



IMAMIA SUNDAY SCHOOL

The most valuable treasure is knowledge and wisdom and the worst misfortune is ignorance". Amir al-Mu'minin, Imam Ali (AS)

STUDENTS NOTES FOR CLASS 7 AQAIID 2006/2007



Verily Allah is Dominant in His affairs...
(Yusuf, 12:21)

NAME: _____

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Imamia Sunday School

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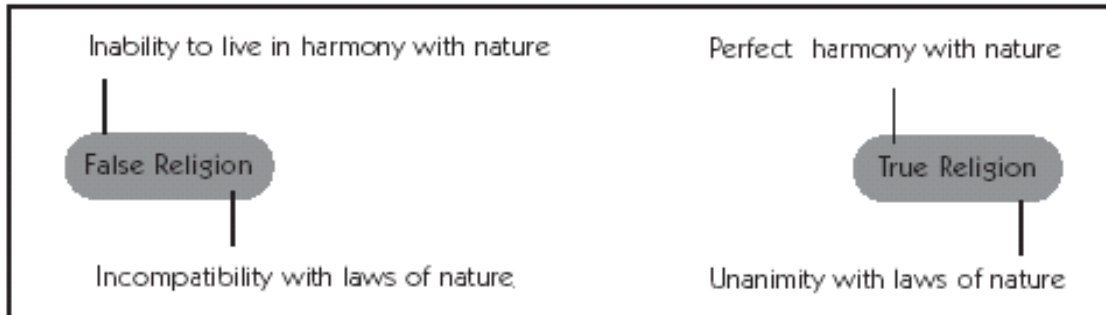
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NOTE: All lessons take from Basic Beliefs of Islam by Sayyed Qasim Mujtaba Moosavi Kamoopuri except an noted

Aqid Class 7 - Lesson 1

How to Identify the True Religion

The Basic rules of the Judgment - Compatibility with the Natural laws



It is not difficult to determine the identity of the true religion and to distinguish it from the false religion.

If we fairly examine the basic concepts and teachings of different religions then we can choose the true religion and reject the untrue religion. Following are the three basic rules of scrutinizing the religion in order to identify the true and false nature of the religions.

1. Compatibility with the Natural laws.
2. Unanimity with biological laws.
3. Comprehensive in contents.

Compatibility with the Natural laws.

The true religion will never clash with the laws of nature.

It is quite obvious. Because if the religion is from God, Who is the sole creator of the universe, then there should not be any conflict between the cosmic laws and the teachings of that religion, as both have the same origin.

A conflict will certainly arise between the principles of religion and the natural laws working in the universe, if the religion is not from The Master of the Universe, Who has made the laws of universe.

Today, the basic structure of all religions, except Islam, has been shattered by the bombardment of scientific researchers.

The truth of the Nature discovered by the scientists has openly exposed the falsehood of fictitious religions.

The polytheistic religions preaching the worshipping of sun, moon, stars, animals and thousands of other such gods can not survive now. The structure of polytheism has totally collapsed after the discoveries of scientific truths. In 1969, the Apollo 11 and Apollo 12 astronauts landed on the head of the god (moon) of the polytheists. That was the most shameful day for all the worshippers of moon, when one of their gods was under the feet of man.

Basic Beliefs of Islam
by Sayyed Qasim Mujtaba Moosavi Kamoopuri

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 2

How to Identify the True Religion

The Basic rules of the Judgment - Unanimity with the biological laws.

Another important distinctive characteristic of the true religion is that its basic principles show a complete unanimity with the biological laws of life.

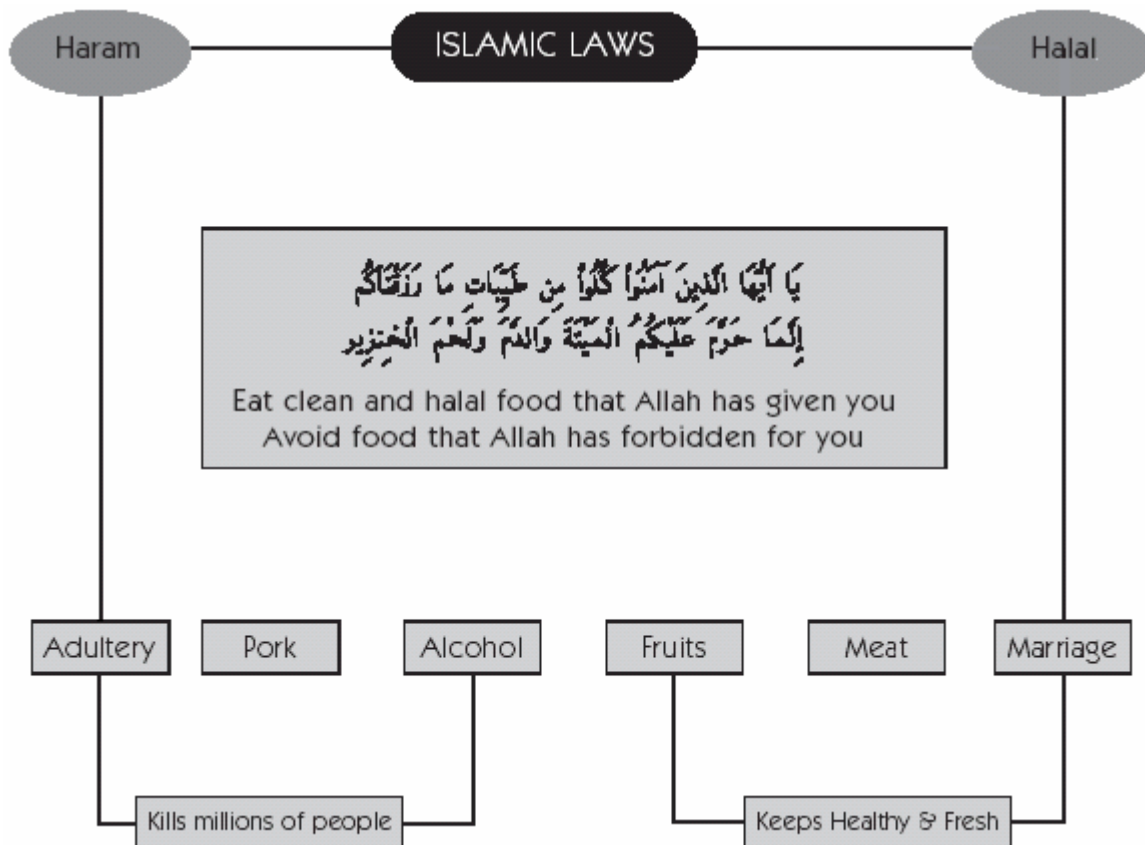
If the religion is truly from God, Who is the creator of man, then the religious precept must comply with the natural demands of human body. This rule also invalidates all religions except Islam.

Islam is the only religion which not only allows but educates its followers to take the maximum benefits from the Nature. The Halal and Haram of Islam do not stop us to enjoy anything but regulate our natural instincts to take the full advantage of the uncountable blessings of Allah Subhanahu taala. The Holy Quran has made it very clear in the following verse.

قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

“Say: Who has forbidden the beautiful (gifts) of Allah, which He has produced for His servants, and the things, clean and pure, (which He has provided) for sustenance? Say: They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) purely for them on the Day of Judgment” (7:32)

In fact, Quran has condemned those people who unnecessarily avoid halal things and make their life miserable. However, Islam certainly demands from its believers to exercise self discipline and avoid what is forbidden even if it attracts them.



religions either totally suppress the genuine demands of the body and society or leave them totally free to exhaust their precious energy in the abundance of vast Nature. A few examples of this kind are being cited here to show a marked difference between the Divine religion and man-made laws.

