

Aqáid **(Beliefs)**

Lesson 1

Types of People

The Qur'ān refers to people with different titles depending on their faith and what they believe. It is important to know the meaning of these titles that the Qur'ān uses so that we can understand its message better.

Muslim

The word 'Muslim' refers to a person who submits to the will of Allāh. That means he or she does not go against what Allāh wants. A Muslim believes in the Kalimah ash-Shahadatayn. The Kalimah ash-Shahadatayn is:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

*Ash-hadu an Lā ilāha illallāh. Wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadur
Rasulullāh.*

*I bear witness that there is no god except Allāh. And I bear witness that
Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh.*

Any human being who declares this is considered to be a Muslim. A Muslim also believes in all the Anbiyā (prophets) sent by Allāh and all the Books that Allāh sent with the Rusul (messengers). A Muslim especially believes that the Qur'ān is the unchanged Word of Allāh and must be followed. A Muslim also believes that there is life after death and that one day everyone will be brought back to life and there will be a Day of Judgement when all the good will enter Paradise and live there happily forever and all the evil will be sent to Hellfire.

Allāh tells us in the Qur'ān:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

O you who have faith! ... do not die except as muslims.

- Surah Aal-i Imrān, 3:102

A female Muslim is called a Muslima. And the plural of Muslim is Muslimun or Muslimeen.

Mu'min

A Mu'min is a Muslim with a higher level of faith in Allāh. The word Mu'min comes from *Imān*, which means 'Faith'. A Mu'min loves Allāh and Rasulullāh (s) sincerely and instead of just practising what is wājib and keeping away from what is harām, a Mu'min also does what is mustahab (recommended) and keeps away from what is makruh (not recommended).

A female mu'min is called a mu'mina. And the plural of mu'min is mu'minun or mu'mineen.

Allāh praises the Mu'mineen in the Qur'ān and says:

﴿إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ
وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ﴾

The faithful (mu'minun) are only those who have faith in Allāh and His Messenger and then have never doubted, and who do jihād with their wealth and their lives in the way of Allāh. It is they who are the truthful.

- Surah al-Hujurāt, 49:15

Part of being a mu'min is to believe in Allāh and to follow the teachings of the Qur'ān the way Rasulullāh (s) commanded us to do so. For example, Rasulullāh (s) taught us that Allāh is always just ('ādil) and will never punish the good or reward the evil on the Day of Judgement. So a mu'min believes in the justice ('adālah) of Allāh. Similarly, Rasulullāh (s) said that after him there will twelve Imāms who will be his successors and the true teachers and guardians of the Qur'ān. This belief is called Imāmah. A mu'min believes in Imāmah as well.

In other words, to be a Muslim, one has to have faith in One God (Tawhid), one has to believe that Muhammad (s) is the Messenger of Allāh (Nubuwwah) and one has to have faith in life after death and the Day of Resurrection (Qiyāmah). But to be a mu'min, one also has to have faith in 'Adālah and Imāmah and to follow the rules of Islam according to the teachings of the family of Rasulullāh (s) – the Ahl al-Bayt ('a).

When a human being has faith that 'there is no god but Allāh', he or she is no longer an atheist or a polytheist. Such a person is called a monotheist (*muwahhid*). The Jews, Christians and Muslims are

considered to be monotheists. When a monotheist has faith that 'Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh', he or she is no longer a Jew or Christian. Such a person is a Muslim. But a Muslim can also have doubts or hypocrisy in his or her heart and may even give up his or her faith out of pride or out of greed for worldly power, wealth or pleasures. For example, the people who killed the Imāms from the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) and tortured many descendants of Rasulullāh (s) also claimed they believed 'there is no god but Allāh and Muhammad is His Messenger.' But when a person has faith that Imām Ali ('a) and all the eleven Imāms after him are the *awliya* (plural of *wali*, meaning 'special friends') of Allāh and the successors of Rasulullāh (s) then his or her love and faith in following the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) gives him or her extra protection from ever going astray or following an unjust ruler or having hypocrisy in the heart. Such a person is truly a superior Muslim and therefore called a Mu'min.

Kāfir

A Kāfir is a person who denies the truth despite knowing it. For example, a person who does not believe in Allāh as the one and only God is called a kāfir. A female kāfir is called a kāfira and the plural of kāfir is kāfirun, kāfireen or even kuffār.

Some people do not believe in Allāh or Rasulullāh (s) or the Day of Judgement because they don't know about them and no one has ever told them the truth. So we cannot judge them and Allāh will decide about them on the Day of Judgement. We should try our best to let others know about Allāh, Islam, Rasulullāh (s), the Qur'ān and the Ahl ul-Bayt ('a).

But some people know the truth and they still deny it. They do not respect the Qur'ān and they even hate Rasulullāh (s) because they are too proud to accept the truth. Allāh curses such kuffār in the Qur'ān and says:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ﴾

﴿أَجْمَعِينَ﴾

Indeed those who turn faithless and die while they are faithless (kuffār) - it is they on whom shall be the curse of Allāh, the angels and all mankind.

- Surah al-Baqarah, 2:161

Mushrik

To believe in any god besides Allāh is called shirk. So a Mushrik is someone who believes in more than One God. In English, a Mushrik is called a polytheist. A female mushrik is called mushrika and the plural of mushrik is mushrikun or mushrikeen.

People who worship idols or fire or the sun or animals like the cow or snake, etc. are all examples of mushrikun.

Shirk is a very great sin in Islam because it stops a person from ever knowing Allāh and going to Jannah in the Hereafter. Allāh sent 124,000 anbiyā (prophets) and they all came to teach people not to worship anyone besides Allāh, the One and Only God and Creator of everyone and everything.

Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

﴿اتَّبِعْ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾

Follow that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, there is no god except Him, and turn away from the polytheists (mushrikeen).

- Surah al-An'ām, 6:106

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

أَفْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا﴾

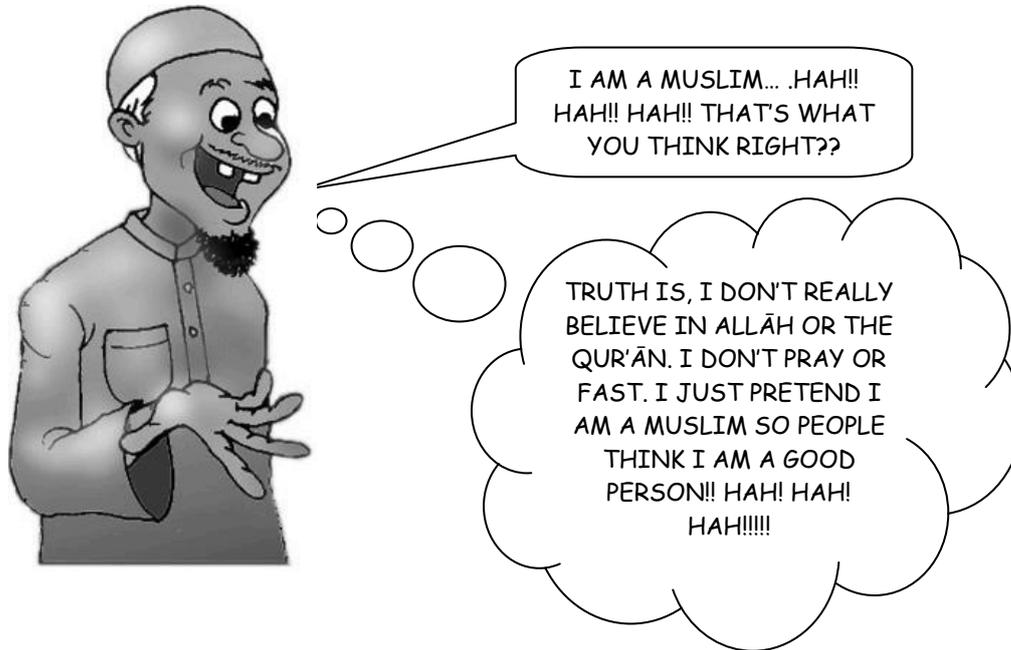
Indeed Allāh does not forgive that any partner should be ascribed to Him, but He forgives anything besides that to whomever He wishes. And whoever ascribes partners to Allāh (i.e. does shirk) has indeed fabricated [a lie] in great sinfulness.

- Surah an-Nisā, 4:48

Munāfiq

Munāfiq means 'hypocrite'. A munāfiq is a person who pretends to be a Muslim only to fool people, but in his heart he does not follow Islam and in fact he hates Islam and the Muslims.

A munāfiq is very dangerous because the Muslims never know that he is their enemy. The Muslims think he is one of them. A female munāfiq is called munāfiqa and the plural of munāfiq is munāfiqun or munāfiqeen.



Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

﴿بَشِّرِ الْمُنَافِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا﴾

Inform the hypocrites that there is a painful punishment for them.

