



# **Islamic Studies**

**Syllabus For SC**

**(2068 / 2)**

**Paper 2**

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## Syllabus for SC (2068 / 2)

### Table of Content

<u>Chapters</u>	<u>Pages</u>
<b>Paper 2 Section A</b>	
4 Rightly Guided Caliphs	3
<b>Paper 2 Section B</b>	
Qur'anic Topics	10
Hadith	14
Prophets	18
<b>Paper 2 Section C</b>	
Articles Of Faith	33
Pillars Of Islam	35
Jihaad	42
Id	44
Birth, Marriage Funeral	46

**4 Rightly Guided Caliphs**

**Caliph Abu Bakr (ra)**

**Why was the relationship between the Prophet and Abu Bakr special?**

Among the various friends of the prophet (s.a.w) there have been some who were so close to him that their names are forever mentioned in the history of Islam. One of these names is Abu Bakr (ra). The following paragraphs will elaborate on his life and the relationship between the prophet and himself.

Abu Bakr was from a simple family of the Quraish people. He was two years and three months younger than the holy prophet (s.a.w). He had a common ancestor with the prophet in Murra. He received no formal education but he was known for his experience and high level of intellect and wisdom. Both the prophet and himself were friends from childhood and they were both traders. After the Prophet married Khadijah they lived in the same neighbourhood in Mecca and often met each other. When the Prophet proclaimed Islam, Abu Bakr was the first one to have recognised this as the truth and became the first adult male to become Muslim and declare it openly. It was due to Abu Bakr's persuasion that many of his friends became Muslim such as Uthman bin Affan, Talha, Zubayr, Abdur Rahman bin A'waf, Saad bin Abi Waqqas and Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah. Abu Bakr gave all of his wealth for the cause of Islam and bought the freedom of many slaves in Mecca who had become Muslim. An example can be Bilal. When the prophet spread Islam the Muslims were persecuted.

Abu Bakr also suffered persecution in Mecca along with the Prophet and other Muslims. The prophet gave him the title of the Testifier of the Truth (as Siddiq) due to his immediate belief in the Night Journey known as Isra wal Mi'raj. The Prophet and Abu Bakr migrated (made Hijrah) to Madina together. Allah mentioned this event in the Qur'an saying "when the unbelievers drove them out, they two were in the cave ...". This verse is an indication of the importance of Abu Bakr though not mentioned by name in the verse. In order to consolidate that relationship Abu Bakr wanted the prophet to get married to his daughter. Then the Prophet married Aisha. Another event showing how Abu Bakr was esteemed by the prophet was when he was asked by the Prophet to lead the first Hajj. The prophet didn't take part but the delegation was under the control of Abu Bakr. When the prophet was in his last months, he allowed Abu Bakr the leadership of swalaat. When the Prophet was ill he said that "I have paid back everyone's debts, but my debt to Abu Bakr will be paid by Allah on Day of Judgement".

**Describe how Abu Bakr was elected as Caliph.**

After the death of the prophet there was no one as leader to take over the khilafat. The prophet did not nominate a successor and there was confusion. The situation was chaotic and Abu Bakr had to calm people down after Prophet died saying that "if you worship Muhammad know that he is dead. If you worship Allah, know He will never die...". At this the situation changed for the best and the Ansar gathered to discuss the appointment of a successor. There were some prominent companions like Abu Bakr, Umar, and Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah. The Ansar wanted a Caliph from amongst them and the Muhajiroun wanted one from them. As it was the custom, Abu Bakr said that the Arabs would like an "Amir" from the Quraish. The Ansar suggested one from each group, but this will create problems with 2 leaders at the same place and time. Umar objected as this would create confusion. Abu Ubaidah said "O Ansar, you were the first to uphold Islam. Do not be the first also to sow the seed of dissention in it". The Ansar agreed remembering that the Prophet was a Quraish from the noble tribe of the Quraish and from Banu Hashim.

As such, Abu Bakr proposed the names of Umar and Abu Ubaidah to be considered as future caliph. However, in the presence of Abu Bakr, no one present at that time wanted to become the caliph instead of the friend of the prophet. There were many reasons for that hesitation. Among these reasons we can say that Abu Bakr held unusual honour of being the one who migrated with the Prophet, he was also asked by the Prophet to lead the prayers when he was ill and he was the best friend of the prophet. As such, Umar held the hand of Abu Bakr reminding everyone that he was mentioned in the Qur'an as being the second in the cave of Thawr and the one having the title of As Swadiq. The companions remembered the Prophet saying 'I have paid back everyone's debts, but my debt to Abu Bakr will be paid by Allah on Day of Judgement'. That was enough as convincing points for Abu Bakr to be accepted by the public. Umar took his hand and the oath of loyalty to Abu Bakr and all those present followed the footsteps of Umar. The next day others pledged their loyalty in the mosque of Medina.

The first caliph thus delivered his unforgettable speech and said that "I have been elected as your Ameer, although I am not better than you. Help me, if I am in the right; set me right if I am in the wrong; obey me as long as I obey Allah and His prophet; when I disobey Him and His prophet, then obey me not". That was the opening speech of Abu Bakr. It is a sign of the continuity of the democratic society set by the prophet and a society based on the words of Allah and His prophet. Abu Bakr didn't want to become caliph but as the Islamic state is a system based on democracy, he was thus chosen by the prominent companions present there and by the public as the one most suitable to continue the work of the last prophet of Islam.

### **What were the main achievements of Abu Bakr?**

Once at the head of the state, he dedicated his time for the smooth running of the society. **Firstly**, he created and founded a truly democratic state where each of his people was authorised to have their say in the society. They had the liberty to choose their own leader and at the same time there was freedom of speech and religion. **Next**, he created and reinforced the Majlis Shura for a better consultation with his companions. He increased the number of the members of the Majlis from 7 to 11. **In addition**, in order to have a better control over his state, he divided Arabia into provinces – each one with officers to work. They would then meet during the month of Hajj in order to discuss the problems or / and achievements of the respective provinces. **Fourthly**, he established Military cantonments and a reserve force for his army and for better security. His security would extend to all members of his Ummah under his flag. He conquered and reinforced different countries like Bahrain, Oman, Mahrah, Yemen, Hadramuth, eastern and western Iraq, Hira, Damascus, Syria, Basrah and Ajnadein. **Moreover** many tribes converted to Islam due to the way his armies would deal with them. That was because of the advice of the caliph. Before setting his armies to different missions and countries he would always advise them not to raise arms against women, children, old persons, priests and even on trees. **In addition**, he observed the Rights of both Muslims and non-Muslims ensuring freedom and security for all his people. All those living in the Islamic state were subjected to have the same rights and have the liberty to complain. He was kind with all his fellowmen and also with the unbelievers. **More to the point**, he was the first one to undertake the work of Preservation of the Qur'an for the benefit of his Ummah especially for future generations. As such he appointed Zaid bin Thabit who was a hafiz of the Qur'an to collect all Qur'anic verses in circulation from all those who had in their possessions at least one verse. **Eighthly**, he emphasized much on the idea and concept of morality and self-respect among his people. His society was known for the high degree of morality and spirituality. It was the period of the blessed Ashab and then the Tabi'in.