Slaughtering of animals

Similarly, Hindus, Jains, and Buddhists do not eat meat and consider slaughtering of animals for their meat as cruel and inhuman. We can analyze it rationally whether slaughtering of animals is cruelty or not.

We know that there are many animals that eat mainly meat (Carnivals). Such animals have an inborn tendency and biological make-up to prey on plant-eating animals (herbivores). God has given these animals extremely sharp bladeliike shearing teeth, strong jaw muscles and other necessary facilities of hunting. If hunting, slaughtering and eating of meat is a cruel and barbarous act then why the Most Kind and Merciful God has created carnivores which cannot eat anything except meat.

Millions of goats, sheep and cows are being slaughtered every day for eating purposes. But there has never been any shortage of these halal animals. Thus, eating meat can not be regarded as a barbaric act. However, Islam stresses on moderate eating of animals meat and strictly maintains regulation regarding the welfare of all living species.

Basic Beliefs of Islam
by Sayyed Qasim Mujtaba Moosavi Kamoopuri

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 3

How to Identify the True Religion

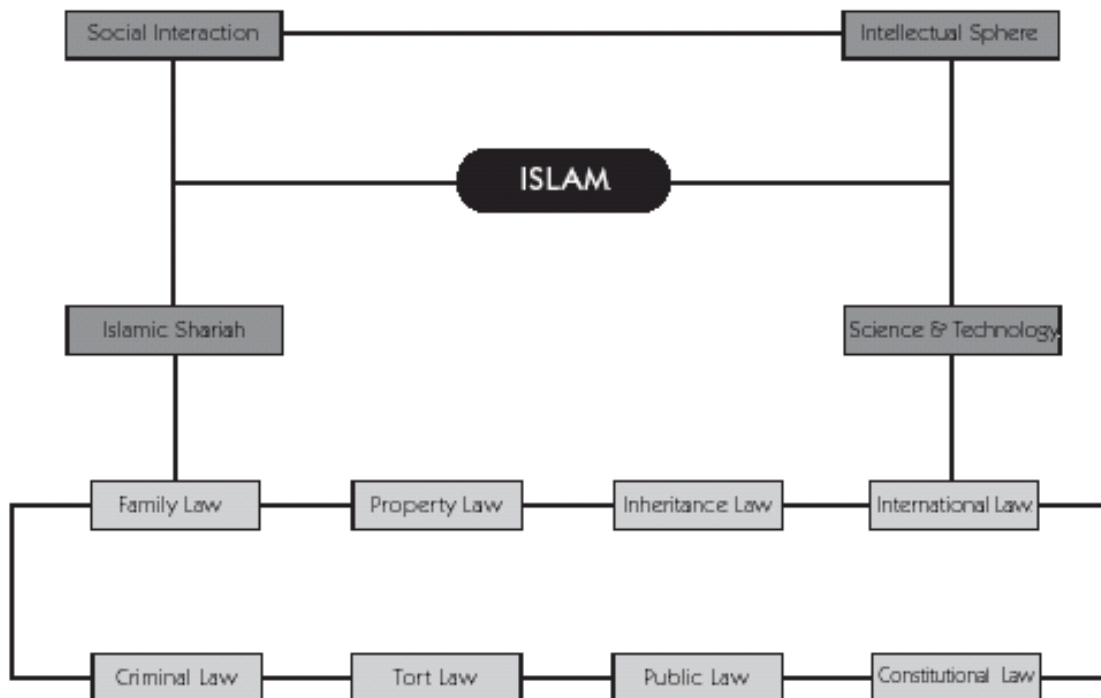
The Basic rules of the Judgment - Comprehensiveness of the religion

Lastly, the true Divine religion can easily be recognized by its ability to guide the mankind in each and every sphere of his life.

The war between Islam and the adherents of all other religion is on the issue of comprehensiveness of Islamic teachings.

They argue that religion is a private thing and it should not come out to interfere with the social and official works. Several times a practicing Muslim encounters such provoking remarks; don't bring your religion in office, please keep it in the mosque or in your house. These people do not know one basic thing about Islam and that is the comprehensive nature of Islam. Unlike other religion, Islam covers each and every aspect of human life and therefore demands its followers to observe its teaching in every sphere of their life.

Thus, a careful analysis of religions can help every person of rational thinking to differentiate between the true and untrue religion.



CORE CONCEPT

The aim of this lesson is to enable you to identify your faith in a rational way. Blind following and inheriting the father's religion without real understanding of the faith has no value in Islam. The primary principle of Iman laid down by the Holy Quran is:

- to testify and intellectually recognize the basic contents of the faith.

The fulfillment of this basic condition demands sincere efforts to acquire useful knowledge and to do some research.

This is why, acquisition of knowledge is compulsory for every male and female Muslim.

Basic Beliefs of Islam
by Sayyed Qasim Mujtaba Moosavi Kamoopuri

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 4

Polytheism - Shirk. **Kinds of Shirk or Polytheism.**

The opposite of Tawhid is Polytheism. Polytheism or Shirk means to consider anyone god other than the true God. It is the most terrible and unforgivable crime. Imam Jafar as-Sadiq (as) has said: Among all sins, Shirk is the most sinful act.

Kinds of Shirk or Polytheism.



There are many kinds of Shirks, but the Holy Prophet (sws) has classified them into two main categories, which are as follows.

1. Shirk-e-Akbar. (Major Shirk - Open and apparent Shirk)
2. Shirk-e-Asghar. (Minor Shirk - Concealed or hidden Shirk)

SHIRK-E-AKBAR OR MAJOR SHIRK. [OPEN SHIRK]

Major Shirk or Shirk-e-Akbar means explicitly open polytheism.

Definition of Major Shirk.

Major Shirk is of two kinds.

1. To associate anyone with Allah Taala as His part.
2. To associate Allah's attributes to someone as his own.

Associating Allah with someone or something as His part means, to believe in more than one God. i.e., two, three, and many separate gods or two, three, or many inseparable gods.

In general, a person is said to have committed a major Shirk if:

- He believes in many gods, separate or inseparable.

- He associates anyone in anyway with God as a part of Him.
- He portrays anyone in anyway possessing supernatural powers like God.
- He portrays or characterizes any Prophet or Imam or a leader as God or like God or a part of God.

All such people are known as polytheists or mushriks. It is important to know more about all kinds of Shirk in order to refrain from them completely.

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 5

Polytheism - Shirk. **Idol worship - Believing in many gods.**

It is the most apparent kind of Shirk. All religions in which people worship many gods or idols or anyone other than God or associate God with anyone, are polytheistic religions. The followers of these religions are Mushriks. There are many religions which practice idol worship.

Zoroastrians believe in two gods - god of evil (darkness) and god of goodness (light).

Buddhists do not believe in God. But Buddhists worship the statue of Gautam Buddha as their god. So do the followers of Jainism. They both are polytheistic religions.

In Hinduism, there are three main gods, and traditionally 33 million other gods and goddesses. In order to call themselves monotheistic, they say that behind all these gods, there is also a single spiritual entity called Brahma.

Christians also believe that God is present in three forms. This is known as trinity i.e. they believe that in one God there are three Divine persons - the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit or holy Ghost. This means that Christians divide god into three parts, Father - Son -Holy Spirit, and unite them together to make one single god. They use paintings, statues, and other art to show their sacred figures and stories from the Bible. In Eastern Europe and the Near East, worshipers give special reverence to icons (images of Jesus Christ or the saints).