- Surah an-Nisā, 4:138

Imām Ali ('a) has said, 'A mu'min will never hate me even if I cut off his nose. And a munāfiq will never love me even if I give him the whole world. This is because Rasulullāh (s) promised me, "O Ali, a mu'min can never hate you and a munāfiq can never love you!"'

That is why Rasulullāh (s) gave Imām Ali ('a) the title Amir al-Mu'minin which means 'the Commander of the Faithful'.

Salmān, the companion of Rasulullāh (s) said whenever the Muslims wanted to know if a person was a mu'min or a munāfiq, they would praise Imām Ali ('a) in front of him and see his reaction. If he got happy they knew he was a mu'min and if he got angry they knew he was a munāfiq.

The best way to make sure we never become munāfiqun is to recite salāwat on Rasullullāh (s) and his Ahl al-Bayt ('a) loudly.

Fāsiq

A fāsiq is a person who disobeys Allāh openly by committing sins in public. Such a person is not afraid of Allāh and does not care what people think of him or her. A female fāsiq is called a fāsiqa and the plural of fāsiq and fāsiqun or fāsiqeen.

Allāh calls Iblis (Shaytān) a fāsiq because he disobeyed the orders of Allāh openly:

﴿وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ...﴾

When We said to the angels, 'Prostrate before Adam,' they prostrated, but not Iblis. He was one of the jinn, so he was a fāsiq against his Lord's command.

- Surah al-Kahf, 18:50

Allāh tells us never to trust a fāsiq:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصِبْحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ﴾

O you who have faith! If a fāsiq should bring you some news, then check it, otherwise you may harm some people out of ignorance, and then become regretful for what you have done.

- Surah al-Hujurāt, 49:6

A Muslim may commit a sin by mistake but always regrets it and immediately asks Allāh for forgiveness. He or she is also ashamed if others know of his or her wrongdoing. A fāsiq on the other hand sins openly and even tells other people about his sins and this encourages other people to sin because they begin to think it is not serious. That is why Allāh does not like the fāsiqeen and tells us never to trust them. A fāsiq is not allowed to lead other people in salāh. His words should never be trusted and he should never be given any respect or position of

leadership in the Muslim community otherwise other people will start imitating him and committing sins openly. In fact, to discourage a fāsiq, we should not even be very friendly with them or smile and laugh with them unless we are trying to come closer to them so that we can guide them to become better Muslims.

Types of People

WORD	MEANING
Muslim	One who has faith in Tawhid, Nubuwwah and Qiyāmah.
Mu'min (Faithful)	One who has faith in Tawhid, 'Adalah, Nubuwwah, Imāmah and Qiyāmah and obeys all the commands of Allāh (s.w.t) and His Messenger (s).
Kafir (Faithless)	One who is faithless and does not believe in Allāh (s.w.t) or all His Messengers or in the Day of Judgement or what Allāh has revealed.
Mushrik (Polytheist)	One who believes that Allāh (s.w.t) has one or more partners.
Munāfiq (Hypocrite)	One who only pretends to be a Muslim.
Fāsiq (Open Sinner)	One who disobeys Allāh openly.

Lesson 2

Sifāt ath-Thubútiyya

Sifāt ath-Thubutiya are the qualities (also called “attributes”) that are true for Allāh. The opposite of this is Sifāt as-Salbiyya, which are the attributes that are not true for Allāh. There are very many Sifāt ath-Thubutiya and Sifāt as-Salbiyya but in this and the next lesson we are going to learn only about eight of each type.

Eight of the Sifāt ath-Thubutiya are:

1. Al-Qadeem
2. Al-Qādir
3. Al-Aalim
4. Al-Hayy
5. Al-Mureed
6. Al-Mudrik
7. Al-Mutakallim
8. As-Sādiq

1. **Allāh is al-Qadeem** means ‘Allāh is Eternal’. When we say Allāh is eternal we mean He neither had a beginning or a birth and nor will He ever have an end. Allāh created time and the world and there is no such thing as time for Allāh; so we cannot ask or imagine how Allāh was before time or after time and so on.

Allāh says in the Qur’ān:

﴿هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾

He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden, and He has knowledge of all things.

- Surah al-Hadid, 57:3

﴿فَاطِرُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا يَذُرُّكُمْ فِيهِ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾

The Originator of the heavens and the earth, He made for you spouses from your own selves, and mates of the cattle, by which means He multiplies you. Nothing is like Him, and He is the All-hearing, the All-seeing.

- Surah ash-Shura, 42:11

- 2. Allāh is al-Qādir** means ‘Allāh is All-Powerful’ or ‘Allāh is Omnipotent. Omnipotent is One who has power to do anything He wants. When we say Allāh is al-Qādir it means Allāh has no restriction on what He chooses to do. He has power and control over everyone and everything. Allāh says in the Qur’ān:

﴿إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾

His command, when He intends [to do] something, is only to say to it: ‘Be!’ and it is.

- Surah Yā Sin, 36:82

- 3. Allāh is al-Aalim** means ‘Allāh is All-Knowing’ or ‘Allāh is Omniscient’. Omniscient is One who knows everything and nothing remains hidden from Him. When we say Allāh is al-Aalim it means nothing can ever remain a secret from Allāh. Allāh knows even our deepest thoughts and feelings. Allāh says in the Qur’ān:

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ
نَجْوَى ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا أَدْنَى مِنْ ذَلِكَ
وَلَا أَكْثَرَ إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾

Have you not regarded that Allāh knows whatever there is in the heavens and whatever there is in the earth? There is no secret talk among three, but He is their fourth [companion], nor among five but He is their sixth, nor less than that, nor more, but He is with them wherever they may be. Then He will inform them about what

they have done on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed Allāh has knowledge of all things.

- Surah al-Mujādilah, 58:7

﴿يَعْلَمُ خَائِنَةَ الْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِي الصُّدُورُ﴾

He [even] knows the treachery of the eyes [when you look secretly], and what the chests hide [i.e. what you hide in your hearts].

- Surah Ghāfir, 40:19

4. **Allāh is al-Hayy** means ‘Allāh is Ever-Living’. When we say Allāh is al-Hayy we mean One who never dies. Allāh created life and death so it is not possible for Him to be born or to die. In fact Allāh does not even sleep or remain absent for even the blink of an eye or even less. Allāh says in the Qur’ān:

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ...﴾

He, who created death and life...

- Surah al-Mulk, 67:2

﴿... لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ...﴾

...Neither drowsiness overcomes Him nor sleep...

- Surah al-Baqarah, 2:255

5. **Allāh is al-Mureed** means ‘Allāh does as He pleases’. However Allāh is al-Mureed does not mean that Allāh will do anything without wisdom or without a good reason. Even if something that Allāh does makes no sense to us, there is still a very good reason for which Allāh does everything because He is All-Wise and He loves His creation very much. When we say Allāh is al-Mureed we mean to say that Allāh does not do anything because of being forced by anyone or anything. It is impossible for anyone to force Allāh to do anything. Allāh says in the Qur’ān:

﴿... إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ﴾

Indeed Allāh does whatever He wishes.

- Surah al-Hajj, 22:18

﴿لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ﴾

He is not questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned.

- Surah al-Anbiya, 21:23

6. **Allāh is al-Mudrik** means 'Allāh is All-Aware'. When we say Allāh is al-Mudrik, we mean Allāh sees and hears everything though He has neither eyes nor ears. Allāh is not a physical body. He created all physical bodies. But nothing escapes Allāh. Allāh is so powerful that He can see everything without needing eyes or light and He can hear everything – even what we are thinking – without needing ears or sound. Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

﴿... عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ

وَلَا أَصْغَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ﴾

The Knower of the Unseen, not [even] an atom's weight escapes Him in the heavens or in the earth; nor [is there] anything smaller than that or bigger, but it is in a manifest Book.

- Surah Sabā, 34:3

﴿وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبُرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ

مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا

فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ﴾

With Him are the treasures of the Unseen; no one knows them except Him. He knows whatever there is in land and sea. No leaf falls without His knowing it, nor is there a grain in the darkness of

the earth, nor anything fresh or withered but it is in a manifest Book.

- Surah al-An'ām, 6:59

7. **Allāh is al-Mutakallim** means 'Allāh is the Master of Speech'. This means Allāh does not need a mouth or tongue or any means to speak or communicate with His angels, prophets or any creation. When Allāh wishes to communicate directly with anyone or anything, He can create speech in any object and it will speak what He wills and as He wills. For example, Allāh spoke to Nabi Musa ('a) from a burning tree and when Rasulullāh (s) went for Mi'raj, Allāh spoke to him directly from behind a 'Curtain of Light'.

