prophet (s), weeping and remorseful. The Prophet (s) wiped his tears saying, 'Do not weep. And if they repeat what they

did to you again, they you too repeat and say what you said before.’ And it is concerning ‘Ammār that Allāh revealed:

﴿مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ  
بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

*Whoever gives up faith in Allāh after his faith - **except someone who is forced while his heart is at rest in faith** - those who open up their chests to unfaith, upon such shall be Allāh’s wrath, and there is a great punishment for them.*

- Surah an-Nahl, 16:106

### Hadrat Abu Tālib (‘a)

You have seen earlier the story of *Mu’min Aal Fir’aun* who is mentioned in the Qur’ān in Surah 40 ayah 28 that he used to hide his faith so that he could use his influence to protect Nabi Musa (‘a).

Hadrat Abu Tālib, the uncle of Rasulullāh (s) (and father of Imām Ali (‘a)) was the same. He was the chief of Makkah and as long as he was alive, the other Makkah leaders like Abu Sufyān and Abu Jahl could not harm Rasulullāh (s). But this was only possible as long as Hadrat Abu Tālib did not openly say he was a Muslim. If he showed himself as a Muslim then he would lose his power and status and he would not be able to support and protect Rasulullāh (s).

We do however see a lot of evidence of his faith in Rasulullāh (s) in many of Hadrat Abu Tālib’s poetry in praise of Rasulullāh (s). We also know that Hadrat Abu Tālib helped Rasulullāh (s) make his first public announcement at Da’wah Dhul ‘Ashirah, he also recited the ‘*aqd* of marriage between Rasulullāh (s) and Sayyida Khadija (‘a) and he also protected Rasulullāh (s) and all the new Muslims in his valley called *Sh’ib Abu Tālib* when the Quraysh imposed sanctions against the Muslims. All these incidents and more show that Hadrat Abu Tālib (‘a) was a Muslim and one of the best of them but did not openly declare his faith.

Shortly after Hadrat Abu Tālib (‘a) and Sayyida Khadija (‘a) passed away, Rasulullāh (s) had to leave Makkah and migrate to Madina because there was no one to protect him against the evil plots of the Quraysh. In fact

the Quraysh only plotted to assassinate Rasulullāh (s) after Hadrat Abu Tālib (‘a) passed away.

Much later on, after even Rasulullāh (s) passed away and the Banu Umayya came to power, they began teaching people that Hadrat Abu Tālib (‘a) died a non-Muslim and will not enter Jannah. This was mainly because he was the father of Imām Ali (‘a) and the Banu Umayya (especially Mu’āwiya) hated Imām Ali (‘a) and used to make up stories to tarnish his image.

Unfortunately, because the majority of Muslims simply followed the Banu Umayya as their rulers, this idea of Abu Tālib not being a Muslim has spread amongst Sunni Muslims who believe this even today.

The Shi’ahs and Sunnis therefore have a fundamental difference on a person who says verbally he is a Muslim just to save his life but in his heart he is a hypocrite versus someone who doesn’t say he is a Muslim but his heart is full of faith. The first person is a munāfiq and the second person is a mu’min. In Islāmic history, these two roles are symbolized by Abu Sufyān and Hadrat Abu Tālib (‘a) respectively.

The Sunni Muslims say Abu Sufyān was a Muslim because he recited the Kalima when Rasulullāh (s) took over Makkah from him and therefore Abu Sufyān died a Muslim and will go to Jannah. And they say Abu Tālib was not a Muslim because even when he was dying he did not recite the Kalima and therefore he will not go to Jannah. So they go by what was said by a person and not the true intentions of a person.

The Shi’ah Muslims say that Abu Sufyān was the leader of the polytheists of Makkah. He plotted against Rasulullāh (s) and fought him for most of his life. When Makkah was lost, he recited the *kalima ash-shahādah* only to save his life. But even after that, his disloyalty to Islām is well known. Even his son Mu’āwiya, his wife Hind and his grandson Yazid are known for their hatred for Rasulullāh (s) and Islām – though at face value they recited Kalima. So really, they were hypocrites and will go to Jahannam.