Christians known as iconoclasts opposed the use of images because they considered it idolatry. But other Christians argued that such images (icons) are merely symbols to help worshippers think of God.

A dispute called the iconoclastic controversy raged between the two sides during the AD 700's and early 800's. The iconoclasts destroyed the pictures and statues in many churches.

A similar disagreement over the use of images broke out between Protestants and Roman Catholics during the 1500's in which Protestant destroyed many statues and images which were being worshipped by the Catholics.

The ancient Greeks and Romans had polytheistic religions. They assumed sky, stars, sun, planets, moon, and many other things as gods and used to worship them. They named each day of the week and month by their god such as Sunday (sun), Monday (moon).

The ancient Egyptian people considered their kings (Pharaohs) to be living gods.

In the Shinto religion of Japan, gods are thought to reside in particular trees, rocks and streams.

Before World War I (1935-1945), the Japanese people honored their emperor as god. On September 2, 1945 Emperor Hirohito who was considered and worshipped by Japanese as their god, officially surrendered and announced his defeat. Thousand of Japanese were weeping seeing their god in such a humiliated condition. On Jan.1, 1946, Emperor Hirohito renounced all claims to the divinity (god) that formerly had been claimed for him. The constitution of 1947, which he approved, changed him from sovereign to “symbol of the state”

The Gallis or Ghullat (extremists), among Muslims, form another group of Mushriks. They are also called Mufawwiza. They believe that Allah has delegated His powers or entrusted all affairs to the Holy Imams. According to them, the Imams give life and death, and they also give us food. According to all Shia Ulama, any person who has this belief or similar views about Imams is a Mushrik.

Islam considers all such religions as polytheistic and believes in the absolute oneness of God.

Quran has severely condemned all these religions and tells that the followers of these religions will be severely punished.

Thus, all religions, except Islam, are polytheistic religions. Islam is the only religion which strongly believes in pure monotheism (i.e., absolute oneness of God).

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 6

Polytheism - Shirk. **Associating God with someone.**

Another kind of Major Shirk is:

- to associate Allah with someone as part of Him,
- to consider anyone like Him,
- to give Allah's attributes to anyone else,
- to include anyone in the worship of Allah.

Imam Jafer Sadiq (as) has said; "If someone performs an action for Allah, and includes in it the pleasure of a human being, then the doer of that action is a Polytheist".

All Shia Ulama agree, as stated by an eminent Shia scholar of Iran, Sultan'Il-Wa'izin Shirazi, who is well-known for his monumental book, The Right Path, also published in English with a title, Peshawar Nights, that offering in the name of other than Allah, or to include anyone in the offerings being made in the name of Allah, is not allowed in religion of Ahlal- Bayit.

He further writes in the same book on page 40 that; "If we make an offering not in the name of Allah, but for someone else, whether he be dead or alive, or if we include him with the name of Allah, even if he is an Imam or his son, the offering is not valid If this is done knowingly then it is evident polytheism as is clear from the verse

وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

"and not join anyone in the service of your Lord" (18:110)

He further adds, "All Shia Jurists agree that to make an offering in the name of any person, including Prophets or Imams, is wrong. If it is done intentionally, it is polytheism. An offering must be made in the name of Allah. Although, we are allowed to do it wherever and whenever we like. For instance, if someone takes a goat to a particular place of worship or to the tomb of an Imam and sacrifices it in the name of Allah alone, there is no harm in it. But if pledges to make an offering in the name of the Prophet or an Imam, or some other person, it is forbidden."

Portraying anyone like God.

The third kind of Shirk is to portray anyone as God. This type of Shirk is the outgrowth of inferiority complex and insufficiency. Many grand personalities, powerful kings, and great saints were worshipped as gods by their people.

Krishna, popularly known as Lord Krishna, Ram Chanderji, Gautam Buddha, Firaun, Namrud, were all human beings. But people worshipped them because they were highly impressed by their character, or wealth, or power.

Nusairi call Hazrat Ali (as) their god because of his extraordinary personality. Apparently it seems that they have raised the status of Hazrat Ali (as) by calling him god. Some ignorant Shia poets also, under this false impression, refer Hazrat Ali ibn-Abi Talib (as) as the god of Nussairi in their poetry. But in actuality, they commit a big sin of degrading the Holy Imam and putting his sacred name in the list of gods (people of much lower rank) mentioned above.

Thus, whenever we find any great personality and his incredible achievements, we must appreciate him, but we must glorify Allah, as He is the one who gave him power, talent, energy, opportunity, and finally success.

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 7

Polytheism - Shirk **Portraying Prophets or Imams as gods.**

All Muslim scholars, Shia and Sunni, without any difference of opinion, consider it a major Shirk [Shirk-e -Akber].

A Muslim becomes Mushrik if he portrays any of the Prophet or Imam in any way or in any form as God or like God or part of God.

In the articles of Islamic acts, Ayatullah al-Uzma *Sayyid Ali al-Husayni al-Sistani*, (and all other marja as well) describes Ghulat as a kind of Shirk and Kufr, and writes; "Those who believe one of the holy twelve Imams to be God or say that God has penetrated into him are Kafirs."(Article 107)

Imams have cursed those people who give them Divine attributes and call them in a way as some body is calling God.

During the time of Hazrat Imam Jafer Sadiq (as), some one attributed some false hadith to his father, Hazrat Imam Muhammad Baqir (as), in which various aspects of divinity were attached to the Imams, notably Amir ul- Muminine Hazrat Ali(as). The people who were spreading these fabricated ahadith were the followers of Mughir bin Said and those of Abi Khattab Muhammad bin al-Assadi.

When Imam Jafar Sadiq (as) heard about this, he said; "May Allah curse Mughira bin Said as he used to tell lies against my father, May Allah make him taste the heat of burning iron, May Allah curse those who say about us what we do not say ourselves, May Allah curse those who try to make us away from the servitude of Allah, Who created us, and to Him is our return and in His hand is our control". Rijal al-Kishi.

Precisely, according to the teaching of the Holy Prophet (sws) and his Ahlal Bayit (as), if anyone knowingly or ignorantly commits any of the following acts, then he has committed a major Shirk.

- To consider any Prophet, or Imam, or a leader as an Independent Power.
- To portray the Prophet, or any Imam as god or like a God.
- To give the Prophet, Imam, or anyone, attributes of Allah or Divine titles which make them to look like a God.

- To associate anyone of them with God in His Power of Execution.

All of the above mentioned acts are just the same but different kinds of major Shirk. Muslims must abstain from all such acts with full determination as the Shirk is an unforgivable crime.

The Holy Prophet of Islam and his Ahlal-bayit have taught us to believe that Allah has created everything when nothing existed. Thus, creating, giving food, granting bounties, death, life, health, wealth, sickness, all in all are under His control.

Amirul Mu'mineen Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) wrote a lengthy letter to his son Imam Hassan (as) advising him to ask Allah alone in all desperate situations.

Imam Ali (as) writes:

"... In all your affairs resign yourself to your Allah, because you will thus be resigning yourself to a secure shelter and a strong protector. You should ask (dua) only from your Lord because in His hand is all the giving and depriving. Seek good (from Allah) as much as you can...." Letter no 31 Nahjul Balagha.