Similarly, Allāh can make any inanimate object speak as well. For example, one of the miracles of Rasulullāh (s) is that when he picked up pebbles from the ground, the pebbles would do tasbeeh of Allāh (i.e. praise Allāh) in his palm. Allāh would allow the pebbles to speak. On the Day of Judgement, Allāh will command our hands and legs and skin to speak and it will speak and say what we did. Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

﴿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

﴿وَقَالُوا لَجُلُودِهِمْ لِمَ شَهِدْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا قَالُوا أَنْطَقَنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ خَلَقَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ﴾

They will say to their skins, 'Why did you bear witness against us?' They will say, 'We were given speech by Allāh, who gave speech to all things. He created you the first time, and to Him you are being brought back.'

- Surah Fussilat, 41:21

8. **Allāh is as-Sādiq** means ‘Allāh is always Truthful’. When we say that Allāh is as-Sādiq we mean that Allāh never breaks His promise. Some Muslims say that because Allāh can do as He pleases, He may even decide to put all the evil people in paradise on the Day of Judgement and all the good people in Hell. We the Shi’ah of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) say this is impossible because Allāh has promised to put the good in Jannah and the evil in Jahannam and Allāh never lies or breaks His promise. Allāh says in the Qur’ān:

﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ لَا يُخْلِفُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

[This is] a promise of Allāh: Allāh does not break His promise, but most people do not know.

- Surah Rum, 30:6

﴿... وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا﴾

...and who is more truthful in speech than Allāh?

- Surah an-Nisā, 4:87

﴿وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سُدَّ خُلُومَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ حَقًّا وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ قِيلًا﴾

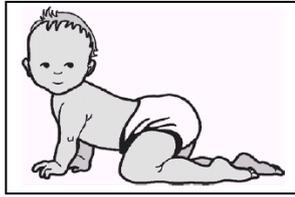
But those who have faith and do good deeds, We will make them enter into gardens with streams running in them, to remain in them forever - a true promise of Allāh, and who is truer in speech than Allāh?

- Surah an-Nisā, 4:122

How Yusuf Learnt the Sifāt ath-Thubutiyya

‘What does “**Allāh is al-Qadeem**” mean?’ Yusuf asked his Mom. His mom told him that there was a time when Yusuf did not exist. He was not even born. Then he was born and that was the beginning of his life. Yusuf had now grown and will continue growing older until one day he

will become an old man. And finally like all human beings, Yusuf will one day die and go back to Allāh, his Creator and that will be the end of Yusuf's life on earth.



Allāh is al-Qadeem, Yusuf's mother explained, means that he was not born, He never changes or grow and He will never die.

One night. Yusuf woke up from his sleep and he looked very scared. When his mom asked him what the matter was, he replied that he had a bad dream about a big monster. Yusuf wanted his superman toy in bed with him so that if the monster came back superman can fight him because he is so strong.

Yusuf's mom told him that he could keep his superman toy with him but superman is not real. If he wants someone really strong and powerful to help him, he should ask Allāh, who is al-Qādir. No one and nothing is more powerful that **Allāh who is al-Qādir**.

The next day, Yusuf's mom wanted to check if Yusuf understood that **Allāh is al-Aalim** and He knows everything, even our secrets and what we whisper. Yusuf's mom had taught Yusuf a poem:

He knows when you are good and when you are bad.
He knows if you are telling the truth and when you are lying.
He knows when you are happy and when you are sad.
He knows when you need help and He helps you.
He knows everything.

So now to test him, Yusuf's mom gave him a big present and told him, 'you can only open the present in a place where no one can see you.'

Yusuf thought this would be very easy. He took the present and ran upstairs, but his father was there. So Yusuf ran into the garden, but the

birds were there. He thought for a moment then he ran down into the basement and hid under the stairs as he looked around.

At last there was no one there. He was just about to open the present when suddenly he remembered what his mom had told him: **Allāh is al-Aalim**. Yusuf went back to his mom without opening the present. His mom asked him, 'why didn't you open the present?' and he replied, 'It's no use. There is no place where Allāh cannot see me, Allāh knows everything, **Allāh is al-Aalim**.' Yusuf's mom was very pleased with his reply and gave him a big hug!

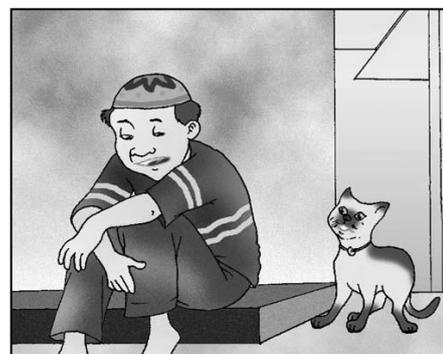
One day Yusuf and his parents decided to go on a holiday. Before they could go they had to arrange for someone to look after Yusuf's pet fish and feed it otherwise it would die.

Yusuf's mom explained to Yusuf that just as the fish needed someone to look after it, the same way someone is looking after us. She then asked Yusuf if he knew who was looking after them all. He replied 'Allāh!'

'That's correct!' replied Yusuf's mom. 'How come **Allāh is al-Hayy** and He never dies?' asked Yusuf. 'Well,' replied his mom, 'without Allāh, everything in the world and the whole universe would die. Everything and everyone needs Allāh all the time. So Allāh can't die. Dying means going back to Allāh. If Allāh died, who would He go back to? And who would everyone go back to after they died? Allāh created life and death but He is not like anything or anyone that is born or dies. **He is al-Hayy, the Ever-Living**.

Now when they came back from their holiday, Yusuf really wanted a cat. So he prayed to Allāh but he did not get one. He was very sad because he thought Allāh was not listening to him.

One day Yusuf went to his friend's house, he was very happy to see a cat there so he started playing with it and wished Allāh would listen to him and let him have a cat. Suddenly he started feeling sick.



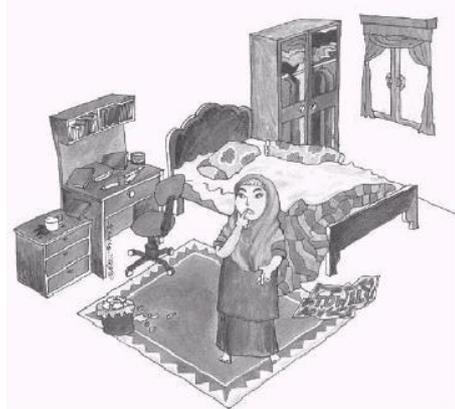
The reason was because he was allergic to cats. That was perhaps the reason why Allāh did not answer his prayer.

Now Yusuf understood that **Allāh is al-Mureed, He can do whatever He wants** but He always does what is good for us only.

One day, Aamina, Yusuf's sister asked her mom if she could go outside and play. Her mom said she could but only after she cleaned her room.

So Aamina went up to clear her room. When she got there she shut the door so that no one could hear what she was doing and started saying to herself that no one would know if she just threw all her things in the cupboard.

She suddenly stopped because she remembered that although her mom could not hear and see what she was doing but **Allāh is al-Mudrik and He could hear and see her.**



So Aamina was sorry and asked Allāh for forgiveness and cleaned her room properly. Aamina went and gave her mom a big hug for teaching her that **Allāh is al-Mudrik** and can see and hear everything.

Aamina's mom told her, 'you are never alone. Allāh is always with you. He will always listen to you when you want to talk to Him and He knows when you are sad or want Him to help you.'

At bedtime, both Yusuf and Aamina asked their mom to tell them a story. Their mom told them a story about Rasulullāh (s):

One day, the people of Makkah asked Rasulullāh (s) to prove to them that he was really a messenger of Allāh. So Rasulullāh (s) picked up some pebbles from the ground. And all of a sudden, the pebbles began doing tasbih of Allāh and saying, 'Muhammad is the Messenger (Rasul) of Allāh!'

The people were amazed to witness this miracle. Some of them accepted Rasulullāh (s)'s message and others refused and said, 'this is magic!' because they were proud and did not want to accept the miracle.

When Yusuf heard this story, he asked his mom, ‘how come the pebbles could talk when they are not alive?’

‘Allāh made them talk,’ replied Yusuf’s mom. ‘This is because **Allāh is al-Mutakallim. He can create sound and speech in anything.** When Allāh commands anything to speak, it will always speak and say what Allāh wants it to say.’

One day, Yusuf and Aamina’s mom wanted to teach her children never to tell lies and always to keep their promises.

‘Do you know why **Allāh is as-Sādiq and He never lies or breaks His promise** and why the prophets (anbiya) of Allāh and the Imāms never lied?’ asked mom.

‘No, please tell us,’ replied the children.

‘Well it’s like the story of the boy and the wolf,’ replied their mom. And she began to tell them a story:

Once upon a time there lived a boy whose father had told him to look after the sheep on the hill. The boy was sitting watching the sheep and was very bored so he decided to play a trick.