On the other hand, Hadrat Abu Tālib (‘a) is one of the most eminent people of Paradise. He spent his entire life protecting Rasulullāh (s). He sheltered him, raised him like his own son, fed him before he fed his own children and gave Rasulullāh (s) all the protection and support to

spread his message in Makkah. He allowed the other Makkan leaders to think he was only defending his nephew. Yet because he did not openly declare the *kalima ash-shahādah* and the Banu Umayya made up false stories that he was asked on his deathbed to recite the Kalima and he refused, the Sunni scholars today consider him to have died faithless. Hadrat Abu Tālib (‘a) taught us how to practice taqiyya and he is as worthy of praise and esteem in Allāh’s view as the *Mu’min Aal Fir’aun*.



## Lesson 6

# Qiyámah

There once lived a Muslim who secretly drank alcohol in his house. One day a small boy walked into his room and saw him. Now the man was terrified. Would the boy tell someone what he had seen? How would the man face his family and friends in the masjid? He could not sleep at night as he worried about everybody finding out about his drinking.

What a strange man! He was more scared of a little boy than of Allāh. Allāh sees all we do and there will be a Day when we will have to account for all we have done. That will be the Day of Judgement.

### Stages of the Day of Judgement

No one knows the exact time of the Day of Resurrection. It is a secret known to Allāh alone. But many verses of the Qur'ān tell us about what will happen during the Day of Judgement. One verse of the Qur'ān mentions the length of the Day of Judgement like 50,000 years in this world:

﴿تَعْرُجُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ﴾

*The angels and the Spirit ascend to Him in a day whose measure is fifty thousand years.*

- Surah al-Ma'ārij, 70:4

### Blowing of the Trumpet

When the Hour of Doom comes to pass, Allāh will command the archangel Isrāfil ('a) to blow a Trumpet given to him by Allāh. When Isrāfil ('a) blows this trumpet, everyone in the heavens and on the earth will fall unconscious and die.

﴿وَتُفْخَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَصَعِقَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ...﴾

*And the Trumpet will be blown, and whoever is in the heavens will swoon and whoever is on the earth, except whomever Allāh wishes.*

- Surah az-Zumar, 39:68

Then the earth will shake violently. The stars will fall away. The mountains will crumble and turn to dust. The oceans will be set on fire and the whole solar system that we know of will collapse...

﴿إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ. وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ. وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ. وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ. وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ. وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ﴾

*When the sun turns dark, when the stars fall down, when the mountains are set moving, when the pregnant camels are neglected, when the wild beasts are brought together, when the seas are set on fire.*

- Surah at-Takwir, 81:1-6

﴿يَوْمَ يَكُونُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ. وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ الْمَنْفُوشِ﴾

*The day mankind will be like scattered moths, and the mountains will be like tufts of wool.*

- Surah al-Qāri'ah, 101:4-5

﴿إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انشَقَّتْ. وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ. وَإِذَا الْأَرْضُ مُدَّتْ. وَأَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا وَتَخَلَّتْ. وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ﴾

*When the sky is split open and obeys its Lord as it should. When the earth is spread out and throws out what is in it, emptying itself, and obeys its Lord as it should.*

- Surah al-Inshiqāq, 84:1-5

And the whole earth will be changed into a new earth:

﴿يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ﴾

*The day the earth is transformed into another earth and the heavens [as well], and they are presented before Allāh, the One, the Supreme.*

- Surah Ibrāhim, 14:48

The earth will then become one flat surface:

﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْجِبَالِ فَقُلْ يَنْسِفُهَا رَبِّي نَسْفًا. فَيَذَرُهَا قَاعًا صَفْصَفًا. لَا تَرَى فِيهَا عِوَجًا وَلَا أَمْتًا. يَوْمَئِذٍ يَتَّبِعُونَ الدَّاعِيَ لَا عِوَجَ لَهُ وَخَشَعَتِ الْأَصْوَاتُ لِلرَّحْمَانِ فَلَا تُسْمَعُ إِلَّا هَمْسًا﴾

*They question you concerning the mountains. Say, 'My Lord will scatter them [like dust].' Then He will leave it (the earth) a level plain. You will not see any crookedness or unevenness in it. On that day they will follow a caller in whom there will be no crookedness. The voices will be silenced before the All-Merciful (Lord), and you will hear nothing but a murmur.*