Muslims should take extreme caution while praising the Prophets and Imams. The magnitude of their greatness is certainly unimaginable and their status is beyond our praise, but they all were human beings and we mustn't depict them as God or like a God or give Allah's attributes to any one of them. Quran Reflects

اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا لَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ سُبْحَانَهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

"They (Christians) have taken their rabbis and monks as Lords besides Allah, and also al-Masih, son of Maryam, though they were ordered to serve one God only. There is no god but He, Exalted be He above those whom they associate with Him." (9:31)

The teaching of monotheism is that there is no god but Allah, Who has no partner. There is none like Him. It is basically impossible that there could be anyone like Him. If anyone is like Him then it means that there are two gods which is impossible.

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 8

Polytheism – Shirk Divine Warnings to Mushriks

Quran has clearly warned all the inhabitants of the planet earth that all kinds of Mushrikeens (polytheists) will straight go to the Hell-Fire and will remain there for ever. Allah has made His Paradise haram for them.

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ

“Allah has forbidden to him (mushrik) the paradise, and his abode is the fire.” (5:72)

Quran has also made it very clear that The Most Merciful Allah may forgive our other sins but will definitely not forgive the sin of Shirk.

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

“Surely Allah does not forgive those who associate other gods with Him, and forgives what is besides that to whomsoever He pleases; and whoever associates other gods with Allah, is guilty of a terrible sin”. (4:48)

Quran also informs that all prophets and wise men have condemned Shirk and have advised their followers not to commit this terrible crime.

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

“And Luqman said to his son when admonishing him: My son, associate none with Allah, for to associate others with Him is a tremendous wrong.” (31:13)

Quran has announced that Mushriks have been driven out from the human community.

Islam considers the Mushrik, the outcast of the human race. They are officially not allowed to enter the sacred places like Makkah, Madinah and all mosques. There are special security posts at all entry points of Makkah and Madinah for screening.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُونَ نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَقْرَبُوا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ عَامِهِمْ هَذَا
وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ عَيْلَةً فَسَوْفَ يُغْنِيكُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنْ شَاءَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

“O Believers: Know that that the idolaters (Mushriks) are unclean. Let them not approach the sacred mosque”..... (9:28)

Muslims are not allowed to marry Mushrik man or woman.

وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَاتِ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنَ وَلَأَمَةٌ مُؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ وَلَا تُنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنُوا وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكُمْ أُولَئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيُبَيِّنُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ

“Do not marry Mushrik women until they become Muslims. A Muslim slave woman is better than a Mushrik woman even though she allures you. Nor marry (your girls) to Mushriks until they become Muslims. A Muslim slave is better than a Mushrik, even though he allures you. Mushriks invite you to the Hellfire. But Allah invites you by His grace to the gardens of (BLISS) and forgiveness.” (2:221)

Islam considers Mushrik, the most discarded persons.

الزَّانِي لَا يَنْكِحُ إِلَّا زَانِيَةً أَوْ مُشْرِكَةً وَالزَّانِيَةُ لَا يَنْكِحُهَا إِلَّا زَانٍ أَوْ مُشْرِكٌ وَحُرْمٌ ذَلِكَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“The adulterer should marry only an adulteress or a Mushrik and the adulteress should marry only an adulterer or a Mushrik. Muslims are not allowed to marry such persons.” (24:3)

Quran admonishes Muslims not to socialize with Mushriks and follow their lifestyle. However, Islam allows to have business relationships with extreme caution.

وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ

“If you were to obey them, you shall indeed become polytheist (Mushrik)”. (6:121)

The reason Quran discourages mingling with Mushriks is, because they have been infected by Satan and will transmit the satanic germs to all those who will freely join them.

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

إِنَّمَا سُلْطَانُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِهِ مُشْرِكُونَ

“(Satan has) no authority over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord. He (Satan) only has power over those who befriend him and those who serve other gods besides Allah (i.e., Mushriks)”. (16:99-100)

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 9

Causes of human sufferings and natural disasters-Reaction of our action.

Everyday when we read the newspaper or watch TV, we come to know about many different kinds of human miseries and mishaps. We also see people around us miserably suffering with chronic diseases, hunger, and poverty. We also hear about many catastrophic natural disasters such as earthquake, floods, hurricanes, tornado, cyclone, storms and droughts killing millions of people and leaving millions of widows, orphans, and handicaps.

A question arises that when God is All-mighty i.e. capable of controlling anything and everything and God is also all-knowing i.e., He knows everything that happens anywhere in the universe, then why such dreadful events occur.

This is a very important question. Many atheists use this question as a valid reason to deny the existence of God. This question also disturbs many ignorant Muslims. It is therefore essential for all Muslim students to have a satisfactory answer to this question. This question does not have one simple answer as there are many different causes of human suffering and afflictions.

Some of the major causes of calamities and sufferings are as follows:

- Reaction of our action and Divine punishment.
- Warning and reminder to turn back to God.
- To energize and stimulate human spirit and to intensify his efforts.
- Examination.
- Divine system.

Reaction of our action.

The major cause of our all sufferings and miseries is our deeds. i.e., in most of the cases we suffer because of our wrong doings. Quran has disclosed this law of God.

ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامِ يُخَذُّ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَاسِبُونَ

“Then it shall be said to the wrongdoers: Taste the everlasting torment; shall you be rewarded except according to your deeds” (10:52)

i.e., you receive the payment of what you earn. This law of God has also been discovered by Isaac Newton in Nature which we teach in Physics. i.e., every action has an equal reaction.

If we sincerely study and analyze our sufferings and miseries we will really know that in most of the cases our sufferings are the outcome of our own actions or attitude. Let us see this categorically.

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 10

Causes of human sufferings and natural disasters - Hunger and poverty

The most common kind of suffering and infliction are hunger, poverty and diseases. Let's analyze the causes of these inflictions one by one.

Poverty is the lack of enough income and resources to live comfortably. It is one of the world's main social problems. In both developing and developed countries, millions of people are suffering because of poverty. Poverty is the most common social disease. Many of the poor people in the world cannot buy the food, shelter, clothing, and medical care that they need. This creates frustration, hopelessness and lack of interest in life. In the late 1980's, it was estimated that 1 billion people, about a fifth of the world's population, were so poor that their health and lives were endangered.

But what is the cause of poverty and who should be held responsible for all that suffering? Man or God?

Poverty has variety of causes. Some of them are being mentioned here.

- Lack of education, skills and aptitude to do work. Many people don't want to do work. They suffer due to their laziness or less interest in work. Some people think that Allah Subhanahu taala is our sustainer and He has taken the responsibility of our basic needs. It is true, but still a lot of efforts are needed to take our share from the Divine warehouse. So in many cases poverty is due to the under utilization of human potential and natural resources.
- Inflation also significantly contributes to poverty. Inflation means increasing the price of goods which affects a certain group of the society. We experience this problem now and then. This is a man-made cause in which human selfish nature works to get as much as possible without considering anything.
- Some countries are poor because of lack of expertise and equipment needed to produce adequate food supplies for most of their people. It is also due to the lack of involvement in science and technology.
- Many women become poor after they are divorced or separated from their husbands. It is also a personal reason.
- In some cases poverty also results from natural disasters such as floods, droughts or poor harvests. This can also be the indirect cause of our wrongdoing which we shall discuss later.

Thus in most of the cases we find that the hunger and poverty are mainly either due to the improper distribution of amenities or under utilization of natural abilities and resources

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 11

Nabuwwat – Prophethood

What was the special work of Prophets?

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِذْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَئِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٦﴾

The Holy Quran precisely tells the responsibility of the Prophet towards his nation.

“It is He Who sent forth among the unlettered an apostle of their own to recite to them His revelations, to purify them, and to instruct them in the scriptures and wisdom, - (62:2)

From this verse of the Holy Quran, we arrive at a conclusion that there were four main assignments of the prophet. No other person except a Divine agent is capable to do these works.