He began to shout at the top of his voice, “Wolf! Wolf!” When his father and other people in town heard this, they ran up to the hill to help the boy.

When they got to the top they saw no wolf but just the boy sitting there laughing. They were very angry and told him that it was wrong to lie. The boy did not listen and did the same thing the next day.

On the third day a wolf really appeared! When the boy cried, “Wolf! Wolf! Help me!”, no one listened to him because they thought he was joking again. But the wolf was really there and it killed all the sheep and attacked the boy.

So when a person lies, people stop believing him or her.

Allāh wants us to believe Him and trust Him. That is why **Allāh is as-Sādiq**. Allāh also wants us to become truthful so that other people would believe us. Rasulullāh (s) started preaching Islam when he was 40 years old. But he had never lied since he was born and everyone called him as-Sādiq (the Truthful) and al-Amin (the Trustworthy). So it was easy to believe him when he began preaching the message of Islam.

Lesson 3

Sifāt as-Salbiyya

Sifāt as-Salbiyya is the opposite of Sifāt ath-Thubutiya. These are the attributes (qualities) that Allāh does not have and what we can never say about Allāh.

Just like Sifāt ath-Thubutiya, we will learn about eight Sifāt as-Salbiyya:

1. Shareek
2. Murakkab
3. Makān
4. Hulool
5. Mahal al-Hawādith
6. Mar'i
7. Ihtiyāj
8. Sifat az-Zāid

1. **SHAREEK** means Allāh has no partner. Allāh is One and Only One and Alone. He does not have and does not need a partner, a spouse, a child, or anyone. He is the only Creator and everyone and everything else is His creation. All the Prophets and Messengers of Allāh came to tell people not to worship anyone except Allāh and not to make anyone a partner of Allāh. To believe anyone is a partner of Allāh is called “shirk” and it is a great sin. Allāh says in the Qur’ān:

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

When Luqman said to his son, as he advised him: ‘O my son! Do not ascribe any partners to Allāh. Polytheism (shikr) is indeed a great injustice.’

- Surah Luqmān, 31:13

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ﴾

بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٨﴾

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

2. **MURAKKAB** means Allāh is not made up of anything. Everything is made up of something except Allāh. For example, we are made up of flesh and bones and blood, and so on. A car is made up of metal and plastic and rubber, and so on. A computer is made up of wires and metal and plastic. It is not possible for all to be a murakkab (a compound made up other things) because He created everything and already existed before anything else was even made. When we say murakkab is not possible for Allāh we also mean that because Allāh is not composed of anything, He cannot be divided, even in our imagination.
3. **MAKAAN** means Allāh is not in any fixed place or location. Makān is not an attribute (sifah) of Allāh because He has no physical body that can be at one fixed place. Allāh does not reside in any place. He is everywhere. Even when we say the Ka'bah is the House of Allāh we mean it is a special house that Allāh has blessed and it is a place where Allāh wants people to visit during Hajj and to face it during salāh. But Allāh does not live in the Ka'bah. He is not up in the heavens or down below the earth. Allāh is everywhere at the same time.
4. **HULOOL** means Incarnation is not possible for Allāh. It means nothing can enter Allāh nor does Allāh enter anything or anybody. Some people believe in hulool and say that Allāh came to the world in the form of a human being. This is impossible because hulool is one of the Sifāt as-Salbiyya and it is not possible to imagine this for Allāh.
5. **MAHAL AL-HAWADITH** means Allāh is not subject to change. Allāh does not change. For example, Allāh does not grow old or young. He does not become happy or sad, pleased or angry. When we say Allāh is happy with someone, it only means that person is receiving Allāh's blessings and rewards. When we say Allāh is angry with someone, it means Allāh's punishment is on that

person. But Allāh is not like human beings who change in their moods. That is why on the Day of Judgement, Allāh can be very pleased with the good and very angry with the evil at the same time. It only means Allāh will reward the good and punish the evil at the same time. Otherwise nothing changes in Allāh as such.

6. **MAR-I** means Allāh is not visible. He cannot be seen nor will He ever be seen, because He has no body. Allāh can only be recognized by His signs and His creation.
7. **IHTIYAJ** means Allāh has no dependence or need. Allāh does not depend on anybody nor does he need anything or anyone. Allāh created everything out of love and for everything to benefit from Him but it makes no difference to Him if something exists or not.
8. **SIFAT AZ-ZAID** means Allāh's Sifat ath-Thubutiyya are not independent qualities or attributes but they are all one and the same as Who He is. For example when we say that Allāh is al-Aalim, that does not mean that His knowledge is separate from His Existence or that it can increase or decrease. There has never been a time when Allāh had less knowledge. Another example would be al-Qādir. It does not mean that Allāh's power is another thing separate from His knowledge or Who He is. Allāh is al-Qādir means He is Power itself. Every attribute is Who He is.

To understand this better, think of the difference between the sweetness of sugar versus the sweetness of tea. We can imagine the sweetness of tea as being separate from the tea because we know the tea was not sweet until we added some sugar in it. But we cannot imagine the sweetness of sugar as being separate from sugar because that would mean it is not sugar anymore! Similarly, we can imagine knowledge, power, life, and so on as being separate from a person because we can imagine a person who is first born without knowledge or a person increasing or decreasing in power or with or without life. But for Allāh, it is impossible to even imagine this. Allāh is life. Allāh is knowledge. Allāh is power itself and so on. Thinking of any of His Sifāt as being 'extra' (Sifat az-Zāid) is not possible for Allāh (s.w.t.).

Lesson 4

Who is an Imām?

Relation of Nubuwwah to Imāmah

The Arabic word 'Imām' means 'Leader'. For example, the one who leads others in salāh is called an Imām of Salāh. The plural of Imām is Aimmah.

Some of the Anbiyā (prophets) of Allāh were made Aimmah by Allāh because they were very special and Allāh wanted them to lead others. For example, Allāh tested Nabi Ibrahim ('a) and when he passed, Allāh made him an Imām, even though he was already a Nabi:

﴿وَإِذْ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا...﴾

And when his Lord tested Ibrāhim with certain words, and he fulfilled them, He said, 'I am making you the Imām of mankind.

- Surah al-Baqarah, 2:124

Similarly, Allāh said to Nabi Dāwud ('a):

﴿يَا دَاوُدُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ...﴾

O Dāwud! We have made you a representative (khalifa) on the earth.

- Surah Sād, 38:26

When Allāh sent Rasulullāh Muhammad (s), He told him to tell the people that he would be the last Nabi and Rasul. Allāh would never send another prophet or messenger or Book after him.

But who would guide the people after Rasulullāh (s) if the people could not understand the Qur'ān or if Islam was in danger?

So Allāh told Rasulullāh (s) to tell the people that after him there would be twelve Imāms and all of them would be from his family (Ahl al-Bayt) ('a). And the last Imām would live for a very long time because the world can never be without an Imām. And one day, the last Imām would fill the world with peace and justice and everyone all over the world would worship no one but Allāh.

This is a promise of Allāh in the Qur'ān:

﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا
اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ
خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا...﴾

Allāh has promised those of you who have faith and do good deeds that He will make them successors in the earth, just as He made those who were before them successors, and He will establish for them their religion which He has approved for them, and that He will surely change their state to security after their fear, while they worship Me, not ascribing any partners to Me.

- Surah an-Nur, 24:55

So Imāmah is the belief in the twelve Imāms after Rasulullāh (s). The first Imām is Imām Ali b. Abi Tālib ('a) and the last Imām is Imām al-Mahdi ('atfs). You already learnt the names of all the twelve Imāms in Book 2 and Book 3.

To believe in an Imām is wājib. All Muslims believe that Rasulullāh (s) said, 'A person who dies without knowing the Imām of his time, dies the death of jāhiliya.' Jāhiliya was the time before Rasulullāh (s) when everyone in Makkah was a mushrik and worshipped idols. So it means anyone who dies without knowing who the Imām is, dies the death of a mushrik.

Three months before Rasulullāh (s) left this world, he went for Hajj. After Hajj, he gathered all the Muslims at a place called Ghadeer Khum. The Muslims were more than 120,000. He reminded them about the teachings of Islam. Then he told them he was leaving the world very soon. The people were very sad and were crying. Then Rasulullāh (s) gave them good news. He told them:

مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَهَذَا عَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ

Whoever's master I am, then this Ali is his master (too).

So Rasulullāh (s) was telling the people that the first Imām after him was Imām Ali ('a) just like Rasulullāh (s) had told the people many times before as well.

So after Nubuwwah came to an end, Imāmah continued. An Imām is appointed by Allāh through Rasulullāh (s) or through the previous Imām. An Imām makes sure that the Qur'ān is not forgotten, lost or changed and rescues Islam whenever it is in danger.