However, there had been some problems that were dealt by Abu Bakr and that could be considered as among his achievements. Before the death of the prophet (s.a.w), the latter had assigned Usamah bin Zaid for an expedition to Syria. The army had not the time to leave Madina when the prophet (s.a.w) passed away. Now, many people thought that it would be better not to send any army outside Madina for its security. Some proposed to assign a more experienced commander for the expedition due to his young age and being the son of a slave. However, Abu Bakr adhered by the decision of the prophet (s.a.w). Later after several months, Usamah returned victoriously. **A second important fact** is that after

the death of the prophet (s.a.w) many persons rose and pretended to be prophets. Among them there was Aswad Ansi from the tribe of Ansi in Yemen. He was known as the Veiled Prophet for his ugliness. Another one was Tulaiha from north Arabia who claimed prophethood during the time of the prophet (s.a.w). He was known as the Liar. When Khalid bin Walid attacked him at Buzaka, he fled to Syria. When Syria was conquered by the Muslims, he converted to Islam. Another false prophet was Musailima / Musailama – belonging to Banu Hanifa tribe. He wanted to imitate the prophet and reduced the number of namaz, he abolished zakaat and sawm. He Legalised drinking and adultery and composed sentences and pretended them to be Wahy. He was known as Musalima the Liar. He was killed by Khalid bin Walid. A false prophetess rose in the name of Sajjah – a Christian woman belonging to Tamim Tribe. She got married to Musailima to reinforce their army. When Iraq was conquered, she converted to Islam. **A third problem** was the refusal to pay Zakaat by some tribes such as Banu Asad, Banu Ghatafan, Banu Abbas, Banu Murrah. The caliph despatched an army of eleven battalions to face and crush all problems. In less than one year there was calm and security in the Islamic dominion.

Abu Bakr would never allow anyone to go against the Ummah or the Islamic Law. He would instead make it a must that the Law of Allah and His prophet would be established and enforced. At the same time he would respect the rights of all individuals muslims and non muslims.

### **Caliph Umar (ra)**

#### **Describe the events that led up to Umar becoming a Muslim.**

Among the Ashab of the holy prophet (s.a.w), Hazrat Umar was one of the bravest. He was known for his sincerity in his work, his high personality and his bravery. There had been many crucial events where his presence had been of utmost importance. He was born from a Merchant family and he developed the sharp idea of a successful businessman. His Father was Khattab and his Mother was Khatmah. According to history he was 12/13 years younger than the prophet (s.a.w) and they shared a common Ancestor in Ka'ab. He received both Formal and informal education making him suitable and apt for reading and writing Arabic Language. He was very Learned, Intelligent and studious to the extent that no one was able to challenge him in educational field. He was a successful trader as well as a wise and loyal friend. He was admired for his sharp mind, his dedication to his work, his loyalty towards his relatives, his eagerness towards his religion and for his bravery.

He was among the polytheists and the idol worshippers but Allah had planned otherwise. He opposed the Muslims because he believed in the gods of the Kaaba amounted to 360 idols. He was aware of the mission of the prophet and he felt strongly about killing him to end all problems arising in Mecca and to avoid any risk of conversion. So, in the year 616 (in the 6th year of the prophet's mission) he set out with his sword. On his way he met and told a clansman known as Nu'aym bin Abdullah where he was going and about his objective. The clansman said to him that "By God, you have deceived yourself, O Umar! Do you think that Banu Abd Manaf would let you run around alive once you kill Muhammad? Your sister is a Muslim now. Why don't you return to your own house and set it straight?" In a furious mood, he angrily returned to his sister's house. Arriving there he saw one of the companions, Khabbab, spreading Islam to his sister and his brother in law. He was moreover angry when he noticed that Fatima, his sister hid a few pages of Qur'an she was reading. The pagans used to call that rubbish reading. Her sister knew about his character and what he could do if these pages would fall into his hands. She didn't want to give the paper on her brother's request. In the meantime Khabbab slipped away. Umar began hitting Sa'id, his brother in law and when Fatima wanted to interfere and to defend her husband, she got hit by Umar. She received a slap in the face and she was bleeding. The sight of blood stopped Umar and the latter was very sorry as he loved his sister so much that he never harmed her. It was not done intentionally. He was a bit calm and he was sorry. He asked to read the pages but still Fatima did not trust him. Fatima wanted him to wash himself before touching and handling these pages.



As such Umar returned home, took off his sword and washed himself, then came to his sister. Fatima then hand over the pages to him. He was reading surah Ta Ha and he was so impressed by these words. Umar's eyes filled with hot tears and asked "Is this what we were against? The One who has spoken these words needs to be worshipped." He then left and went towards the prophet (s.a.w). During that period the Muslims would gather in the house of a companion known as Arqam ibn Abil Arqam to say their congregational prayers. They were just beginning to assemble, when one of them, looking out the window, saw Umar approaching the house with a drawn sword. In a state of considerable alarm, he told other members of the congregation what he saw. Presumably, they too were alarmed. But Hamza, the uncle of the prophet who six months earlier converted to Islam was also present in the house of Arqam, reassured them, and said that if Umar was coming with good intentions, then it was all right but if not, then he (Hamza) would run him (Umar) through with his (Umar's) own sword. When he knocked the door the prophet asked the companions to let him in but they were ready for anything to happen. The prophet asked him why he had come. Umar faced the prophet with humility and joy and said, "O Messenger of God, I have come for no reason except to say I believe in God and his Messenger". Prophet Muhammad was overcome with joy and cried out that God was Great! Within days, Umar lead a procession of Muslims to the house of God where they prayed openly. It was on this occasion that Prophet Muhammad gave him the nickname Al Farooq – the criterion. It denotes one who is able to distinguish truth from falsehood. Islam was strengthened with Umar, his fierce hatred melted into a love that knew no bound. His life and his death were now for the sake of God and his Messenger. That was unexpected and everyone rejoiced saying Allahu Akbar. According to hadith the prophet was praying Allah to strengthen Islam through Umar.

#### **Assess the main achievements of his Caliphate.**

There had been many different achievements in the caliphate of Umar. He was a very successful leader as he continued the principles of the prophet and Hazrat Abu Bakr with an iron fist. He was not the one to tolerate any unislamic aspects and immoralities in his society. He continued with the Majlis shurah with 11 members for decision making. He divided his caliphate into provinces and districts under different governors. He had regular checks on them. They would in return report to him during the period of Hajj on annual basis. He established office of judge (qadi) independent of provincial governor. He was the one who created the Hijri calendar. He contributed in the expansion of cultivated lands and new tax (ushr) was levied on produce of land. He established the finance department known as diwan of those entitled to state pensions for helping in wars. There were different sources of revenue such as Jizya (poll tax), zakaat, kharaj (spoils of war), Fay (income from crown lands) and ushr (1/10 of produce). All these were meant for funding the Baitul Maal (public treasury). In order to have a better control on the territories his armies were forbidden to buy land in conquered territories. He settled his army in new planned towns such as Kufa and Basra and these were accessible when there was the need to fight. He had a well-disciplined army and considered the welfare of soldiers, both Muslims and non-Muslims.