- Surah Tā Hā, 20:105-8

Thereafter the angel Isrāfil ('a) will be brought back to life and Allāh will command him to blow the Trumpet a second time and everyone who ever lived will come back to life:

﴿... ثُمَّ نَفِخَ فِيهِ أُخْرَى فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنْظُرُونَ﴾

*Then it (the Trumpet) will be blown a second time, behold, they will rise up, looking on!*

- Surah az-Zumar, 39:68

No one knows how long everyone will remain dead between the two blowings of the Trumpet. The sound of the Trumpet (as-Sur)'s second blowing will indicate the start of the Day of Judgement. And when people are raised again, it will be a new world altogether:

﴿وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُمْ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَنْسِلُونَ. قَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا مَنْ بَعَثَنَا مِنْ مَرْقَدِنَا هَذَا مَا وَعَدَ الرَّحْمَانُ وَصَدَقَ الْمُرْسَلُونَ. إِنْ كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ جَمِيعٌ لَدَيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ﴾

*And when the Trumpet is blown, behold, there they will be, scrambling from their graves towards their Lord! They will say, 'Woe to us! Who raised us from our place of sleep?' 'This is what the All-Merciful (Lord) had promised, and the messengers had spoken the truth!' It will be but a single Cry, and, behold, they will all be presented before Us!*

- Surah Yā Sin, 36:51-53

﴿فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ﴾

*When the Trumpet is blown, there will be no ties between them on that day, nor will they ask [about] each other.*

- Surah al-Mu'minun, 23:101

## The Resurrection

The Resurrection of the dead will be physical. It won't be spirits or souls alone.

When people challenged Rasulullāh (s) and asked him how Allāh would bring the dead back to life, Allāh replied them saying:

﴿... قَالَ مَنْ يُحْيِي الْعِظَامَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ. قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِي أَنْشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾

*He says, 'Who shall revive the bones when they have decayed?' Say, 'He will revive them who produced them the first time, and He has knowledge of all creation.*

- Surah Yā Sin, 36:78-79

﴿أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ نَجْمَعَ عِظَامَهُ. بَلَىٰ قَادِرِينَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ نُسَوِّيَ بَنَانَهُ﴾

*Does man suppose that We shall not put together his bones? Yes indeed, We are able to complete [even] his fingertips!*

- Surah al-Qiyāmah, 75:3-4

A Muslim must therefore believe that the Resurrection will be of the souls **and** bodies just like in this world.

﴿خُشَعًا أَبْصَارُهُمْ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ كَأَنَّهُمْ جَرَادٌ مُنتَشِرٌ﴾

*with a humbled look [in their eyes], they will emerge from the graves as if they were scattered locusts,*

- Surah al-Qamar, 54:7

﴿يَوْمَ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ سِرَاعًا كَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ نُصَبٍ يُوْفَضُونَ﴾

*The day when they emerge from the graves, hurrying, as if racing toward a target.*

- Surah al-Ma'ārij, 70:43

## Mahshar – The Gathering Place

As massive earthquakes and changes in the earth flatten everything and the earth becomes one flat, smooth, extended surface, everyone will be resurrected and they will all gather for accounting before Allāh. This open, flat, plain field where the entire human race will stand for accounting is called Mahshar.

Imām Ali ('a) describes this event:

*That day would be such that Allāh would collect on it the previous generations and the latter, to stand in obedience for accounting and for being paid for their deeds. Sweat would flow up to their mouths like reins while the earth would be trembling under them. In the best condition among them would be someone who has found a resting place for both his feet and an open place for his breath.<sup>5</sup>*

The condition of people at this time will be such that every man, woman and child will be concerned only about his or her own well being, and not of others:

﴿فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الصَّاحَّةُ. يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ. وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ. وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ. لِكُلِّ

أَمْرٍ مِنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ﴾

*So when the deafening Cry comes - the day when a man will evade his brother, his mother and his father, his spouse and his sons - that day each of them will have something to keep him preoccupied.*

- Surah 'Abasa, 80:33-37

<sup>5</sup> Nahj al-Balāgha, Sermon 101

Imām Ali b. Musa ar-Rida ('a) said, 'There are three occasions when this creation (humans) is most bewildered and frightened: The day he is born, he comes out of the womb of his mother and sees the world (for the first time); And the day he dies and sees the next world and its people; And the day he will be resurrected and will see the commands (or judgments) which he had not seen in this world.'