After Rasulullāh (s) announced Imām Ali ('a) as his successor at Ghadeer Khum, Allāh revealed this verse of Qur'ān:

﴿...الْيَوْمَ يَئِسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا...﴾

...Today the faithless have despaired of your religion. So do not fear them, but fear Me. Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam as your religion....

- Surah al-Māidah, 5:3

An evil man objected to this and asked Rasulullāh (s), 'Do you appoint Imām Ali ('a) as your successor because Allāh said so or because he is your cousin?' And Rasulullāh (s) said, 'I only said what Allāh commanded me to say'. So the man said, 'O Allāh, if this is true then punish me right now because I don't believe it.'

And immediately a rock fell from the sky and hit the man on the head and killed him. And Allāh revealed in the Qur'ān:

﴿سَأَلَ سَائِلٌ بِعَذَابٍ وَاقِعٍ﴾

An asker asked for a punishment bound to befall.

- Surah al-Ma'ārij, 70:1

Differences between Imāmah and Khilāfah

After Rasulullāh (s) passed away, even before he was buried, some Muslims in Madina got together and chose Abu Bakr as their own ruler.

Abu Bakr called himself the Khalifa of Rasulullāh (s). Khalifa means successor or someone who comes after another person.

Imām Ali (‘a) tried to remind people that he was their Imām and the Khalifa of Rasulullāh (s) but most of them refused to listen to him.

After 25 years, the people asked Imām Ali (‘a) to be their ruler and when he agreed, many people fought with him and finally Imām Ali (‘a) was struck with a poisoned sword in the month of Ramadan while he was fasting and praying in the Masjid of Kufa. This was less than four years after Imām Ali (‘a) was the ruler over the Muslims.

After Imām Ali (‘a), all the Aimmah from the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) were denied their right to rule over the Muslims. Other people ruled and most of them were evil and cruel. They committed many sins and tortured the family of Rasulullāh (s), the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), poisoning or killing them.

It is important to know that Allāh appoints an Imām through Rasulullāh (s). So an Imām remains as the Imām and the spiritual leader, teacher and guide of Muslims and the protector of the Qur’ān even if the people don’t accept him as their ruler and they choose someone else as their ruler and call him the Khalifa.

In other words, even though people can appoint someone as a Khalifa or even if someone takes power by force and call himself the Khalifa of Rasulullāh (s), he can never be one of the twelve Imāms after Rasulullāh (s) that are chosen by Allāh.

Just like Allāh chose who would be a Nabi or Rasul, similarly, only Allāh chose who would be an Imām. This has been true in the history of all human beings. Allāh chose Nabi Adam (‘a) as His Nabi. Even when a Nabi wanted someone else to be a Nabi, they had to ask Allāh first. For example, Nabi Musa (‘a) asked Allāh if his brother Nabi Harun (‘a) could be his assistant:

﴿وَأَجْعَلْ لِي وَّزِيرًا مِّنْ أَهْلِي . هَارُونَ أَخِي﴾

Appoint for me a vizier from my family, Hārun, my brother.

- Surah Tā Hā, 20:29-30

And when Allāh made Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) an Imām, Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) asked if any of his descendants would also be an Imām. Allāh said:

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

And when his Lord tested Abraham 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 means only the just and good from the descendants of Nabi Ibrāhim (‘a) can be Imāms. Rasulullāh (s) and all the Imāms from the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) are from the descendants of Nabi Ibrāhim (‘a).

Qualities of an Imām

Now we know that believing in Imāmah is wājib on all Muslims. We also know that Allāh wants us to obey the Imām because he tells us:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ...﴾

O you who have faith! Obey Allāh and obey the Messenger and those who have been given authority among you...

- Surah an-Nisā, 4:59

So how do we know whom to follow as the Imām? Well, Rasulullāh (s) was commanded by Allāh to appoint Imām Ali (‘a) as the 1st Imām. Then Imām Ali (‘a) appointed his son Imām Hasan (‘a) as the next Imām and Imām Hasan (‘a) appointed his brother Imām Husayn (‘a) as the third Imām and so on.

Because an Imām is the spiritual leader and guide of all people and he protects the Qur’ān as the final message of Allāh to all of mankind, he must have some special qualities. These qualities are:

1. An Imām must be appointed by Allāh through Rasulullāh (s) or the previous Imām.

2. An Imām must be ma’sum (sinless). This means he never commits sins or makes mistakes.
3. An Imām must be the bravest and most courageous of all the people in his time.
4. An Imām must be the most knowledgeable of his time. He must be able to answer any question he is asked. There should be no one who knows the Qur’ān or its meaning better than the Imām. (For example, the fact that others asked Imām Ali (‘a) for advice and guidance but he never needed to ask anyone for guidance after Rasullāh (s) proves he was the rightful Imām.)
5. An Imām must be the most pious, the most generous and the best of all people in his time, in every quality.
6. An Imām must be able to perform miracles to prove he is the Imām of his time. For example, Allāh may give him some hidden knowledge about what is to happen in the future and whatever he predicts would come true.
7. Everything in the world besides humans and jinns obey the Imām. If an Imām prays to Allāh, his prayers are always answered and he is able to communicate with animals, wild beasts, birds and even the fish in the seas.

Lesson 5

Imām al-Mahdī ('atfs)

Why do we need an Imām?

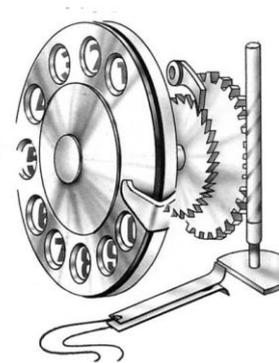
Some people say the Qur'ān is enough to guide us and we don't need an Imām. We know this is not true because even though there are millions of Muslims today, they argue and fight and disagree about what the Qur'ān is saying and its message. So we need someone who can interpret the Qur'ān correctly and unite everyone on the actual meaning of the Qur'ān.

Just like our eyes, hands, ears, nose, legs are all very useful but we depend on our brain to control everything, similarly we need an Imām to make sure our souls, the Qur'ān, and all Islamic teachings are used and followed properly.

A Short Story to Explain Imāmah

One day a man made a very powerful machine. Many people found the machine useful and used it all the time.

Before he died, the man taught his student how to fix the machine if it ever got spoilt. The man also left a User Guide for the machine to help people understand the general rules of how to use the machine. But after his death, whenever people had any specific questions about their machines or it stopped working, they would go to the student, and he would always answer their questions.



Similarly, although Rasulullāh (s) had brought all the laws of Islam and left the Qur'ān behind, after his passing away there needed to be someone who could answer the peoples' specific questions.

These were the Imāms ('a) who were chosen by Allāh to carry on with Rasulullāh (s)'s work.

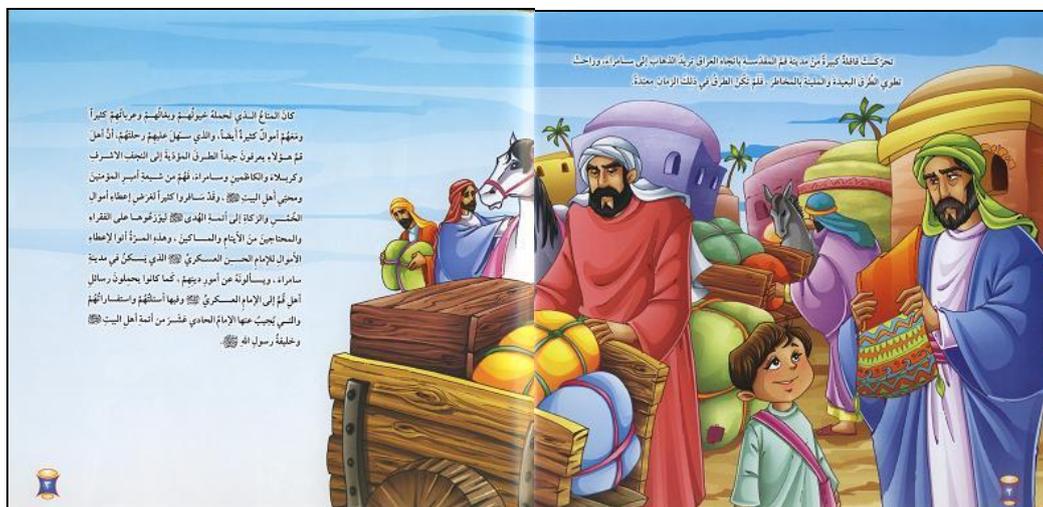
Remembering the Imām of our Time

Whenever we hear the names of Rasulullāh (s) or any of the ma'sumeen ('a), we should ask Allāh to send His blessings on them by reciting the salawāt. But when we mention the name of the Imām of our Time, Imām al-Hujjah ('atfs), then we must show him even more special respect.