He standardised the Military division, Police department and the Educational department. To have a better control over his population, he had regular census. In order to ensure the spreading of Islam, teachers were sent throughout country to teach how to read the Qur'an and other Islamic fields. He constructed mosques, schools, roads and outposts for travellers. He gave individuals the right to question him or / and all officials and complain. This was a means of a strong democratic government. He checked weights and measures and prevented profiteering and hoarding. He dedicated great deal of time to religious affairs and he spiritualised the whole state. Some of his personal example could be seen in the fact that he was clear in thought, deeds, fair, pious and upright. Moreover, Hazrat Umar was a successful military commander. He was victorious in the Battle of Namarraq against Sassanians (Persians), in the Battle of Buwaib, against Sassanians again, in the battle of Qadisiya in 14 AH and finally broke strength of Sassanians. He was victorious in the Battle of Yarmuk 15AH against the Romans and at the Battle of Nahawand in 21AH. There was the fall of Jerusalem into Muslim hands in 16AH and the conquest of Egypt in 17AH.

There are other achievements of Hazrat Umar such as the establishment of Public Treasury, the establishments of courts of Justice and appointment of Judges, the establishment of Postal service, the survey and assessment of lands, the public census, the punishment of those who practice Monopoly by exile to different lands, the establishment of and use of Jails, the building of Canals and Bridges, the use of the Whip, the establishment of Public Rest Areas, hostels and *Wudu* (Ablution) Stations, the use of secret reports and specially designated emissaries to provide first reports as what is really going on in different provinces, the salary for Imams, *Muadhin* (Callers to prayer), teachers and public lectures, the stipends for the poor among the Jews and Christians who lived in conquered lands, the punishment for drunkenness, written satires and lampoons, the establishment of Guilds for certain trades, the prohibition of the mention of women's names in poetry, the holding of *tarawih* (Ramadan night prayers) in congregation, the providing of lighting in the Mosques at night, the persuading of Abu Bakr to collect the Qur'an in one book, the establishment of Military bases at strategic points in the different provinces, the personally making nightly rounds to check on the condition of the people first hand, the formulation of the Principal of *Qiyas* (Analogical Reasoning.) for determining rulings on newly encountered matters in *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence.), the establishment of a more exact system of calculation of the inheritance, the limiting the relationship between Muslims and Non-Muslims, the establishing a stable for the lost camels, the state intervention to control the price of merchandise and the enlargement the *al-Haram* (the Sacred Mosque) at Mecca.

### Caliph Uthman (ra)

#### **Describe the achievements of Uthman as Caliph.**

Caliph Uthman was the son of the father Affan and the mother Arwa. He was born in Macca in the 6th year of elephant and he was 5 years younger than the Holy Prophet (s.a.w). They were related through the common ancestor Abd Manaf. As from his formal education, he was able to read and write Arabic language. He was much learned, intelligent, wise (wisdom) and studious. In addition he was a successful trader and was always polite with his customers and business partners. Well before his conversion to Islam, he was a pious man. He never indulged in polytheism and idol worshipping. He was among the Hanif.

He embraced Islam at the demand of Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra). He was a very tender hearted person. He would cater for the needy, destitute, low class and the poor. He would always come to the help of the persecuted. After the death of Umar, he became caliph and his reign lasted for 12 years (645-656 CE) and his empire greatly enlarged in the initial five or six years of rule. He enlarged both mosques in the cities of Mecca and Medina to suit the needs of the growing number of Muslims. **Secondly**, he embarked on the digging of wells for the convenience of both the people of Hijaz and the travellers. He also improved existing water courses to prevent flood. **Next**, he built large naval fleet and consolidated his army and through years he conquered places like Crete, Cyprus and Rhodes. He also sent his army to Egypt against Romans 646. **Moreover**, he sent Mu'awiyah as the governor of Syria into Asia minor and Khurasan to conquer and consolidate the countries and the state of the Islamic religion and creed. **Fifthly** there were many military expeditions to north Africa and Tripoli was conquered. There were also quelled revolts in Armenia and Azerbaijan where the Muslim armies crushed all revolts.

**A six point is that**, the caliph engaged in the standardisation of the Qur'an which was already compiled, but differences in recitation of Qur'an were noticed in far areas. Uthman was told about the situation and he took the mushaf from Hafsah (the Prophet's wife). **Another point** is to ensure the authenticity of the Qur'an, he instructed Zaid bin Thabit as the head of the project. Zaid made a public announcement that anyone having any verse should come forward to participate in this endeavour. **Another point** is that compilation was also checked from the memories of other companions who were huffaz of the Qur'an. After this step Zaid was instructed to make new copies of Qur'an and other new copies were made and sent to all corners of Muslim empire. **Ninthly** in order to ensure that the old copies would not be in

circulation, Uthman ordered his men to collect and burn all the old circulating copies of the whole Islamic empire. As such the old copies were destroyed. **Tenthly** the move of Uthman to standardise the Qur'an was to ensure that today we have the real and authentic Qur'an sent by Allah upon the prophet (s.a.w) of Islam. The Qur'an we read now is the same one from the time of Uthman.

### **Why do you think problems arose during his Caliphate?**

There were many problems during the time of Uthman due to specific reasons. When he came to power, he wanted to make some changes in the posts of his government. He wanted to place his trusted men for a better control and to crush all problems. He did never want to give any favour to any member of his family, but instead, he was accused of appointing inefficient relatives as governors and he was so weak at commanding his people. He was also accused of his wrong and bad administrative measures of replacing already existing governors and that he did not check his newly appointed officers. He was charged of all the problems emerging in his dominion. He was accused of being too tender hearted towards those breaching the Shari'ah. He took lesser decisions against them. The greatest accusation was that he burned down the words and message of Allah – the Qur'an. Some of the rebellious persons accused him of corruption and upsurging the right of his people and money from the Bait-ul-Maal. All these accusations came from the Khawarij.

As such, **firstly**, Uthman's mild disposition was in severe contrast to Umar's reputation of being strong and the defeated Persians and Romans presumed that Uthman was not be able to hold empire together and that resulted in revolts in outlying areas. **Secondly**, due to large empire and the passing of time there was only few alive as role models who remembered the Prophet (s.a.w) personally and the high ideals of Islam. Many Muslims converts had lived with other values (not as honest and generous) which were difficult to change. They were led by their own customs. Uthman was unable to take strong decisions against all these kinds of corruptions. **Thirdly**, there was the question of the position of governors given to family members by Uthman (Umayyads). That situation revived the old rivalry between the Ummayad and the Hashemites again. That renewed the already existing enemies especially when more wealth was coming in from conquered territories. There was an urge to take over power. **Fourthly**, Uthman himself was too gentle towards his men, governors and people. Some advisors took advantage of his age and weakness. In this Abdullah bin Saba was the main ring leader of dissenting voices leading to exploiting the situation. **Fifthly**, there were many critics about him concerning the burning of the copies of the Qur'an after new compilations and standardisations of the Qur'an left to Hafsa were made. Uthman felt that differing versions of the Qur'an would cause conflict in his community and for later nations in later centuries.