After everyone has gathered on one plain and is standing in fear and awe, then a voice will call out, 'To whom does the Kingdom belong today?' Everyone will hear this and realize their power was not really any independent power and the only King was always Allāh the Creator. There will be none to answer. Then Allāh will declare again, 'To Allāh, the Only One, the Supreme':

﴿يَوْمَ هُمْ بَارِزُونَ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنْهُمْ شَيْءٌ لِمَنِ الْمُلْكُ الْيَوْمَ لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ  
الْقَهَّارِ﴾

*The day when they will emerge [from their graves], nothing about them will be hidden from Allāh. 'To whom does the kingdom belong today?' 'To Allāh, the One, the Supreme!'*

- Surah al-Ghāfir, 40:16

## Questioning of Prophets and their Nations

The first people to be questioned on the Day of Judgement will be the prophets and messengers. Allāh will ask them if they delivered the message they were given so that everyone present can see that there was no failing on the part of Allāh's guides.

﴿يَوْمَ نَدْعُو كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمَامِهِمْ فَمَنْ أُوْتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَأُوْتِئِكَ يَقْرَءُ وَنَ كِتَابِهِمْ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا﴾

*The day We shall call every group of people with their Imām, then whoever is given his book in his right hand—they will read it, and they will not be wronged so much as a single date-thread.*

- Surah Banu Isrāil, 17:71

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ أَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّي إِلَهَيْنِ مِنْ دُونِ  
اللَّهِ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقِّ إِنْ كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ  
تَعَلَّمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ. مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا  
أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا  
تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنْتَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ. إِنْ تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ  
عِبَادُكَ وَإِنْ تَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾

*And when Allāh will say, ‘O Isa son of Maryam! Was it you who said to the people, “Take me and my mother for gods besides Allāh”?’ He will say, ‘glory be to You! It is not for me to say what I have no right to [say]. Had I said it, You would certainly have known it: You know whatever is in my self, and I do not know what is in Your Self. Indeed You are knower of all that is Unseen. I did not say to them [anything] except what You had commanded me [to say]: “Worship Allāh, my Lord and your Lord.” And I was a witness to them so long as I was among them. But when You had taken me away, You Yourself were watchful over them, and You are witness to all things. If You punish them, they are indeed Your creatures; but if You forgive them, You are indeed the All-mighty, the All-wise.’*

- Surah al-Māidah, 5:116-118

The Prophets and Imāms will also testify for their own people and bear witness who amongst the people was loyal, sincere and faithful to Allāh’s message.

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ

شَهِيدًا...﴾

*Thus We have made you a middle nation that you may be witnesses to the people, and that the Messenger may be a witness to you.*

- Surah al-Baqarah, 2:143

﴿فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا﴾

*So how shall it be, when We bring from every nation a witness and We bring you as a witness to them?*

- Surah an-Nisā, 4:41

﴿...لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ...﴾

*...so that the Messenger may be a witness over you...*

- Surah al-Hajj, 22:78

This proves that Rasulullāh (s) is not dead and even though he is not physically present, he is able to witness what his nation (ummah) does. In fact, the Light (nur) of Rasulullāh (s) and the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) existed even before the creation of the world so it is not impossible for them to be aware of and witness what people do in this world.

Allāh tells us that ordinary martyrs are not dead and we should not call them dead. How then can we say that Rasulullāh (s) or his purified Household is dead?

﴿وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ﴾

*And do not call those who were killed in Allāh's way 'dead.' Rather, they are living, but you are not aware.*

- Surah al-Baqarah, 2:154

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ﴾

*Do not suppose those who were killed in the way of Allāh to be dead; rather, they are living and provided for near their Lord.*

- Surah Aal-i Imrān, 3:169

All the Anbiya and Rusul and Aimmah, *alayhim as-salām*, will also be asked to pray for those who have sinned but are sincerely sorry so that Allāh will forgive them. This is called Intercession (shafā'ah) and we shall learn more about it in Book 8. Even though Allāh can forgive people directly, He will give the power of shafā'ah to the Anbiya ('a) and Rusul ('a) and Aimmah ('a) and especially Rasulullāh (s) and his Ahl al-Bayt ('a), to honour them and show their status to all of humankind. Some very learned scholars and very pious individuals will also be given the power to intercede (i.e. do shafā'ah) for others in their community or their families. All this will save many people from the fire of Hell. Of course no



one will be able to help another person except by the permission of Allāh.