We can do this by bowing our heads a little and saying 'Allāhumma 'ajil farajahu' when his name is mentioned. This means, 'O Allāh, make his return quicker!'

We all look forward to the day when Imām al-Hujjah ('atfs) returns and establishes Islam all over the world and all humans live together in peace and love like one big happy family! We should always pray for the return of our Imām in our lifetime and hope that he will return before we die, insha Allāh and that we will be one of those who will help him in his cause and mission. Amen!

The Caravan from Qum

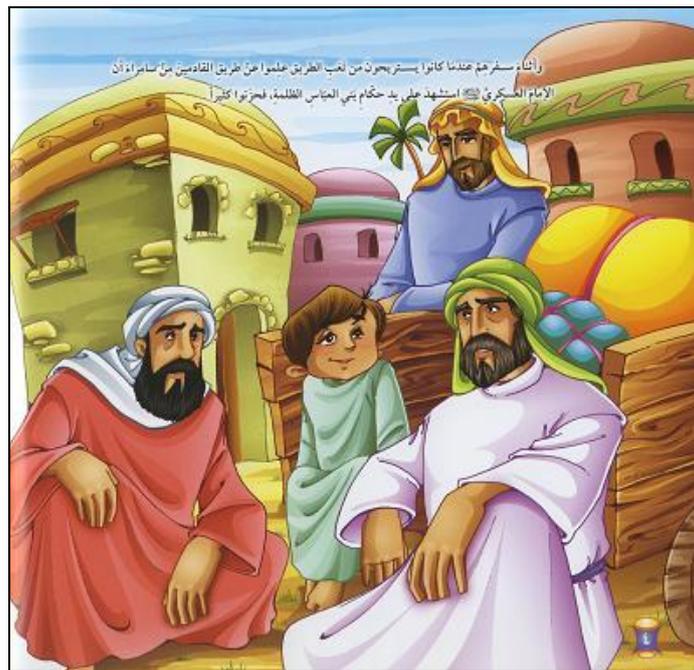


Once upon a time, a large caravan from the city of Qum in Iran set out for Samarra (Iraq). They had to prepare for a long and dangerous journey because travelling in those days was slow and full of perils.

The group was carrying with them a lot of precious goods and much wealth on their camels, donkeys and horses. This group was familiar with the roads to Najaf, Karbala, Kadhmayn and Samarra because they were

from the Shi'ah of Amir al-Mu'minin, Imām Ali bin Abi Talib ('a) and they loved the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) so they used to go to these holy places for ziyārah all the time.

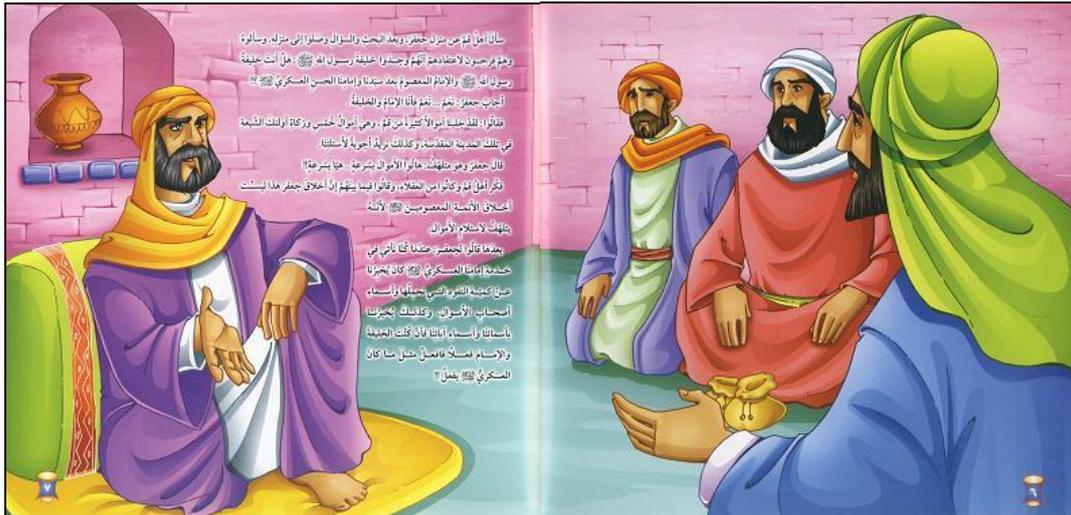
On this occasion, they were going to Samarra to meet Imām Hasan al-Askari ('a) and to give him all the Zakāh and Khums money from the people of Qum, so that the Imām could distribute it to the poor and the orphans. They also had with them letters with questions from other Shi'ahs in Qum and they were going to ask the Imām for answers.



In the midst of their journey, this caravan from Qum heard from another group that was returning from Samarra, that Imām Hasan al-Askari ('a) had been poisoned by the Abbasid ruler in Samarra and had passed away. They were very sad and began grieving for the Imām.

But the group decided that would still continue their journey to Samarra so that they can find out who the next Imām and successor of Rasullāh (s) was and also so that they can ask their questions and give the Imām the Zakāh and Khums money entrusted to them.

When they arrived in Samarra, they began asking about the successor of the eleventh Imām ('a) and a group of people told them, 'The Imām after Imām al-Askari ('a) is his brother Ja'far. So go to him.'

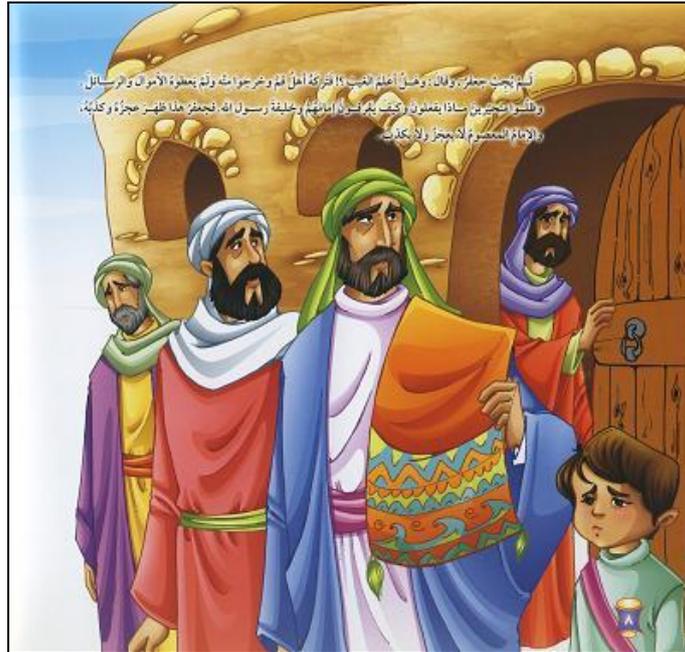


The people from Qum find out where the house of Ja'far was and then went to see him. They were very happy because they thought they had finally found the Imām after Imām al-Askari ('a). So they asked Ja'far, 'Are you the real successor of Rasulullāh (s) after Imām Hasan al-Askari ('a)?!' And Ja'far replied, 'Yes...yes.. I am the Imām and the khalifah now.'

So they said, 'we have brought with us a lot of Zakāh and Khums money from the people of Qum. And also we have questions that we need answers for.' Ja'far said to them eagerly, 'Give me the money quickly...come on now, quick!!'

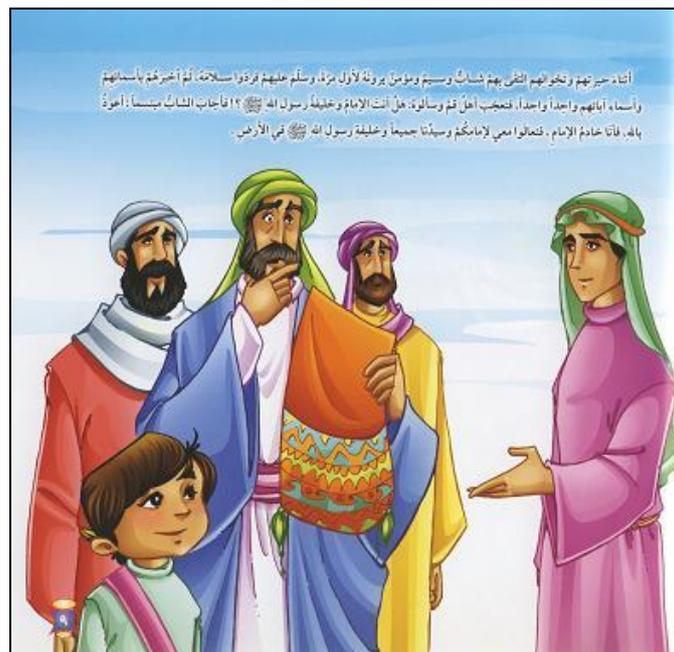
The People of Qum refused because they were clever. They first spoke amongst themselves and said, 'The manners (*akhlāq*) of this Ja'far is not like that of an Imām. He seems very eager to get hold of the money.'