### **Caliph 'Ali**

#### **Describe the relationship between the Prophet and Ali in the years after the first revelation.**

He was the son of Abu Talib and as mother Faatima. He was a descendant of Hashim, cousin and in-law of Holy Prophet (s.a.w). He was 30 years younger than the Holy Prophet (s.a.w). Due to his surroundings, he obtained formal education by which he was able to read and write. He was learned, intelligent and studious. He learned the Qur'an by heart and was pious well before his acceptance of Islam. He had a good guide in the person of the holy prophet (s.a.w).

Both the prophet (s.a.w) and Hazrat Ali (ra) were very close. Ali was brought up in the Prophet's household since childhood. He had been acquainted with the life style and family members of the prophet. It is to be noted that when the prophet (s.a.w) spread Islam, Hazrat Ali was the first child to accept Islam and when the Prophet was instructed to 'warn thy nearest kin' (26:214) Ali said 'I will be your helper'. In fact he listened and learned from the Prophet. It can be well said that the prophet was his direct teacher. During the whole mission of the prophet, Ali would always be by his side to spread Islam



or to support the prophet and his family in so many different ways. Years passing by reaching the days before the Hijra to Madina, everyone waited for that right moment. Ali and Abu Bakr stayed behind in Mecca with the Prophet before the Hijra. Ali had risked his own life by sleeping in the Prophet's bed on the night of hijra for the Khawarij planned to burst into the house of the prophet to kill him in his bed. This was decided as such as Ali had a specific mission to perform that is to return things kept with the Prophet for safekeeping to their right owners. Later on when it became the time in Madina for brotherhood the Prophet declared Ali to be his brother.

He was so close to the prophet that he was married to Fatima, the Prophet's daughter. However, there was no show off out of this marriage. Ali and his family lived a frugal (economical) and simple life, just like the Prophet's family. He worked as a labourer with Prophet and engaged in building the mosque in Medina. He was the father of the famous Hasan and Husain, the Prophet's beloved grandchildren known so much in history for their piety and firmness on deen. As he was literate, he was a scribe of the Prophet and for the treaty of Hudaibiyah he was the main scribe. He was made standard bearer for the Muslims and he honoured his responsibility. He participated in the battles of the prophet and was a great warrior in all of them during the Prophet's lifetime. It is praiseworthy to mention here that there is the Ghadir Khumm episode where the prophet took the hand of Ali, raised it in the air and declared: 'For whomever I am the authority and guide Ali is also his guide and authority. Oh God! Be friendly with the friends of Ali and be enemy of his enemies. Whoever helps him, help him, and whoever leaves him, leave him.' This is to show how Ali was honoured by the prophet. Finally, it is known that Ali, along with others, washed the Prophet's body and buried him.

### **To what extent was Ali successful during his Caliphate?**

After the death of the prophet (s.a.w) there were 3 caliphs before Hazrat Ali in the name of Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman. All the 3 did their best at their own level to be a good leader. However with events led by the Khawarij and after the assassination of Uthman, there were 3 days where there was no leader as caliph. When the Khawarij gave an ultimatum of 24 hours then Ali was chosen by the public. Muslims held Ali in high esteem due to being the son in law of the Prophet (s.a.w). He was born in the family of the prophet and he knew the message and practice of the Prophet better than most of the people of that time and he was revered for his knowledge of the Qur'an and the Shari'ah. He was then appointed as Caliph at assassination of Uthman where there was chaos in Madina. He maintained the Shari'ah and he was successful in doing so. **Secondly**, he faced challenges to his rule right from the start of his short Caliphate which lasted for 5 years. The opponents wanted him to find Uthman's murderer immediately but it was in vain. Ali's priority was the consolidation and the reorganisation of his Caliphate first. He dismissed some provincial governors and appointed new ones and that was an unpopular move. There were as such oppositions from Mu'awiyah, the governor of Syria who was related to Uthman and who accused Ali of siding with the rebels at time of Uthman's death. This was considered as unsuccessful.

**Thirdly**, with the desire to find the murderers of Uthman Aisha, Talha and Zubayr went north to get support in their quest. This resulted in battle of the Camel (Jamal) in against Ali. That was the first civil war in Islam between two muslims' armies. However Ali was successful in this move. Though there was fighting but it was in the favour of the caliph. **Fourthly**, Ali shifted the Islamic capital to Kufa where he would have more support there and it was closer to Syria which was Mu'awiyah's base and that gave him an opportunity to fight him. However, the armies were reluctant to fight Mu'awiyah at Siffin and that led to an arbitration agreed upon. Some soldiers from Ali's army (the Kharijites) opted out of arbitration and Mu'awiyah became Caliph in Damascus (Syria). Ali had no choice than to step down though he remained Caliph but he lost Syria. As such he was unsuccessful. **Fifthly**, Ali fought Kharijites at Nahrawan and won this battle. However this was the third war between Muslims. Ali then wanted his army to fight Mu'awiyah in Syria but his soldiers didn't agree. Following this the Kharijites planned the assassination of Ali, Mu'awiyah and Amr but only Ali was martyred while praying. Ali was a radical and an idealist person but he was not prepared to play the dirty game of politics. He was thus unsuccessful in uniting the Muslims politically which resulted in Sunni/Shi'a split.

**Qur'anic Topics**

**Describe what you know about the structure of the Qur'an.**

The Holy Qur'an is the undisputed word of Allah. There is no doubt on that. All prophets who came were given their own guidance according to their time and circumstances. The revelations that were given to our last prophet (s.a.w) were over a period of 23 years at Macca and Madina.

Throughout these years the revelations were dictated by the prophet (s.a.w) to his scribes. Accordingly, these records were then crosschecked by the Prophet himself. Whenever and wherever there would be corrections and changes the prophet would give directives and he would instruct his scribes where revealed verses were to be placed. By the time the Prophet died at the age of 63, Muslims had many complete records of the Qur'an but not in the standard text and format as we have today. Later it was then compiled into a standard and complete copy during Abu Bakr's Caliphate. It was in the same order as authorised by the Prophet. It was thus checked by the companions and other huffaz of that time. The Qur'an begins with al Faatiha [the Opening] also known as the Basmallah. It is generally followed by the longest surah till the shortest one and each surah is divided into verses [ayah or sign]. Sometimes at the beginning or at the end of the Qur'an there are the rules of Tajweed and at the end there is the Du'a of Khatam ul Qur'an and at the same time the table of content.

The Holy Qur'an was then divided into 30 parts [juz, sipara] and each part was further subdivided into four parts (quarters). It was arranged in 114 surah [chapters] of unequal length. Among them surah Baqara is the longest and surah Kawthar is the shortest. Each surah [except one that is surah Tawba] begins 'in the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful'. There are 7 Manzil, 540 Ruku' and 6666 verses. On the right top of the Qur'anic page is the Juz (sipara) number, on the left if the surah number, on the right of the surah before the Basmallah is the number of verses in the surah, on the left is the number of Ruku' in it and in the middle is the chronological order of which the surah was revealed. The heart of the Qur'an is Surah Yaaseen, its mother is surah al Faatiha, for protection are the surah Ikhlāas, Falaq and Naas, for Tawheed its surah Ikhlāas, for gratitude its surah ar Rahman and so many others. Each surah has its specificities. These surah were given names relating to dominant content e.g. surah Maryam and sometimes the reasons for the names allocated to different chapters are only known by Allah and His prophet (s.a.w). It must be noted that the arrangement of surah is not in chronological order in which they were revealed. Such surah was designated as that was revealed in Mecca or Medina.