1. To guide the mankind to the right path.
2. To inform the people about the unseen and hidden realities which they can never know or perceive by themselves.
3. To purify their souls and to develop their morals of Divine standard.
4. To certify the actions of people on the Day of Judgment.

• 1st assignment of the Prophet - to guide the people.

This was the first and the main duty of all the prophets. To do this work efficiently and adequately, Allah Taala gave the prophets, both theoretical book [core concepts] and Practical book [Shariah - complete codes of ideal life].

All actions and activities of the Prophets were totally according to the Divine Will. In this way the life of the Prophet itself was an open book. All Prophets taught their respective nations all essential things that are necessary for a meaningful life in this world and for the ultimate success of the eternal world.

• 2nd assignment - To inform the people about the hidden and unseen realities.

This was the second important work of the Prophets. There are many facts and truths which are totally beyond the human reach. Man can never know them unless a reliable person from God tells and explains these facts.

• **3rd assignment - to purify the souls and to develop high morals.**

This is the third important duty of the Prophets. Quran declares the Prophethood as a great favor of Allah Taala to mankind and a source of His unlimited mercy.

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنسَانُ قَدْ جَاءَكَ مَوْحٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

“O mankind: there has come to you a direction from your Lord for the (to cure disease) heart - and for those who believe, a guidance and a mercy.” (10:57)

• **4th assignment - to certify the actions of the people on the Day of Judgment.**

Quran informs us that on the Day of Judgment, the Prophets and their true successors, Imam, will be asked to give full reports of their nation.

يَوْمَ نَدْعُو كُلَّ إِنسَانٍ بِإِمَامِهِمْ فَمَن أُوْتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِنَا وَلِنَا يَتْرَدُونَ كِتَابَهُمْ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا .

“One day We shall call together all human beings with their (respective) Imams: those who are given their record in their right hand will read it (with pleasure), and they will not be dealt with unjustly in the least.” (17:71)

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 12

Nabuwat – Prophethood

Characteristic features of Prophets.

Apart from many other characteristic features, all prophets have five things in common.

1. All prophets were appointed by Allah Subhanahu taala and none of them was self-appointed or appointed by the public.
2. All prophets were infallible (masoom) and perfect human beings. No angel was sent as Nabi or Rasul. All prophets were males. No woman was appointed by Allah as a Nabi or Rasul.
3. All Prophets were endowed with some kinds of distinct signs.
4. All prophets taught the basic beliefs of Islam, i.e., There is no god but Allah who has no partner (Tawhid) and that there is a Day of Judgment when each person will get reward according to his/her deeds.
5. All prophets successfully completed their task.

Let's discuss the characteristics of the Prophets in the light of the Holy Quran.

Appointment of the Prophet.

All prophets were appointed by the Allah Subhanahu Taala, and none out of the 124000 messengers, was a self-appointed or public's nominee.

Why Allah should appoint the Prophet is a self-explanatory fact. The nature of Prophet's work clearly demands that he should be appointed by Allah and not by the public or by himself. This rule will also apply on the successor of the Prophet.

The Prophets are the chosen people who are capable of receiving Divine guidance from the invisible world and communicating it to the people living in the physical world. They are the most trustworthy, selfless and unchanging people. It is Allah alone who can judge who is fit to do this job and, hence, fit to be a Prophet.

Quran attests this rule;

اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ

“Allah knows best whom to entrust with His message.” (6:124)

عَلَّمَ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَى

“He is taught by one who is mighty in power, and vigorous.” (53:5)

Thus, no ordinary person, be he a very intelligent and knowledgeable, can qualify this criterion except the one who is appointed by Allah, Who is Almighty.

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 13

Imamat – Leadership

What is Imamat

Imamat is the fourth basic beliefs of Islam and a component part of Divine Scheme. The word Imam is derived from an Arabic word, meaning leader. Thus the term Imamat means leadership of certain selected people who were appointed by Allah Subhanahu taala as the successor to the Holy Prophet Muhammed (sws) to continue his mission after his death.

There are 12 Imams, all appointed by Allah and announced by the Holy Prophet (saw). Their names are as follows:

First Imam - Hazrat Ali ibn Abi Talib
Secound Imam - Hazrat Hasan ibn Ali
Third Imam - Hazrat Hussain ibn Ali.
Fourth Imam - Hazat Zainul Abideen.
Fifth Imam - Hazrat Muhammad Baqar
Sixth Imam - Hazrat Jafar Sadiq
Seventh Imam - Hazrat Musa Kazim
Eight Imam - Hazrat Ali Raza
Ninth Imam - Hazrat Muhammad Taqi
Tenth Imam - Hazrat Ali Naqi
Eleventh Imam - Hazrat Hasan Askari
Twelfth Imam - Hazrat Muhammed Mehdi

All these Imams were appointed by Allah and declared by the Holy Prophet as his successor one after the other. Their duty was to lead the Ummah of the Holy Prophet (Muslim Community) in accordance with the Quran and Sunnah in spiritual, religious, social, and political matters.

All the 12 Imams were infallible, most knowledgeable and exalted persons. They were fully aware of Quran and Hadith and were authorized by the Holy Prophet to interpret it. Thus, the words and actions of all these Imams are also regarded as hadith.

Disagreement between Shia and Sunni over the belief of Imamat.

Before we bring this controversial matter under discussion, it is important to know, how to deal with the disputed issues among Muslims.

First of all, we should know that, holding dialogues on disputed issues has been encouraged by Islam.

Islam appreciates such dialogues between the adherents of various sects for the following good reasons:

1- To unite all Muslims by reminding them their basic unity of faith.

All Muslims believe in one God, follow the Sunnah of one Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad (sws), and give credence to one single Divine book, The Holy Quran.

2- To strengthen the institution of brotherhood.

The unity of faith will inevitably create a suitable atmosphere of brotherhood among Muslim Ummah. This is the basic requirement of intellectual and social development of a progressing nation.

3- To investigate and institute the absolute truth.

When there are two or more different views about a particular issue then it clearly shows that the truth is ambiguous and certainly unclear. It logically initiates a platform to coordinate sincere efforts to achieve the absolute truth.

The Holy Prophet (sws), who was sent to teach the entire mankind, held dialogues with Christians, Jews and pagans of Makkah.

Allama Abu Mansour ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib Tabarsi, a great alim, has recorded many important dialogues of the Prophet and Imams in his famous book , Al-Ihtiaj. The most famous of this is Mubahila - a dialogue between the Holy Prophet (sws) and Christian missionaries.

Thus, the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet (sws) have strongly recommended to establish dialogues and have also taught us, how to hold and conduct such useful meetings.

The golden principle which was taught by Allah (swt) to all His Prophets is :

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ
بِأَتَمِّ هَيْئَةٍ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ
وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٦٥﴾

“Invite [all] to the way of the Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue [debate] with them in ways that are best.” (16:125)

Thus, Muslims should always remember the above mentioned pre-requisite Quranic condition of dialogues whenever they meet to discuss the disputed issues. These prerequisite conditions can be summarized as follows.

1- The sole intention of arguments must be to invite the people in the way of the Lord.

2- The approach should always be rational, i.e., arguments should be based on Quran, hadith, and established historical facts, unanimously accepted by the concerned groups.

3- The discussion should be carried out in a beautiful manner. There shouldn't be any argument for the sake of arguing or to show any superiority or struggle of winning the

battle. The main aim behind the dialogue should be to remove differences and to invite to the way of Allah.