So they said to Ja'far, 'When we used to come to Imām Hasan al-Askari ('a), he would tell us how much money we were carrying and the names of the people who gave us the money. He would also know all our names and our fathers' names. So if you are the khalifah now, then do the same like Imām Hasan al-Askari ('a) used to do!!'



Ja'far could not reply them and said, 'How can I know the hidden?!'

So the people from Qum left his place without giving him any of the money or the letters. They were now lost and confused and did not know how to find the real Imām and successor to Rasulullāh (s). This Ja'far was definitely not the Imām because he failed to answer them and he had lied to them. An Imām never fails to answer any question and never lies.



As they were wondering what to do next, a young handsome man came to them and said, ‘as-salām ‘alaykum’ and they replied ‘wa ‘alayka salām’. Then the young man told them their names and their fathers’ names and they were surprised.

‘Are you the Imām?’ they asked the young man. ‘Not at all!’ the young man replied. ‘I am only a servant of the Imām and he has sent me to invite you to meet him. So come with me and meet the real Imām and successor of Rasulullāh (s).’



The young man then took the people from Qum to meet the Imām.

Imām al-Mahdi (‘atfs) was still very young. They greeted him and he replied and welcomed them in the most beautiful manner.

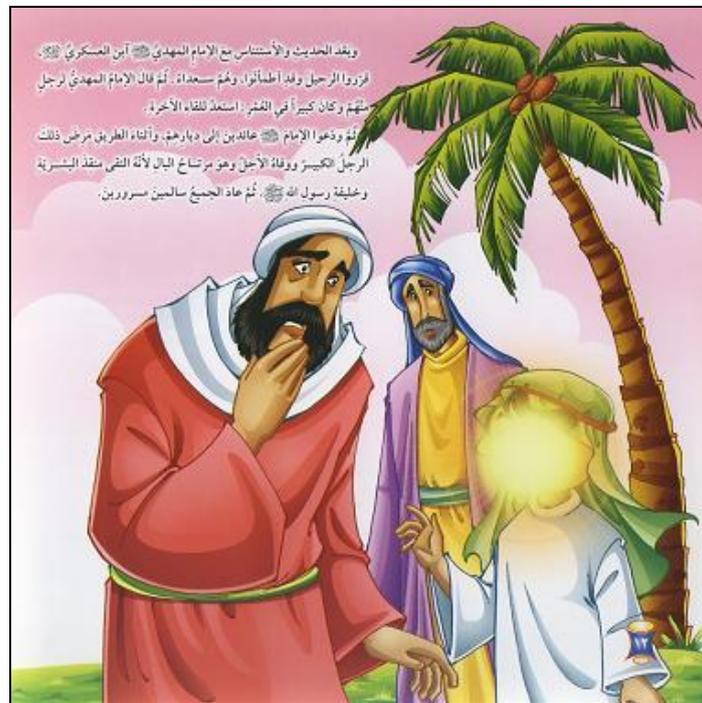
Then the Imām (‘atfs) addressed them one by one, with their name and the name of their father. And he also told them what they were carrying with them and who had given them each portion of the wealth in Qum to deliver to the Imām. Then he even told them how many horses and donkeys they brought with them to carry all the goods.

And he said to them, ‘You have such-and-such letters and questions as well.’ And he answered all their questions in the letters without even

looking at the letters. The men who had come from Qum were overjoyed. They were now sure they had found the real Imām who was Allāh’s proof on the earth and this was Imām al-Hujjah al-Mahdi (‘atfs).

After their meeting with Imām al-Mahdi (‘atfs) the son of Imām Hasan al-‘Askari (‘a), the group was now satisfied. They handed over everything they brought to the Imām and then decided to leave and go back home.

Imām al-Mahdi (‘atfs) told an old man in that group, ‘Prepare for the Hereafter.’ And on the journey back to Qum, that old man fell ill and passed away. But he was very happy because he had met the Imām of his time before dying. The rest of the group went back to Qum, safe and delighted.



Lesson 6

Yaum al-Qiyāmah

By now we should know that one of the five Usul ad-Din is the belief in Qiyāmah (also called Ma'ād). Every Muslim must have faith that there will come a day when everyone will die and Allāh will then bring everyone back to life and judge him or her. Those who had faith and did good deeds in their lives will enter Paradise (Jannah) where they will live forever and those who were faithless and did evil and never asked Allāh to forgive them will enter Hellfire.

The Day of Judgement is a very frightening day for anyone who does not prepare for it. The Qur'ān mentions the Day of Judgement with many different names so as to give us a better idea of that day.

Names for the Day of Judgement

Yaum al-Aakhir	-	The Last Day	9:18
Yaum al-Aazifa	-	The Imminent Day	40:18
Yaum al-'Adhim	-	The Tremendous Day	6:15
Yaum al-Ba'ath	-	Day of Rising (from the dead)	30:56
Yaum ad-Deen	-	Day of Judgement/Retribution	1:4
Yaum al-Fath	-	Day of Conquest	32:29
Yaum al-Fasl	-	Day of Distinction	37:21
Yaum al-Hasrah	-	Day of Regret	19:39
Yaum al-Hisāb	-	Day of Reckoning	40:27
Yaum al-Jam'	-	Day of Gathering	42:7
Yaum al-Khulud	-	Day of Immortality	50:34
Yaum al-Khuruuj	-	Day of Emerging (from dead)	50:42
Yaum al-Mash-hud	-	Day of Testimony	11:103
Yaum al-Qiyāmah	-	Day of Resurrection	41:40
Yaum at-Taghābun	-	Day of Gain & Loss	64:9
Yaum at-Talāq	-	Day of Encounter	40:15
Yaum at-Tanād	-	Day of Distress	40:32
Yaum al-Wa'id	-	The Promised Day	50:20
Al-Aakhirah	-	The Hereafter	2:130
Al-Hāqqah	-	The Inevitable	69:1-2
Al-Ghāshiyah	-	The Enveloper	88:1

Al-Qāri'ah	-	The Calamity	69:4
As-Sa'ah	-	The Hour	40:59
As-Sākhah	-	The Deafening Cry	80:33
At-Tāmmat al-Kubra	-	The Greatest Catastrophe	79:34
Al-Wāqī'ah	-	The Great Event	56:1

Project

Pick 10 names of the Day of Judgement from the list above and on a blank sheet of paper, write down the English translation of the whole verse (from any English translation of the Qur'ān you have at home). For the name of the Day of Judgement, write its Arabic name as well in brackets. Then underline or highlight the name of the Day of Judgement in the verse. The surah number and verse is also given in the list above. Here is an example of how you would write each verse you select:

[Surah Maryam, 19:39]: Warn them of the Day of Regret (Yaum al-Hasrah) when the matter will be decided, while they are heedless and do not have faith.

Necessity of Day of Judgement

Why does there have to be a Day of Judgement?

There are several good reasons for this:

1. Allāh did not create us without purpose, so that when we die that is the end of us. That would be like an artist who creates a beautiful painting and then destroys it. Allāh created us for a purpose. The purpose is for us to live happily forever and never to die. We come to this world only to be tested and to prepare for our final home, which is Jannah insha Allāh. If there was no Day of Judgement and life after death then life in this world would make no sense and would have no purpose at all.
2. Divine Justice. Not all criminals pay for their crimes in this world. Sometimes they are not caught and sometimes the punishment given to them is not enough. For example, if an evil man kills hundreds of people and then he is sentenced to death, can killing him once make

up for all the torture and harm he caused to hundreds of people? Similarly not all good can be repaid in this world. For example, a person who builds a masjid or teaches Qur'ān or Islam to a child or helps an orphan cannot be rewarded in this world. There is nothing in this world good enough for him or her.

Allāh tells us in the Qur'ān about those who doubt that we will be brought back to life:

﴿وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ قَالَ مَنْ يُحْيِي الْعِظَامَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ ۗ قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِي أَنْشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾

He draws comparisons for Us, and forgets his own creation. 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, 36:78-9

In other words Allāh is saying that if He can create us out of nothing, then it is very easy for Him to create us out of our dead bodies or even rotten bones.

And for those who doubt that Allāh is watching us and keeping a record of everything we say and do in this world, Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

﴿فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ . وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ﴾

So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.

- Surah az-Zalzalah, 99:7-8

Allāh also tells us:

﴿وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا وَكَفَى 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 reckoners.

- Surah al-Anbiyā, 21:47

This verse tells us that every deed will be accounted, no matter how small the deed may be. Nothing will be left unaccounted for.

And:

﴿وَالْوَزْنُ 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

The above verse tells us that our deeds will be measured and 'weighed'. Those whose good deeds are heavy will be rewarded. And those whose bad deeds are heavier than their good will be punished.