**Describe what you know about the contents of the Qur'an.**

The Holy Qur'an was sent as a book of guidance to guide Mankind on the right path. As it is said that there is no mistake in it and no one can bring another one similar to that of the Qur'an. It is unique also through its content and theme.

The Qur'an being the words of Allah, all the beliefs of Islam are found in it. There are many themes discussed in it. One example can be found in such as belief in the One Allah and His attributes especially of Him as the Compassionate [Ar-Rahman] and the Merciful [Ar-Rahim]. The whole concept of articles of faith is mentioned throughout the whole of the Qur'an. There is the mention of angels like Jibril, Mikail, Izrail, Izrafil, the witnessing angels (Sayyaahoun) among others. There is also the mention of the revealed books brought by messengers [rasool] of Allah such as Abraham [Ibrahim], Jesus [Isa], Moses [Musa] and David [Daoud]. We have the Suhuf, Tawraat, Zabour, Injeel and the Qur'an. There is also the mention of the stories of some (25) prophets [nabi] such as Adam, Noah [Nuh], Joseph [Yusuf] and Solomon [Sulaiman] to name a few. Above all of these prophets there is the mention of prophet

Muhammad [3:144] who in various places has been blessed by Allah like in 'No doubt we have given you al Kawthar'.

However we have other kinds of verses dealing with warnings about Satan [Shaitan, Iblis] as being the obvious and declared enemy of Mankind and tempting human beings all the way till their return to Allah. There are also warnings about the hard accountability on the Day of Judgement where our records will be presented in front of us for judgement. There are also the different aspects of the rights of Allah that have been made compulsory like the mention of prayer [salat] [2:43], that of zakat [purifying wealth by giving a fixed portion annually], that of fasting during the month of Ramadan [2:183-184] and that of Hajj [22:31]. There is also verses dealing with the family life like the marital relationships [most of Sura 4], the relationships between parents and children, duties of children, adoption and the laws of inheritance [4:11-13]. There are also verses related to the prohibitions of some foods and alcohol [2:172-173], the prohibitions of lending money for profit [riba], the prohibition of gambling. Laws related to criminal law, murder and theft were also revealed added to the secrets of the scientific knowledge e.g. Sura Alaq [96:1-5].

### **Describe the way the Qur'an was compiled under the early Caliphs**

The Holy Qur'an as we have today has been through different stages before its completion. Its compilation was made as from the time of the prophet (s.a.w) till the time of early caliphs like Abu Bakr and Uthman.

Among the Ashab, there had been many scribes like Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali who dedicated their lives in the service of Islam. They were some of the notable scribes who would jot down whatever the prophet (s.a.w) was saying. In that way the Ashab were able to keep the Qur'an intact and in addition to that the prophet would encourage the Ashab to memorize the verses by heart. However during Abu Bakr's Caliphate many of those who had memorised the Qur'an that is the huffaz died in the Battle of Yamama. According to some it was a number of 70 and according to others it was 700. Whatever the number Hazrat Umar feared the Qur'an may be lost and as such suggested to Abu Bakr to compile it into a book format. When Umar approached Abu Bakr the latter was reluctant to undertake the work as it had not been done in Prophet's lifetime. Nevertheless he agreed at last as it will benefit the whole Ummah. Abu Bakr then persuaded Zaid bin Thabit who was also a scribe to do the work. His work consisted of collecting the words written on pieces of bones, leathers, papyrus and palm leaves. He also collected from those who 'preserved in the hearts of men' the verses of the Qur'an. After the work had been done, copies of the Qur'an had been made and spread throughout the Islamic World. When Abu Bakr passed away Umar had possession of these and passed it to the daughter of Umar Hafsa who was at the same time the wife of the Prophet (s.a.w) and it was known as Mushaf Hafsa.

During the Caliphate of Uthman it was noted that Qur'an was being read/recited in different dialects. As such there was fighting among the Syrians and the Yemenites. In order to calm the situation and avoid further problem though the Muslim empire was being expanded Uthman had copies of Qur'an collected. Zaid bin Thabit was again assisted by three other Ashab to look over the text of the circulating Qur'an and to be compared to Mushaf Hafsa for accuracy. Hazrat Uthman decided to burn the circulating copies of the Qur'an. The idea behind that was to bring uniformity among the readings of the Muslims and to standardise the text of Allah. Hazrat Uthman used the dialect of the Quraish which is found in the Qur'an compiled by Hazrat Abu Bakr and left to Hazrat Hafsa (ra). Hazrat Uthman ordered copies to be made and they were sent to various cities of the Islamic empire. To make sure that the work is done, other versions were burnt. Another step in the completeness of the Qur'an due to the increasing converts to Islam and the difficulties to read the Qur'an by the non-Arab and Arab children, Mu'awiyah bin Sufyan during the Umayyad dynasty introduced the syntactical marks like fatha, kasra, dwamma, soukoun, tanween, madd among others. Then there came the final step due to the problem of differentiating between the alphabets of the Arabic language, Abdul Malik bin Marwan, another Umayyad Caliph

introduced dots above and below the Arabic alphabets. As such the Qur'an came to us as it was left completed since that period.

### **What role did Zayd bin Thabit play in the collection of the Qur'an?**

During the khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (ra) the latter employed Hazrat Zayd bin Thabit as the main responsible for the collection of the Qur'an in one book form. Zayd bin Thabit was a hafiz and the well known scribe of the Prophet (s.a.w) in Medina. **Moreover**, it is said that he was a witness to the Prophet's recitation in the presence of Hazrat Jibril (as) during the Prophet's last Ramadan. As such he was aware of the order of what the surah should be in the Qur'an. **Furthermore**, Zayd bin Thabit was asked by Abu Bakr to compile the revealed verses of the Qur'an though he was hesitant. Abu Bakr knew that Zayd bin Thabit was the right man for that job. **Added to the above**, Zayd bin Thabit said that 'By Allah, if he [Abu Bakr] had ordered me to shift one of the mountains from its place, it would not have been harder for me than what he had ordered me concerning the collection of the Qur'an'. That shows how much reliable he was. **Then** he eventually reconciled to the wisdom of the undertaking and agreed to head the Committee though Hazrat Umar and other companions were part of this committee. It was accepted out of respect for Abu Bakr and the greatness of the mission.