﴿مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ﴾

*Who is it that may intercede with Him except with His permission?*

- Surah al-Baqarah, 2:255

﴿يَوْمَئِذٍ لَا تَنْفَعُ الشَّفَاعَةُ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ وَرَضِيَ لَهُ قَوْلًا﴾

*Intercession will not avail that day except from him whom the All-Merciful allows and approves of his word.*

- Surah Tā Hā, 20:109

## Lesson 7

### Qiyámah (cont'd)

#### Rasulullāh (s) and his Ahl al-Bayt ('a)

Out of the trillions and trillions of Allāh's creatures, no one will receive more honour on the Day of Judgement than Rasulullāh (s) and his Ahl al-Bayt ('a). They will be given the highest ranks and everyone will want to be near them. Rasulullāh (s) will be near a fountain called Kawthar and anyone who gets to drink from this fountain will never feel thirsty again and will enter Paradise. Imām Ali ('a) will be given the right to decide who enters Paradise and Hell and that is why he is called 'Qaseem al-Jannati wan Nār' (The Distributor of Paradise and Hellfire). The daughter of Rasulullāh (s) Sayyida Fatima az-Zahra ('a), for example, will be the first one to enter Paradise and she will only go in with her Shi'ah following her. When it is announced on the Day of Judgement, 'where is the Beauty of All Worshippers (Zayn al-Abideen)?' All the trillions of beings standing on the plains of Mahshar will see Imām Ali b. al-Husayn Zayn al-Abideen ('a) being ushered forward and cutting through the ranks of people and everyone will look at him with amazement and great love. And in this manner, every individual of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) will be honoured and will help their sincere Shi'ah and those who loved them to get to Jannah (Paradise).

#### Book of Deeds

Every action a person commits in life and every word he or she utters is recorded by angels in a Book of Deeds:

﴿إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّيَانِ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ . مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ﴾

*When the twin recorders record [his deeds], seated on the right hand and on the left: he says no word but that there is a ready observer beside him.*

- Surah Qāf, 50:17-18

The two angels who record these deeds are called Kirāman Kātibin and you have studied about them in Book 6. One the Day of Judgement, everyone will be given their Book of Deeds to look at. The good will be given their Book in their right hand from the front and they will be very happy to read it and they will know it means they are going to Jannah (Paradise) and the evil will be given in their left hand from the back and they will be terrified because they will know it means they are heading to Hellfire. They will not want to read it but will be forced to.

It will be said to them:

﴿وَكُلَّ إِنسَانٍ أَلْزَمْنَاهُ طَائِرَهُ فِي عُنُقِهِ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كِتَابًا يَلْقَاهُ مَنْشُورًا. اقْرَأْ كِتَابَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا﴾

*We have attached every person's deeds to his neck, and We shall bring it out for him on the Day of Resurrection as a wide open book that he will encounter. 'Read your book! Today your soul suffices as your own accouter.'*

- Surah Banu Isrāil, 17:13-14

﴿وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَا وَيْلَتَنَا مَا لِ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ لَا يَغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا﴾

*The Book will be set up. Then you will see the guilty afraid of what is in it. They will say, 'Woe to us! What a book is this! It omits nothing, big or small, without covering it.' They will find present whatever they had done, and your Lord does not wrong anyone.*

- Surah al-Kahf, 18:49

## Testimony of Limbs

The evil will deny what is in their Books and will try to lie and protest. They will argue and even swear that they never committed the sins recorded in their Book. Allāh will then cause their limbs to speak. Their tongues will be made silent and instead their hands and legs will speak:

﴿يَوْمَ تَشْهَدُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَلْسِنَتُهُمْ وَأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

*On the day when witness shall be given against them by their tongues, their hands, and their feet concerning what they used to do.*

- Surah Nur, 24:24

﴿الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ﴾

*Today We shall seal their mouths, and their hands shall speak to Us, and their feet shall bear witness concerning what they used to earn.'*

- Surah Yā Sin, 36:65

Many other things will bear witness as well. The places where a person did something good or bad will bear witness. The days and nights will bear witness. The earth will bear witness, the Qur'ān will bear witness who read it and who did not, the masājid will bear witness who prayed in them and who did not, and so on. In other words, in the Hereafter, everything will be alive and able to speak.