We should therefore never think we are not important or that whatever we do, Allāh does not care or does not notice. There is not a single person who can escape the Day of Judgement. Every single person will be brought back to life and judged. Allāh promises this as well in the Qur'ān:

﴿إِنَّ كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتِي الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا. لَقَدْ أَحْصَاهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا. وَكُلُّهُمْ آتِيهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَرْدًا﴾

There is none in the heavens and the earth but he comes to the All-beneficent as a servant. Certainly He has counted them [all] and numbered them precisely, and each of them will come to Him alone on the Day of Resurrection.

- Surah Maryam, 19:93-5

Lesson 7

Life & Death

The Purpose of Creation of Life & Death

Allāh tells us very clearly in the Qur'ān, why He created life and death and why He put us on the earth:

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ﴾

He, who created death and life that He may test you [to see] which of you is best in deeds. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Forgiving.

- Surah al-Mulk, 67:2

By fixing our time on this earth, Allāh does not want us to waste time. He wants us to realize that we have a purpose and a very short time on this earth and we have to work hard and make ourselves better by doing lots of good deeds rather than wasting time and just playing games and doing meaningless activities that will be of no use to us in our next life.

When people forget that this life is temporary and the real life is yet to come, they start living in the world as if they will live here forever. They collect a lot of money and material possessions and make all decisions in their lives as if they will never die. That is why Allāh reminds us in the Qur'ān:

﴿وَمَا أُوْتِيتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَرِزْقِنَهَا وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى أَفَلَا

تَعْقِلُونَ﴾

Whatever things you have been given are only the temporary enjoyments of the life of this world and its glitter, and what is with Allāh is better and more lasting. Do you not apply reason?

- Surah al-Qasas, 28:60

﴿بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى﴾

Yet you prefer the life of this world, while the Hereafter is better and more lasting.

- Surah al-A'la, 87:16-17

In fact, death works like a ticking clock or a stopwatch. It makes us value every minute of our lives. Without death, no one would take life seriously. And because human beings like to compete in everything, Allāh tells us to compete with each other in doing good and in rushing to our permanent Home, which is the magnificent Jannah, far more beautiful beyond anyone's imagination:

﴿وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

And rush towards your Lord's forgiveness and a paradise as vast as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the Godwary.

- Surah Aal-I Imrān, 3:133

﴿سَابِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أُعِدَّتْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ...﴾

Take the lead towards forgiveness from your Lord and a paradise as vast as the heavens and the earth, prepared for those who have faith in Allāh and His messengers...

- Surah al-Hadid, 57:21

Our next life is permanent and never ends. If we can go to Jannah then we will be happy forever and we can have anything we want there. We will neither grow old or weak nor will we ever fall sick or die. We will never be unhappy or sad again. How exciting this is for those who are patient and who believe in Allāh and work hard for the Hereafter! How happy they will be even when they are dying and they know they are going to Jannah now to live happily forever!

And those who waste their life and commit sins only, how sad they will be when they are dying and they realize that now they will have to live unhappily forever! They will wish they could turn time backwards and change their lives but it will be too late! Allāh says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادِكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ وَأَنْفِقُوا مِنْ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ

فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنِي إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُنُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ وَلَنْ يُؤَخَّرَ
 اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهَا وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١١﴾

O you who have faith! Do not let your possessions and children distract you from the remembrance of Allāh, and whoever does that - it is they who are the losers. Spend from what We have provided you before death comes to any of you, when he will say, 'My Lord, why did You not give me a short time (more) so that I might have given charity and become one of the good!' But Allāh shall never give more time to a soul when its time has come, and Allāh is well aware of what you do.

- Surah al-Munāfiqun, 63:9-11

Effects of Believing in Ma'ād (Qiyāmah)

With death, a person's soul separates from his or her body. The body decomposes, but the soul lives on, starting a new phase in its existence. On the Day of Judgement, Allāh will raise the dead from their graves, and their bodies will be reformed and they will gather for an accounting of their actions. Every person will be his or her own witness and his or her limbs will bear witness to his or her deeds. Everything he or she ever did will be replayed in front of him or her, without even the slightest detail missing. People will be terrified not knowing what will become of them and what will show when their deeds are weighed and they are forced to open their Book of Deeds and read it. The Qur'ān describes the scene as follows:

﴿وَإِذَا الصُّحُفُ نُشِرَتْ وَإِذَا السَّمَاءُ كُشِطَتْ وَإِذَا الْجَحِيمُ سُعِّرَتْ وَإِذَا الْجَنَّةُ
 أُزْلِفَتْ عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا أَحْضَرَتْ ﴿١٤﴾﴾

When the records [of deeds] are unfolded, when the sky is stripped off, when hell is set ablaze, when paradise is brought near, then a soul shall know what it has readied [for itself].

- Surah at-Takwir, 81:10-14

﴿وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَا وَيْلَتَنَا مَالِ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا وَلَا يَظْلَمُ 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 capturing it!' They will find present whatever they had done, and your Lord does not wrong anyone.

- Surah al-Kahf, 18:49

﴿فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ نَفْخَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ. وَحُمِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ فَدُكَّتَا دَكَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَيَوْمَئِذٍ وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ وَانْشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَهِيَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاهِيَةٌ وَالْمَلَكُ عَلَى أَرْجَائِهَا وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَانِيَةَ يَوْمَئِذٍ تُعْرَضُونَ لَا تَخْفَى مِنْكُمْ خَافِيَةٌ فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوْتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَيَقُولُ هَٰؤُلَاءِ مَا أَقْرَأُوا كِتَابِي إِنِّي ظَنَنْتُ أَنِّي مُلَاقٍ حِسَابِي فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَاضِيَةٍ فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ قُطُوفُهَا دَانِيَةٌ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوْتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِشِمَالِهِ فَيَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُوتِ كِتَابِيهِ وَلَمْ أَدْرِ مَا حِسَابِيهِ. يَا لَيْتَهَا كَانَتْ الْقَاضِيَةَ مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنِّي مَالِيهِ هَلَكَ عَنِّي سُلْطَانِيهِ خُدُوهُ فَعُلُّوهُ ثُمَّ الْجَحِيمَ صَلُّوهُ﴾

When the Trumpet is blown with a single blast and the earth and the mountains are lifted and levelled with a single levelling; then, on that day, will the Imminent [Hour] befall and the sky will be split open - for it will be frail that day - and the angels will be all over it, and the Throne of your Lord will be borne that day by eight [angels]. That day you will be exposed: none of your secrets will remain hidden.

As for him who is given his book in his right hand, he will say, 'Here, take and read my book! Indeed I knew that I shall encounter my account.' So he will have a pleasant life, in an elevated garden, whose clusters [of fruits] will be within easy reach. [He will be told]: 'Enjoy your food and drink, for what you had sent in advance in past days.'

But as for him who is given his book in his left hand, he will say, 'I wish I had not been given my book, nor had I ever known what my account is! I

wish death had been the end of it all! My wealth did not benefit me. My authority has left me.' [The angels will be told:] 'Seize him, and chain him! Then put him into hell.'

- Surah al-Hāqqah, 69:13-31

Our whole life in this world is only a preparation for the eternal life that will begin on that frightening day. Allāh has shown to us clearly the path that leads to success - none of us can say that we were confused about what Allāh wanted us to do. If we choose to obey His commands then eternal happiness awaits us. If we disobey, then eternal punishment awaits us. The choice is ours.

According to the Qur'ān, all the prophets and messengers of Allāh emphasized Tawhid first and then Ma'ād - belief in the Day of Judgement and life after death. A person who denies life after death or Jannah (Paradise) and Jahannam (Hellfire) cannot be a Muslim, because this denial makes the whole Islamic system of religion and morality meaningless. If there is no life after death, then why should anyone follow Islam or be good to others? Why shouldn't we be selfish and enjoy whatever we like? Why should anyone do good and avoid evil? Can you imagine a world where people lie, backbite, cheat, steal, loot, kill and do anything they please because they don't believe there is any accounting of their deeds or any life after death?

We believe in Ma'ād not only because the Qur'ān or Rasulullāh (s) said so but also deep down our instinct tells us that we have a soul that does not die with the body and that no one can escape by doing evil to others. We know subconsciously that we must always pay for any evil we do and in the end we will always win if we are good.

Even if our minds cannot understand exactly how life in the Hereafter will be or what Jannah and Jahannam will be like, there is enough proof in the Qur'ān and authentic ahādith for us to still have faith that there is life after death and therefore we can live our lives keeping this in mind and with a greater sense of purpose. Our purpose should be to become great and noble in character and to benefit other creatures of Allāh instead of just eating, sleeping, playing and then dying without achieving anything.