**Added to the above**, Zayd and Umar sat at the entrance of the Prophet's mosque in Medina collecting all written verses which were attested by two witnesses [known as the Law of Witness methodology which gave it reliability and authoritativeness]. No verse was accepted at first instance. All of them needed verification. **More to the point**, the panel of Swahaba led by Zayd began locating written Qur'anic verses from parchments made of animal skins, scapula that is shoulder bone, leafstalks of date palms and from the memories of men. It was a painstaking task and it required great insight from great men in Islam. **Eighthly**, these were compared with oral recitation from well known Qur'an reciters [qurra] for correctness and consistency. This extraordinary effort resulted in all surah and verses duly arranged in the conventions of script and spellings current in Medina. Hazrat Zayd bin Thabit thus became one of the foremost authorities on the Qur'an. **Ninthly**, these suhuf were given to Abu Bakr for safe keeping, then to Umar and later in the custody of Hafsa bint Umar Farooq, the wife of the prophet. Hazrat Umar once addressed the Muslims and said 'O people, whoever wants to ask about the Qur'an, let him go to Zayd bin Thabit'. **Last but not least**, during Uthman's caliphate the need was felt to make correct copies of the Qur'an. Zayd bin Thabit was called upon once again to head a committee with other companions to prepare copies of the Qur'an from the suhuf kept by Hazrat Hafsa (ra). This was the greatest role played by Zayd bin Thabit (ra).

### **Why do you think it was important to make this collection?**

The collection of the Qur'an during the time and after the demise of the prophet (s.a.w) was a great importance. **First of all**, the Prophet (and many huffaz) had died and therefore there were few remaining who were left to consult about Allah's message. As such if the revelations were not compiled there may have been conflicting versions which would not be good for Islam. In this way there would have been the possibility of falsification and innovation. **Secondly**, the Qur'an is a miracle for the Muslims. It tells us about things we cannot know of otherwise such as topics on Allah, His signs and attributes, the past (stories of earlier prophets) the present and the future (the Day of Judgement, Paradise and Hell). Therefore it was vital that the revelations had to be recorded. This was meant for future generations. **Moreover**, the Qur'an gives infallible guidance to Muslims on how to conduct their lives. It is the foundation of Islam as it guides us about Hajj, Ramadan, Zakaat and worship among others. However, if it was not compiled it would be irreplaceable and it would not have been the divine book. **Furthermore**, the early Muslims were men of vision. They knew the message of the Qur'an was for all people in the world not just the Arabs. The Muslim empire was expanding, more people becoming Muslim. It was therefore vital to compile revelations so that the message could be preserved and conveyed till the last day. **Added to the above**, Allah tells us the Qur'an is for 'those who think'.



Therefore early Muslims realised that a written version was imperative so that individual Muslims could read it and take Allah's message to heart. The Qur'an was thus not meant only to read but to study and to ponder upon.

### Why is the Qur'an important to Muslims?

The Qur'an is important in so many different ways. **At the outset**, it is the words of Allah and as such it is from a source of Divine knowledge. Whatever if from Allah is considered as sacred. So by the mere fact that it is from Allah, it is important for the Muslims as the Qur'an directs Muslims to 'Obey Allah and His Messenger' [3:32]. **Moreover**, the Qur'an was revealed to announce to us about things we cannot know of otherwise. This world and the next are so full of secrets that some of them are unveiled through the Qur'an and serves as a criterion [furqaan] by which to discern truth from falsehood [25:1]. **Furthermore** there are topics such as Allah, His signs and attributes, the past (stories of earlier prophets), the present and the future (the Day of Judgement, Paradise and Hell) which are mentioned in the Qur'an. Without their mentioning we would not have been able to know about what is expected from Allah. **Another aspect** is that the Qur'an guides us about the Hajj, Ramadan, Zakat, and worship leading us to the knowledge of the foundation of Islam. It is the guidance well awaited by the Muslims. **Fifthly**, it addresses the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w), Muslims, as well as everyone in the world. It is a book needed by each and everyone and no one is deprived from its guidance. It is meant for both Muslims and non Muslims.

**Added to the above**, it is a complete code of life for Muslims. The Qur'an is meant to be followed and as such it provides the best code of conduct for the Muslims. It is an invitation to guidance on all aspects of life. **Furthermore**, it is also important as therein are verses used in worship. Without the verses there is no swalaat. The Qur'an is the source where verses of Allah can be derived from. It indicates also the completion of the cycle of revelation. **Eighthly**, the Qur'an forms the foundation of a just society. Abiding by the rules and regulations of the Qur'an will render a Muslim society a Spiritual society. It acts as a means to build up the society on the foundation of morality. **Moreover**, the Qur'an is used as a base for legal thinking that is the Islamic Law - the Shari'ah. All basic rules and regulations are found primarily in the Qur'an and these authorities can't be falsified. The Qur'an is a book of Law meant for all generations. **Last but not least**, Allah through the Qur'an expects us to think and reflect on His verses [12:108] and to use our reason [40:67]. The first revelation was the command to 'Read' implying the whole concept of education and as such Allah Himself says he will protect the Qur'an with its teachings and it will remain unchanged for eternity [15:9].



**Hadith**

**What is meant by Hadith and what are the categories of Hadith?**

After the sending of the holy Qur'an to the holy prophet (s.a.w) there was the need for explanation and interpretation of the divine message. Then came the work and part of the mission of the prophet (s.a.w).

Literally, Hadith means a narration or a recitation of a specific event. Sunnah is the deeds of the prophet (s.a.w). However, according to Islamic terminology Hadith is generally characterised as the deeds, sayings and silent approval of the holy prophet (s.a.w), the Ashab, the Tabi'in and the Taba'ut Tabi'in. These reports form the basis of Islamic law, Quran's interpretation (tafsir), and early Islamic history. In Islamic terminology, the term hadith refers to reports of statements or actions of prophet Muhammad, or of his tacit approval or criticism of something said or done in his presence. Classical hadith specialist say that the intended meaning of hadith in religious tradition is something attributed to prophet Muhammad but that is not found in the Quran. The word Sunnah (custom) is also used in reference to a normative custom of Muhammad or the early Muslim community.

Hadith Qudsiy (or Sacred Hadith) is a sub-category of hadith which are sayings of Prophet Muhammad. Muslims regard the Hadith Qudsiy as the words of God (Arabic: Allah), repeated by Prophet Muhammad and recorded on the condition of an isnad. Accordingly the Hadith Qudsiy differs from the Quran in that the former are "expressed in Prophet Muhammad's words", whereas the latter are the "direct words of God". An example of a Hadith Qudsiy is the hadith of Abu Hurairah who said that Prophet Muhammad said: "When God decreed the Creation He pledged Himself by writing in His book which is laid down with Him: My mercy prevails over My wrath." A hadith is divided into two parts namely the Isnad and the Matn. The **isnad** or the Sanad is the chain of narrators or reporters. It is the list of Ashab, Tabi'in, Taba'ut Tabi'in and scholars who have heard or reported the Hadith directly or indirectly from the holy prophet (s.a.w). The number of persons in an Isnad varies. It may reach 150 persons. The **Matn** is the text or context or message. It is what has been reported or done by the prophet (s.a.w) or any Sahaba or any Tabi'in or Taba'ut Tabi'in.