## The Weighing Scales of Deeds (al-Mizān)

Every person's actions – good or bad – will be weighed. How 'heavy' a person's deeds are will depend not only on the action but also on the person's understanding and the intention behind the action as well.

For example, if a person prayed only because it was a habit and not really out of love for Allāh, their intention was weak so their salāh will be very light. And if a person is learned in religion and prayed 2 rak'ahs, his or her salāh might be 'heavier' than a person who prayed 100 rak'ahs but was ignorant. The weight of each salawāt you recite for Rasulullāh (s) and his Ahl al-Bayt ('a) will be very heavy. The more you recite it in this world, the happier you will be on the Day your deeds are weighed.

﴿وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ

﴿خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا وَكَفَىٰ بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ﴾

*We shall set up the scales of justice on the Day of Resurrection, and no soul will be wronged in the least. Even if it be the weight of a mustard seed We shall produce it and We suffice as accounters.*

- Surah al-Anbiyā, 21:47

﴿وَالْوِزْنَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ. وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَظْلِمُونَ﴾

*The weighing [of deeds] on that Day is a truth. As for those whose deeds weigh heavy in the scales - it is they who are the successful. As for those whose deeds weigh light in the scales - it is they who have ruined their souls, because they used to wrong Our signs.*

- Surah al-A'rāf, 7:8-9

﴿فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ. وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ﴾

*Then those whose deeds weigh heavy in the scales—it is they who are the successful. As for those whose deeds weigh light in the scales—they will be the ones who have ruined their souls, [and] they will remain in hell [forever].*

- Surah al-Mu'minun, 23:102-3

## The Bridge (as-Sirāt)

Every person will then be told to try and get to Jannah by crossing over a bridge (Sirāt). The Sirāt is a very long bridge from Mahshar all the way to the gates of Jannah (Paradise) but it passes over Hellfire. Anyone who slips and falls off the Bridge (Sirāt), falls straight down into Hellfire. Some narrations tell us that for the faithless the Sirāt will be 'thinner than hair, sharper than a sword's blade and hotter than fire'. But those who are pious will cross it like a flash of lightening. For some it will be made very wide and spacious. Others will slip and crawl but make it to Jannah eventually after many, many years while the evil will slip and fall down into Hell.

﴿وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَقْضِيًّا. ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَنَذَرُ  
الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا حِثًّا﴾

*There is none of you but will come to it:<sup>6</sup> a [matter that is a] decided certainty with your Lord. Then We will deliver those who are Godwary, and leave the wrongdoers in it, fallen on their knees.*

- Surah Maryam, 19:71-2

In some narrations we are told that the Sirāt will have many stations. Each station will be a place for one of the duties of Islām. For example, when a person reaches the Station of Salāt, they will be questioned about it. If they used to take their salāh lightly, they will be punished. Those who pass through all the Stations because of being saved by the Mercy of Allāh and the intercession (shafā'ah) of Rasullullāh (s) and the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) will make it to the Gates of Jannah.

﴿وَقَفُّوهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ مَسْئُولُونَ﴾

*[But first] stop them! For they must be questioned.'*

- Surah as-Saffāt, 37:24

Rasullullāh (s) said to Imām Ali ('a), 'O Ali! On the Day of Resurrection, I, you and Jibrāil shall sit on the Sirāt, and none shall pass over the Sirāt except one who is freed from Jahannam because of your love.'