4- All participants should come with full determinations that they will accept the truth.

Major Difference:

There is a serious difference of opinion between Sunni and Shia Muslims on the issue of Imamatus.

1. Sunnis don't believe in Imamatus and do not recognize the 12 Imams as their leaders. Whereas Shia consider Imamatus as one of the fundamental beliefs of Islam and recognize all the 12 Imams as the legitimate successors of the Holy Prophet (saws).
2. Sunnis believe in Khilafatus as a substitute of Imamatus. According to Sunni beliefs, the Holy Prophet did not say anything about his succession or appointed anyone in his lifetime to be his successor. Shia believe that the Holy Prophet nominated Hazrat Ali as his successor and expressed his decision explicitly at several occasions.

There are numerous verses in the Holy Quran, ahadith of the Prophet (saws) and historical events, both in Sunni and Shia authentic books, which are more than enough to enlighten the Muslim Ummah to remove this controversy. But this is possible only if they sincerely wish to resolve the matter rationally and peacefully.

We are discussing the issue briefly in an academic manner just for the sake of understanding and unity of Muslim Ummah.

The whole issue of Imamatus and Khilafatus can be divided into two major parts.

1. Did the Holy Prophet (saws) appoint anyone as his successor to continue his mission after him or not?
2. If he appointed, then whom did he appoint and what was the primary criteria of his appointment?

First Case - Sunni Standpoint

All Sunni scholars, without any difference of opinion, say that the Holy Prophet did not appoint anyone as his successor nor he left any guidelines regarding his succession.

They are also unanimous in believing that the Holy Prophet (sws) never made any nomination in favor of Hazrat Abu Bakr or Omar or Osman or anyone else nor is there any indication of their Khilafat in the Quran or Hadith.

If this is acceptable by all Sunni scholars then it solves 50% of the dispute. Because, if Prophet has not mentioned anyone as his successor then there shouldn't be any resistance from their side to accept anyone as the first Khalifa, whether he be Hazrat Ali (as), or anybody else.

In fact, if Quran and Prophet are totally silent on this matter, as Sunnis believe, then the whole belief of Khilafat should not be considered as a religious issue.

In this way, the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr will simply become a historical event which has no concern with the religious faith.

If this is the case, then Sunnis should not accuse Shias, if they do not accept the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr, Omar and Osman, as they are not rejecting any Divine injunction or religious order.

Thus, from Sunni point of view, even if Hazrat Ali was not appointed by the Prophet as his successor, Shias have the right to accept him as Khalifa in the same way as Sunnis accept Hazrats Abu Bakr, Omar and Osman their Khalifa.

Hence, from Sunni standpoint, one can arrive at a conclusion that the issue of Khilafat is not a religious matter, and as it is not a fundamental article of the Islamic faith, the acceptance or rejection of Khalifas equally makes no difference to the person concerned. If we do not accept Hazrat Abu Bakr as the legitimate Khalifa, It is just as not recognizing any ruler of a Muslim country. If some people of Pakistan or Iran do not recognize the democratically elected president of their country, it wouldn't be a sin.

Thus, Sunnis, according to their own belief, have no right to criticize Shias if they do not recognize the Khalifas which were solely nominated or elected by the people and not appointed by Allah or His messenger.

Shia Standpoint

All Shia scholars strongly believe that The Holy Prophet (sws) had clearly mentioned about his successor in major public meetings. There is a long list of recorded events in history which reveal that Prophet did declare the name of his successor.

Thus, from Shia standpoint, if anyone rejects or doesn't recognize the legitimate successor of the Holy Prophet, then it is an open challenge to the authority of the Prophet and a clear defiance of Divine law. This is definitely a grave sin. If someone does it knowingly and deliberately, then he will be ousted from the Muslim community on account of committing Kufr.

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 14

Qiyamat – Doomsday

How the Doomsday will start?

The Doomsday will appear all of sudden with a catastrophic big bang. It has been referred in the Holy Quran as Soor. No one knows the actual nature of the Soor. But Quran tells us that the Soor will be a tremendous bang which will spread a wave of terror throughout the universe.

وَيَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي السُّورِ فَتَنزِعَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَكُنْ أَتَوْكَ ذُخْرِيْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾

“And the day when the Soor will be blown and all who are in the heavens and the earth will stare in terror, save him whom Allah wills.” (27:87)

There will be two Soors:

- The First Soor

The Divine Bugle! The Big - Bang - Sound! - The start of the Universal Doomsday. It will be a horrible event. The whole universe will start shaking causing to shake everything everywhere. The Quran has called it a ‘heavy day’

“Heavy day in the Heavens and the Earth”. (7:187)

An unprecedented and an unexampled condition of sweeping chaos on a cosmological scale will grip the entire universe. The residents of planet earth will experience tremendous turbulence of whole-earthquake that has never occurred before in the entire history of mankind. Then a chain of disastrous events will occur one after the other destroying the whole universe. Every living creature living anywhere in the universe, including the Angel of Death and the Angel who will blow the Soor will finally die.

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ﴿١٦﴾ وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ﴿١٧﴾

“Every thing that exists will perish, except the Face of your Lord, Full of Majesty, Bounty and Honor”. (55:26-27)

- The Second Soor

Resurrection Day:

Allah will then command the blowing of the second Soor by His will for resurrection of the dead souls. The second Soor will bring the new order of creation. Allah will create a new universe much larger than the present one and the most beautiful one. This will be the fulfillment of the promise of Allah Subhanahu taala, made in the Holy Quran.

يَوْمَ نَطْوِي السَّمَاءَ كَطَيِّرٍ لِّلرِّجْلِ كَمَا بَدَأْنَا
أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ ثُمَّ نَعِيدُهُ وَعِنْدَنَا عِثَابٌ لِّمَن كَانَ لَمَاعِينَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

“He will surely repeat the creation of the universe again” (21:104)

The new world will be unimaginably different (but with some resemblance also) in all respects viz. shape, size, climate, laws and living conditions.

يَوْمَ نَبْدِلُ الْأَرْضَ بِأَرْضٍ أُخْرَىٰ وَنَبْدِلُ الْأَرْضَ بِأَرْضٍ أُخْرَىٰ وَنَبْدِلُ الْأَرْضَ بِأَرْضٍ أُخْرَىٰ
يَوْمَ نَبْدِلُ الْأَرْضَ بِأَرْضٍ أُخْرَىٰ وَنَبْدِلُ الْأَرْضَ بِأَرْضٍ أُخْرَىٰ وَنَبْدِلُ الْأَرْضَ بِأَرْضٍ أُخْرَىٰ ﴿٤٨﴾

“On that Day when the earth will be changed into another earth and the heavens (they will also be changed)” (14:48)

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 15

Qiyamat – Doomsday

An Important hadith about the initiation of the Doomsday.

Some one asked a question to Imam Zainul-Abideen (as) about the duration between the two soors. Imam replied: “As much as Allah would please.” Then Imam was further asked by the same person about the nature of the Soor and how it would be blown. Imam replied: “So far as the first blowing is concerned, verily Allah will command angel Israfil to come down towards the earth to blow the Soor. The Trumpet will have one mouth-piece and two tubes. The space between the two tubes will be like the distance between the sky and earth.

When the angels will see Israfil descending towards the earth with his Trumpet, they will say: Verily, Allah has ordered the inhabitants of the earth to die, and the inhabitants of the heaven to die.