As such there are 4 types of Hadith, namely Swahih, Hasan, dwa'if and Mawdu'. **Firstly**, the Swahih hadith which is referred to as the authentic hadith can be divided into 2 kinds. The 'Swahih li dhaatihi' is a Hadith whose chain of narrators is unbroken, every narrator is reliable ('aadil), well-known for memorization and preservation (dabt) of the hadith. We have also 'Swahih li ghayrihi' which is a hadith having the same qualities as the previous one except for the dabt of a narrator which may be slightly less reliable but that is compensated for by the fact that the hadith is narrated from many chains of people. [The word dabt refers to a narrator having a good grasp of what he narrates as well as a sound memory and/or carefully kept books.] **Next** we have the Hasan Hadith which is referred as good or fair. It is divided into 2 kinds. 'Hasan li dhaatihi' is a hadith which has the qualities of Swahih except that the dabt is not as reliable and there are not enough other chains of narrations to raise it to the status of 'Swahih li ghayrihi'. 'Hasan li ghayrihi' is a hadith which is lacking in more than one quality required for the Swahih but this lack is again compensated for by the presence of other chains of transmission of the same hadith. **Moreover** we have the Dwa'if hadith which is known as the weak hadith. It is a hadith which is lacking more than one of the qualities of Swahih and there are not enough alternate chains to raise its status to Hasan. **Fourthly**, we have the Matrook and Mawdu'. The Matrook is a hadith in whose chain is a narrator known for being a Liar and the Mawdu' is a hadith in whose chain is a narrator upon whom it is established that he fabricated hadith.

## What is the importance of Hadith in one's life?

Hadith being the words, deeds and silent approval of the prophet (s.a.w), Ashab, Tabi'in and Taba'ut Tabi'in are very important in one's life. **Firstly**, it is a personal Code of Conduct which is put into practice by those who really want to follow the shari'ah and those who love Allah and His Nabi (s.a.w). It is a set of laws to be put into practice. **Next** it is important as it forms part of the Shari'ah. The Qur'an is the first source of the Islamic Law followed by the Hadith. It can't be removed or ignored at any cost. **Moreover**, it is a complement to the Qur'an. Allah sent the prophet (s.a.w) along side with the hadith as a means to complete the Qur'an. The Qur'an is the theoretical part as the Hadith is the practical part. **Fourthly**, it is the Tafsir and explanation of the verses of the Qur'an. There are many verses which need the explanation of the prophet (s.a.w) from the Hadith. There are verses which are understood when references are made with an event in the life of the prophet like for battle of Badr. **As a fifth point** it gives details on how to perform Ibaadah and other acts of worship. There are direct orders from the Qur'an of what to do as commands from Allah as part of the Shari'ah but they are not explained of how to be put into practice. The prophet explained them in his Hadith.

**Sixthly**, it helps to avoid pitfalls. It is a way and means where Muslims can have lessons based on stories narrated in hadith in order to avoid mistakes and errors of past nations where the punishment of Allah was sent. **In addition**, it helps to upgrade our status through wazifah or invocation. It is found that there are many short sentences or phrases given by the prophet (s.a.w) as part of invocation or remembrance of Allah. They are done for nearness with Allah. **More to the point**, it helps in having the knowledge of the life of the prophet and the Salaf. It is a tutorial of how the prophet led his life with his wives, children, Muslims, non Muslims and the animals. In it are the stories and lessons from the Ashab. **As another important aspect**, it explains how to deal with Muslims and non-Muslims. It elaborates on the conduct and way of how to treat a non Muslim in a Muslim country and how to live in a non Muslim country as being a Muslim. The treatment of both the Muslims and the non Muslims is detailed. **Tenthly**, it elaborates on Halal and Haram and it is an example in all spheres of live (both materialistic and spiritual). It enlightens us on what must be done and what is prohibited and as such how to be elevated in the sight of Allah and how to be successful in this world, Qabr and Aakhirah.

## How are Hadith defined as Swahih (Authentic)? What are the criteria for a Hadith to be Swahih (Authentic)?

A hadith consists of two parts: its text, called Matn, and its chain of narrators, called isnad. Comprehensive and strict criteria were separately developed for the evaluation of both the Matn and the isnad. The former is regarded as the internal test of ahadith, and the latter is considered the external test. A hadith was accepted as authentic and recorded into text only when it met both of these criteria independently.

The pure and undisputed character of the narrator, called rawi, was the most important consideration for the acceptance of a hadith. As stated earlier, a new branch of 'ilm al hadith known as asma' ar rijal was developed to evaluate the credibility of narrators. The following are a few of the criteria utilized for this purpose. **Firstly** the name, nickname, title, parentage and occupation of the narrator should be known. **Next**, the original narrator should have stated that he heard the hadith directly from the Prophet (s.a.w). **Moreover**, if a narrator referred his hadith to another narrator, the two should have lived in the same period and have had the possibility of meeting each other. **Fourthly**, at the time of hearing and transmitting the hadith, the narrator should have been physically and mentally capable of understanding and remembering it. **As a fifth point**, the narrator should have been known as a pious and virtuous person. **Sixthly**, the narrator should not have been accused of having lied, given false evidence or

committed a crime. **In addition**, the narrator should not have spoken against other reliable people. **More to the point**, the narrator's religious beliefs and practices should have been known to be correct. **As another important aspect**, the narrator should not have carried out and practiced peculiar religious beliefs of his own.

On the other side, there are many criteria for the Matn. **Firstly**, the text should have been stated in plain and simple language. **Next**, a text in non-Arabic or couched in indecent language was rejected. **Moreover**, a text prescribing heavy punishment for minor sins or exceptionally large reward for small virtues was rejected. **Fourthly**, a text which referred to actions that should have been commonly known and practiced by others but were not known and practiced was rejected. **As a fifth point**, a text contrary to the basic teachings of the Qur'an was rejected. **Sixthly**, a text contrary to other ahadith was rejected. **In addition**, a text contrary to basic reason, logic and the known principles of human society was rejected. **More to the point**, a text inconsistent with historical facts was rejected. **As another important aspect**, extreme care was taken to ensure the text was the original narration of the Prophet and not the sense of what the narrator heard. The meaning of the hadith was accepted only when the narrator was well known for his piety and integrity of character. **Tenthly**, a text critical to the Prophet, members of his family or his companions was rejected. Another one was that a text by an obscure narrator which was not known during the age of Swahaabah [the Prophet's companions] or the Tabi'in [those who inherited the knowledge of the Swahaabah] was rejected.