That is why in some hadith Imām Ali ('a) is called *Sirāt al-Mustaqim* (the Straight Path). The Ma'sumeen ('a) are called 'Sirāt' in this world because they are like a bridge that connects us to Allāh. It is perfectly right to call them the Paths of Allāh. Those who hold on to the Qur'ān and the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) in this world will cross the Sirāt safely on the Day of Judgement. Rasullullāh (s) promised us before leaving this world in a hadith that is well-known as Hadith ath-Thaqalayn:

*'I leave behind two important things (thaqalayn): the Book of Allāh and my family, my Ahl al-Bayt. If you hold on to them, you will never go*

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<sup>6</sup> That is, they will approach it, without entering it.

*astray after me and these two will never separate until they return to me at the Fountain of Kawthar.'*

Imām Ali ('a) said, 'And know that you have to pass over the pathway (of Sirāt) where steps waver, feet slip away and there are fearful dangers at every step.'<sup>7</sup>

## The Final Destination

As the Day of Judgement progresses, the good will separate from the evil and become different communities.

﴿وَأَمْتَاذُوا الْيَوْمَ أَيُّهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ﴾

*And 'Get apart today, you guilty ones!'*

- Surah Yā Sin, 36:59

One of the signs of the people heading to Jannah is that their faces will be bright and happy while one of the signs of those destined for Jahannam is that their faces will be gloomy and unhappy:

﴿وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّسْفِرَةٌ. ضَاحِكَةٌ مُّسْتَبْشِرَةٌ. وَوُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ غَٰبِرَةٌ. تَرَهَقَهَا قَتْرَةٌ.

﴿أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكٰفِرَةُ الْفٰجِرَةُ﴾

*That day some faces will be bright, laughing and joyous. And some faces on that day will be covered with dust, overcast with gloom. It is they who are the faithless, the vicious.*

- Surah 'Abasa, 80:38-42

The faithful will keep running towards the direction of Jannah with their faith lighting the way for them while the faithless will keep stumbling and falling into Hellfire. They will try to hold on to the faithful but will not succeed:

<sup>7</sup> Nahj al-Balāgha, sermon 82

﴿يَوْمَ تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَسْعَى نُورُهُمْ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ بُشْرَاكُمُ الْيَوْمَ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ. يَوْمَ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا انظُرُونَا نَقْتَبِسْ مِنْ نُورِكُمْ قِيلَ ارْجِعُوا وَرَاءَكُمْ فَالْتَمِسُوا نُورًا فَضُرِبَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِسُورٍ لَهُ بَابٌ بَاطِنُهُ فِيهِ الرَّحْمَةُ وَظَاهِرُهُ مِنْ قِبَلِهِ الْعَذَابُ. يُنَادُونَهُمْ أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَى وَلَكِنَّكُمْ فَتَنْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتَرَبَّصْتُمْ وَارْتَبْتُمْ وَغَرَّتْكُمُ الْأَمَانِيُّ حَتَّى جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَغَرَّكُمْ بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ﴾

*The day you will see the faithful, men and women, with their light moving swiftly before them and on their right, [and greeted with the words:] ‘There is good news for you today! Gardens with streams running in them, to remain in them [forever]. That is the great success.’ The day the hypocrites, men and women, will say to the faithful, ‘Please wait for us, that we may take something from your light!’ They will be told: ‘Go back and grope for light!’<sup>8</sup> Then there will be set up between them a wall with a gate, with mercy on its interior and punishment toward its exterior. They will call out to them, ‘Did we not use to be with you?’ They will say, ‘Yes! But you gave yourselves into temptation, and you awaited<sup>9</sup> and were doubtful, and [false] hopes deceived you until the command of Allāh (i.e. death) arrived, and the Deceiver deceived you concerning Allāh.*

- Surah al-Hadid, 57:12-14

The faithful will finally make it to Jannah. They will be delighted to arrive there knowing that now they shall live there forever and never experience any fear or grief. The angels will welcome them:

﴿جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ. سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ﴾

*The Gardens of Eden, which they will enter along with whoever is good from among their ancestors, their spouses, and their descendants, and the angels will call on them from every door: ‘Peace be to you, for your patience.’ How excellent is the reward of the [ultimate] abode!*

- Surah ar-Ra’d, 13:23-24

<sup>8</sup> That is, go back into the world. Said mockingly to the hypocrites.

<sup>9</sup> That is, waited for a reverse of fortune for Muslims.