Then Israfil will bang into it, and the voice will come out from that tube which is towards the earth side. All living beings on the earth will die. And the voice will come out from that tube which is towards the heaven side, and all living beings in the heaven will die, except Israfil. Then Allah will say to Israfil: “O Israfil, Die and he will die.”

Then they will remain in this condition as long as Allah would wish. And His ARSH will return upon the water, as it was in the beginning, independent with His Majesty and Power.

At that time, Allah will create a very loud voice which will reach in every part of the heavens and the earth, saying: Whose is the Kingdom this day? No one will answer as there will be none alive; then Allah will answer Himself creating a loud voice: It is of Allah, the One, the Irresistible (Quran 40:16). The One Who created all the creatures and gave them death; verily, I am Allah, there is no god except I alone, there is no partner for Me nor any minister; and I made the creatures by My hand (power) and I made them die by My Will; and I shall resurrect them by My power.

Then Allah will cause the second blowing of the Trumpet; the voice will come out from the side which is towards the Heavens, and all inhabitants of the heaven will become alive and will take their previous positions, and then all people will be gathered for reckoning.”

While Imam was saying all this, he was weeping profusely. [Bihar-ul-Anwar, vol. iii]

The important part of the Imam's narration is the eventuality of the whole episode, i.e., when all living creatures in the universe i.e. both, the inhabitants of the earth and the heavens will die by the order of Allah, and then Allah alone will sustain His Arsh and will create a loud voice saying, There is no god but Allah. This would be an absolute affirmation that, He is the sole creator of everything, and He is alone and absolutely one, He has no partner, no Prime Minister, no father and no son, and there is no god of any kind but Allah, and there is no power other than Him who can create and destroy. Absolute silence other than His one voice is an absolute proof of His absolute oneness.

The scientific clues of the Doomsday - From Big-Bang to Big-crunch.

Scientists can explain how and why the Doomsday would occur. As the Big-bang theory explains how the universe came into existence, the Big Crunch theory explains how the universe will come to an end. Scientists believe from observing the red shift in distinct galaxies that the universe is currently expanding.

According to Einstein theory, the universe has a finite volume and finite number of hydrogen atoms. At some time in the future, no one knows when, the expansion of the universe would stop. The galaxies which are now receding from one another will start to approach towards each other and finally they will start colliding with each other. As there are more than 100 billions of galaxies, billions of collisions will occur one after the other - that is how the scientists believe in the occurrence of the Doomsday. The Holy Quran confirms it." All that is there will perish, except the Countenance of your Lord, Full of Majesty and Bounty and Honor." (55:26-27)

The Big Crunch will be like the Big Bang in reverse. At present the universe is expanding, but it is being observed that the rate of expansion of the universe is gradually slowing down. This shows that the time of the Doomsday is approaching nearer and nearer.

Quran warns:

اقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿١﴾

“Closer and closer to mankind comes their reckoning, yet they heed not and they run away.” (21:1)

This verse is a dire reminder to all the inhabitants of the earth that the Doomsday is not too far but is gradually approaching its appointed time.

“Every event has its appointed times.” (54:3).

The possible scientific explanation of the Doomsday in the light of the Holy Quran has been described by a renowned Muslim scholar Professor S. Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood in his monumental book Doomsday and Life after death. We shall take relevant material from his book.

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 16

Re-appearance of Imam Mehdi (as)

Philosophy of the occultation

It is important to do extensive research on the hadiths to know correctly about the purpose of occultation, and the way Imam Mehdi (as) would re-appear. It is not as simple as we think that our Imam is just living somewhere in hiding, does hajj every year, helps people or Ulema and will reappear on any Friday to establish an unparalleled Islamic government.

There are some important questions concerning the occultation of the Imam which need rational explanation.

1. What is the Divine scheme and purpose of keeping the Imam alive but totally invisible to the public?
2. What is the daily routine of the Holy Imam ? Is he just helping the Ulema occasionally, passively observing the daily performance of the Shias, attending and helping the people in their desperate need and that's all? What would be the productive turnout of his hundreds of years stay in occultation?
3. How will the Holy Imam, on his arrival just as one single person, destroy the giant nuclear powers of the time by a conventional weapon - the sword?
e.g. China alone has about 2 million troops on active duty, 600,000 people in reserve and about 1 million in its armed militia uses as a military draft. The combined armed forces of these nations that are trained to fight both in air and on land have more than 10 million troops on active duty.

We know that Muslim countries are not united to raise a strong army for the Imam nor they are technologically equipped to assist him in any other useful way.

How the conventional sword would match with intercontinental ballistic missiles, atomic bombs, artillery shells, mines, torpedoes and many other kinds of strategic nuclear weapons normally used in world wars?

We know that the United States alone has a war machine that could launch its forces within minutes of a warning and strike anywhere in the world.

4. According to Sunnis belief, Imam Mehdi will be born before the Doomsday and will destroy the evil Empires of his time. Does it mean that the Imam will conquer the giant super powers by some supernatural means? But it has never happened in the whole history of Prophethood. Even the Head of all prophets, the Holy Prophet (sws) did everything from the scratch to the establishment of Islamic government in normal and natural way.

These are indeed some valid and useful questions which need satisfactory answers to strengthen the unshaken belief in the re-appearance of the Holy Imam (as).

According to my research, Imam is not just idly sitting and waiting for Allah's command to come out from the hidden place. I believe, Imam must have a full scheme of work and a broad Divine agenda to follow up during the long period of occultation. But what is that Divine agenda and his scheduled occupation all through the long duration of his concealment?

The rational explanation of this question will convince the unprejudiced Muslim minds, the grave repercussion of the misconceptions they have about the coming of Imam Al-Mehdi (as). The Sunni believe that Imam's birth will take place in future. This misconception jeopardizes the basic Divine objective of sending the Imam before the end of the world.

There is a precise purpose of occultation. However, our explanation may or may not be absolutely correct as there are many things beyond the range of our perception.

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 17

First Phase of Our Existence - Life Before Birth

SOUL — Brain's network — Organs of the Body

All scientists believe without any difference of opinion that each and every organ of the body strictly follows the instructions of the brain. The brain does give instruction to special organs to perform work and only then they do certain kinds of work.

But SOUL is the master control center of the brain. Imam Ghazali, a renowned Sunni scholar of the 11th century beautifully expressed this fact in a very simple manner. He said;

Body is just a vehicle for the soul as a horse is for the rider; it is the soul that determines our journey in this life, just as the rider guides the travel of the horse in the land. Accountability, therefore, is for the rider, not the horse.

This is also clear from one of the hadith of the Holy Prophet (sws) in which he said; Actions will be judged according to intentions.

The intentions are always formed by the souls, and actions are simply their manifestations. The brain is only an instrument that brings the intentions into actions. The other parts of the body are the means that carry out the function.

Judgments, intentions, planning, decisions, don't have any location within the cells of the brain nor can they be traced out in the heart or any other part of the organic body.

The brain simply takes commands from the Soul and executes it through its army (appropriate organs of the body) solely for the pleasure of the Soul.

Thus for our every action and thought, the Soul is solely responsible. The rewards and punishments are also for the Soul only. Quran says;

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٥٨﴾

“On that day we shall seal their mouths. Their hands will speak to us, and their feet will testify to their misdeeds.” (36:65)

الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

“When they enter hellfire, their eyes and ears and the skins on their bodies shall give witness against them on account of the sins they have committed. They will address their skins asking them, why do you give witness against us? They will receive the answer: the Lord Who gave speech to all things and Who first created you has given speech to us too, certainly you will return to Him.” (41:20-21)

This means that all our organs which were used by the Soul to seek its pleasure will testify against our Soul and will speak on how they executed or performed the commands of our Soul. Thus all kinds of pains and pleasures are experienced by the soul through the network of brain. This is why the Soul is absolutely responsible for all our actions whether good or bad.

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 18

Second phase of our existence Life in this world

The second phase of our existence is the most crucial and decisive period of our life. The span of this life is relatively very short i.e., 60 to 70 years in average, but it shapes a definite nature of our endless life. On Quranic scale, the length of our stay in this world is less than a day.

How the present shapes the nature of eternal life?

This is the most important question which all of us should strive to know. Quran has repeatedly mentioned that the nature of our endless life depends upon how we live in this world. For this, we all will be examined for two things.

1. Thought and perception. i.e., Emaan
2. Actions and deeds. i.e., Amaal

All human beings will be judged for these two things and will go either to Jannat or Jahannum accordingly.

The first basic qualification required by a person to enter jannat is perfect religion. Quran has explicitly warned the entire mankind that no religion other than Islam will be accepted on the Day of Judgment.

إِنِّ الدِّينَ حِنْدُ اللّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

“The only true religion before Allah is Islam.” (3:19)

Thus all non-Muslims, who don't fulfill this pre-requisite condition, are not qualified for Jannat.

The second important requirement is Amaal, i.e. actions. Islam has given a full scheme of work, called Shariah (Islamic laws), which has identified all good and bad actions, obligatory duties and forbidden acts. Thus all those Muslims who don't follow the rules of Shariah will not be qualified to enter Jannat.

However, Allah is so kind and lenient that He forgives all our sins if we sincerely ask Him for forgiveness. And His generosity is such that He will multiply the reward of our good deeds ten times i.e. far above the merit, and the punishment will be no more than what commensurate with our sin.

Quran confirms this in the following verse.

مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ قُلْتُ عَشْرَ امْتَالِهَا وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ قُلْتُ لَا يُجْزَى إِلَّا بِمِثْلِهَا وَهُمْ لَا يُلْتَمُونَ ﴿١٦٠﴾

“He that does a good deed shall be repaid tenfold: but he that commits a sin shall be punished only for it.” (6:160)

What is successful life?

As the second phase of our life i.e., life in this physical world, is the most important and decisive period of our entire life, it is essential to know how to make this life most successful and productive.

There is a vast Islamic literature, which includes more than 6000 Divine verses, more than 15000 ahadith of the Prophet, more than 300 sermons & duas of Imams and a huge stock of books by Ulama, all this just to tell with all minor and major details about, What is a successful life and how to get the ultimate success.

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 19

Second Phase of Our Existence - Life in this world

How can we accomplish the purpose of our life?

It is very important to understand fully and correctly what should be the primary and ultimate aim of our life which should never be compromised with anything in any circumstances. Quran has told us in a very decisive manner that the Divine purpose of creation is to worship Him. Every second of our life should be spent in His worship. This means that worship doesn't mean traditional or ritual worship in which we do certain acts prescribed in the shariah. Worship means to follow His commandments in every action.

Some key points of successful life.

1. The first and foremost thing in the agenda of life is the true intention of total submission to Allah Subhanahu taala. i.e., we should have this feeling in the heart of our heart. We should please Allah Subhanahu taala by all possible means. We should do anything and everything to seek His pleasure and His nearness.
2. We should know this fact very well that every pleasure and success in this world is of temporary nature. The real success is the success of Akherah. Thus, we should not do anything at the expense of Akherah. Quran has repeatedly warned the residents of planet earth that their stay on earth is pretty short. Every intelligent person at least knows this fact.
3. Acquire useful knowledge to strengthen Emaan. Quran has stressed on the exploration of the universe and study of nature.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩٠﴾
الَّذِينَ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ اللَّهَ تَعَالَىٰ وَهُمْ وَقُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُودِهِمْ وَيَتَذَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾

“Indeed: In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are signs for men of understanding, those that remember Allah when standing, sitting and lying down, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth (saying): Lord, you have not created these in vain. Glory be to You: save us from the torment of the fire.” (3:190)

Thus, it is important to ponder in the vast creation of Allah Subhanahu taala in order to glorify His majesty.

Today, the Western scientists have collected a large amount of information about the universe and its innumerable entities through their researches and explorations. As one can not grasp the enormous amount of acquired knowledge,

it has been divided into bits and pieces, classified as physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy etc. All these disciplines of sciences, being taught in secular institutions, can be made very useful if they are taught with Islamic perspectives.

4. One must know the laws of Islam in order to fulfill the obligatory duties and to abstain from the forbidden acts.

The sunnah of the Holy Prophet (sws), as interpreted by his Ahl al Baiyt, covers each and every aspect of an ideal life. Thus, it is essential to follow his sunnah and the teachings of the Imams in every sphere of life. We should acquire taqwa in life. Taqwa means, to observe the obligatory duties in full and to abstain from the evils and forbidden things.

Aqaid Class 7 - Lesson 20

Third Phase of Our Existence Life After Death

Our third phase of life or the third stage of our existence is the life after death. World of Souls (Alam-e-Arwah) — Womb of Mother — Physical World — World of Soul (Barzakh)

What is life and death?

Many scientists do not believe in the existence of the Master of the universe. They think that all living beings in the world are the accidental products of Darwin's evolution. The inevitable outcome of this baseless faith is that everything is for nothing. Such mindless people can never comprehend the philosophy of life and death.

That is the reason that Western scientists who have discovered a large number of facts about life and death know very little about life. They admit that they can not give one simple definition of life that can appropriately cover all its aspects. We find this confession in all standard books of biology that scientists can not define life because they can not locate the dividing line between the living and non-living things.

For example, a virus is a lifeless particle by itself, but it becomes active and multiplies rapidly when invades in a living cell. i.e., the virus has the characteristics of both living and non-living species.

Thus, scientists openly confess that they can not give a precise definition of life and can only give some common characteristics of living creatures.

So when scientists cannot even define life, how can they create life? Test-tube baby, surrogate motherhood or cloning is nothing but the manipulation of natural birth mechanism. Similarly, scientists cannot comprehend the philosophy of death. They say, death is the end of all life processes in an organism. But they can not say anything about what makes the life process to cease.

Today, surgeon can transplant almost every organ of the human body if it starts malfunctioning. This means that they should be able to avoid death as it is always caused by the malfunctioning of any organ. But we all know that despite the tremendous progress in surgery and medicine, the life span is more or less the same as it was 100 years ago. So, scientist can neither create life nor can they stop occurrence of death. This fact reveals the actual nature of life and death.

قَبَارِكُ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمَمَلَكُ وَهُوَ عَلِيمٌ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ
الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّؤُوفُ

“Blessed be He in Whose hands is all sovereignty: He has power over all things. He created life and death that He might put you to the test and find out which of you acquitted himself best. He is the Mighty, the Forgiving one.” (68:1)

In such a short sentence, Quran has given a complete and perfect definition of life and death. It gives a full account of the origin and the prospect of life and death. Briefly we can highlight the important features of life and death from this short verse of the Holy Quran.

1. Life is not the accidental product of some spontaneous bio-chemical reactions. Rather, it is the great creation of All-Mighty Allah Subhanahu taala.
2. Death is not the disorder of physio-chemical functions of organic systems of the body. Rather, it is also another kind of creation of All-Mighty Allah Subhanahu Taala.
3. Both, life and death have a well defined purpose in the existence of a living being.
4. Death is not the end of life but the beginning of another kind of life.

This complete and perfect definition of life and death opens our mind to think seriously about the life after death.