And they shall begin experiencing rewards and pleasures beyond their imagination:

﴿فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُمْ مِنْ قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

*No one knows what has been kept hidden for them of comfort, as a reward for what they used to do.*

- Surah as-Sajdah, 32:17

Some Islāmic scholars say the difference between this world and the Hereafter is like the difference between our previous 'world' when we were in the wombs of our mother and this world. A fetus in the womb of its mother lives in a small, dark, cramped place. Even if you could talk to it, there is no way it can ever imagine light or space or colour of the vast oceans and tall mountains or even a flower or a fruit or what it means to see or walk or the movements of the sun and the moon. In the same way, we only imagine Paradise and Hell based on our limited language and experience in this world but the Hereafter is very, very different and beyond our imagination.

Those who end in Hell will be scared and unhappy to be there. The Angel in charge of Hell will ask them:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَيَسَّ الْمَصِيرُ. إِذَا أُلْقُوا فِيهَا سَمِعُوا لَهَا شَهيقًا وَهِيَ تَفُورٌ. تَكَادُ تَمَيِّزُ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ كُلَّمَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَذِيرٌ. قَالُوا بَلَى قَدْ جَاءَنَا نَذِيرٌ فَكَذَّبْنَا وَقُلْنَا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ كَبِيرٍ. وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ. فَاعْتَرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ فَسُحِقًا لِأَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ﴾

*For those who defy their Lord is the punishment of hell, and it is an evil destination. When they are thrown in it, they hear it blaring, as it seethes, almost exploding with rage. Whenever a group is thrown in it, its keepers will ask them, 'Did there not come to you any warner?' They will say, 'Yes, a warner did come to us, but we called it a lie and said, 'Allāh did not send down anything; you are only in great error.' And they will say, 'Had we listened or applied reason, we would not have been*

*among inmates of the Blaze.’ Thus they will admit their sin. So away with the inmates of the Blaze!*

- Surah al-Mulk, 67:6-11

And later on when the People of Hell will be asked how come they ended up there:

﴿مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ. قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ. وَلَمْ نَكُ نُطْعِمُ الْمِسْكِينَ. وَكُنَّا نَخُوضُ مَعَ الْخَائِضِينَ. وَكُنَّا نَكْذِبُ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ. حَتَّىٰ آتَانَا الْيَقِينَ﴾

*What drew you into Hell?’ They will answer, ‘We were not among those who prayed. Nor did we feed the poor. We used to gossip along with the gossipers, and we used to deny the Day of Judgement, until death came to us.’*

- Surah al-Mudaththir, 74:42-47

Sins stick to a person’s soul and make it dirty and rusty. Many people who end up in Hell will eventually be purified and cleaned and will come out of Hell and be brought to Paradise. Only the very evil people will remain there forever. We will learn more about life in Jannah and Jahannam in Book 9 inshā Allāh.

﴿وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا فَفُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِ رَبِّكُمْ وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَلَكِنْ حَقَّتْ كَلِمَةُ الْعَذَابِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ. قِيلَ ادْخُلُوا أَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا فَبئسَ مَثْوًى الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ. وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوهَا خَالِدِينَ. وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي صَدَقْنَا وَعَدَّهُ وَأَوْرَثَنَا الْأَرْضَ نَتَّبِعُ مِنْ الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ نَشَاءُ فَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ﴾

*The faithless will be driven to hell in throngs. When they reach it, and its gates are opened, its keepers will say to them, ‘Did there not come to you [any] messengers from among yourselves, reciting to you the signs of your Lord and warning you of the meeting of this day of yours?’ They will*

*say, 'Yes, but the word of punishment became due against the faithless.' It will be said, 'Enter the gates of hell to remain in it [forever]. Evil is the [ultimate] abode of the arrogant.' Those who are wary of their Lord will be led to paradise in throngs. When they reach it, and its gates are opened, its keepers will say to them, 'Peace be to you! You are welcome! Enter it to remain [forever].' They will say, 'All praise belongs to Allāh, who has fulfilled His promise to us and made us heirs to the earth, that we may settle in paradise wherever we may wish!' How excellent is the reward of the workers [of righteousness]!*

- Surah az-Zumar, 39:71-74