**According to Imam Bukhari** it was vital that all reporters as from him till the prophet (s.a.w) should be trustworthy and reliable. He would give preference to students of highest rank of any particular teacher. In this way he would ensure the best report without mistake found in the text. He also accepted the usage 'an – contemporary in hadith collection. The meaning of 'an means 'from' or 'concerning' and it implies that the one narrating the hadith should know and hear from the one before him personally. Imam Bukhari would reject Hadith with discontinued Sanad. **According to Imam Muslim** he made a clear distinction between *Haddathana* and *Akhbarana*. 'Haddathana' meaning 'he narrated to us' implies that the person had heard it directly from his teacher. There is direct contact between the teacher and the student who is listening attentively. 'Akhbarana' meaning 'he informed us' implies that the student is reading the hadith before the teacher. He also accepted Hadith only through the consensus of Traditionist. He has recorded only that hadith which, at least, two reliable *Tabi'in* (successors) had heard from two Companions and this principle is observed throughout the subsequent chain of narrators. **According to Abu Dawood** all hadith supported by the Practice of Ashab of the prophet (s.a.w) are accepted. However he would make great investigation if there is any contradictory in a hadith or between 2 hadith or more. According to him, if a Mursal Hadith (1 person omitted) is backed and supported by a Swahih hadith then it will be accepted. He would also follow the conditions and styles of Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim

According to **Imam Tirmidhi**, he never narrated hadith from those who fabricated hadith. According to Allama Tahir Muqaddisi, he mentions that *al-Jami' ut-Tirmidhi* contains four types of hadith: those ahadith that conform to the conditions of Bukhari and Muslim, those ahadith that conform to the conditions of Abu Dawud and Nasa'i, those ahadith that have certain discrepancies either in the *sanad* or *matan* and those weak hadith that some *fuqaha* have relied on. But after mentioning a weak hadith, he would explain the state of its weakness. Imam Tirmidhi accepted a hadith which is narrated with the word 'an provided both the narrators are contemporaries. A *mursal* (1 person omitted) hadith is accepted by Imam Tirmidhi when it is supported by a chain of narrators which is not broken. **According to Imam an Nasaa'i**, he would reject a reporter if all Traditionists did so. He would also reject a hadith if the reporter has mentioned anything extra while others have not reported it from the same teacher. **According to Ibn Majaa** he made a merger of all categories of Hadith. However, he would take care of not including false hadith in his collection. He brought this collection with Swahih, hasan and dwa'if hadith with the view to broaden the scope and availability of hadith to the public.

Along with these generally accepted criteria, each scholar then developed and practiced his own set of specific criteria to further ensure the authenticity of each hadith.

## What is the relationship between Qur'an and Hadith?

Allah Almighty says in the Quran: "We sent them with clear proofs and written ordinances. And We revealed to you the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them and that they might give thought." (An-Nahl 16:44) Commenting on this verse, Imam Al-Baghawi, one of the well-versed scholars of Islam, said in his tafseer: "The message — in the verse — refers to the divine inspiration. And the Prophet is the clarifier of the divine inspiration. The explanation of the Quran is to be sought in the Sunnah." (Al-Baghawi 25)

Thus, the relation between the Quran and the Sunnah is such that the latter is a clarification of the former. The Sunnah explains and interprets the Quran. It gives more details about what is concisely mentioned in the Quran, especially when it comes to legal rulings. Many laws, as well as acts of worships, are briefly mentioned in the Quran. Then, the Sunnah elaborates on such items and gives more details and explanation or interpretation. A good example for this is the prayers. The Quran orders Muslims to pray, but it does not mention how many times Muslims should pray. Or, when and how to pray but it does mention: "And obey Allah and obey the messenger; but if you turn away, then upon Our messenger is only [the duty of] clear notification." (At-Taghabun 64:12) And it also mentions: "And whatever the messenger has given you, take; and what he has forbidden you, refrain from. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty." (Al-Hashr 59:7)

So, Allah orders us clearly to follow and obey the messenger and take whatever he gives us. And as we are talking about prayers, the Prophet says: "Pray as you saw me praying." (Al-Bukhari) Zakaat (obligatory alms), fasting the month of Ramadan, monetary transactions, and so on. All of the above titles are touched on briefly by the Quran but the Sunnah elaborates on them. It is worth mentioning that the Quran is communally transmitted from generation to generation in such a way that huge number of people memorised and transmitted it to the subsequent generation all the way from the time of the Prophet until today. This is what makes the Quran so authentic, because it is impossible that an entire generation will be mistaken in their narration. On the other hand, not all the Sunnah was transmitted to us in the same way like the Quran, only some if it is. However, Muslim scholars developed a very scientific and sophisticated methodology to categorise the narrations that come to us from the Prophet. This science is called hadith methodology. Using certain scientific criteria, they can tell which narration is authentic and which is not. In a nutshell, the Quran is inspired by Allah in meaning and wording. However, the Sunnah is inspired by Allah in meaning while the wording is from Prophet Muhammad. Allah says in the Quran what means: "Nor does he speak from [his own] inclination. It is not but a revelation revealed." (An-Najm 53:3-4).

So, the Sunnah, as the Prophetic text, comes right after the Quran as part of the revelation, and both of them are the two main sources of Islam. Allah made it clear that Sunnah should be followed when he says: "He who obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah." (An-Nisaa' 4:80). Another hadith that shows that Quran and Sunnah are interrelated, and warns against taking the Quran and abandoning Sunnah goes: "Indeed I have been given the Book (that is, the Quran) and something like it along with it." (Abu Dawud) To conclude, the Quran and the Sunnah together are the sources of guidance and laws for Muslims. The Sunnah is the explanation and interpretation of the Quran. That is why they cannot be separated, as they work harmoniously to convey the message of Islam and show people what Allah wants from them in order for them to lead the best life on this earth and also to win Heaven in the hereafter.



### Prophets

#### Hazrat Adam (as)

Before the creation of Mankind Allah created angels on Wednesday, jinns on Thursday and Man on Friday. Angels were and are fervent and obedient servants of Allah. However, jinn were and are always opposing the law of Allah. They had shed blood on earth and created chaos. When Allah decided to create Mankind and to send him on earth, the angels set the question of 'Will You place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood'. But Allah knows what they don't know.

As such Allah the Almighty created Hazrat Adam (as). After his creation Allah explained this in the Qur'an as 'Allah taught Adam all the names of everything, then He showed them to the angels and said: "Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful." They (angels) said: "Glory be to You, we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Verily, it is You, the All-Knower, the All-Wise." He said: "O Adam! Inform them of their names," and when he had informed them of their names, He said: "Did I not tell you that I know the unseen in the heavens and the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you have been hiding?" Allah created Hazrat Adam (as) with earth, water, air and fire. Allah gave him knowledge which angels were unaware of. This is to show the superiority of knowledge of Hazrat Adam (as) over angels and at the same time the superiority of Man over other creatures. Allah asked Adam to teach the angels the names of things that is to show to them his knowledge on Allah and Everything.

Hence Allah ordered the angels to prostrate. All of them did so except Iblis who refused and was proud and was one of the disbelievers (disobedient to Allah)." The order of prostration was meant to show his superiority again over the angels in creation and knowledge. It was not like prostration of ibaadah for Allah. It is a sign of respect. Iblis disobeyed due to his pride, knowledge and his creation out of fire which is above earth, but earth is submissive. Therefore Allah ordered Hazrat Adam (as) to dwell with his wife in the Paradise and both of them freely with pleasure and delight of things therein as wherever they will but come not near this tree or they both will be of the Zalimeen (wrongdoers)." Then the Satan made them slip there from (the Paradise), and got them out from that in which they were. Then Allah ordered them to get down all with enmity between themselves. On earth will be a dwelling place for them and an enjoyment for a Time."

Allah created Hazrat Eve (ra) out of the crooked ribs of Adam as a companion in Jannah. They were allowed to stay in Jannah, to eat whatever they desired but not to approach the forbidden fruit. Shaitaan influenced and their curiosity deceived them. They were sent to earth. For 300 years they kept on asking forgiveness till Hazrat Adam received from his Lord Words that His Lord pardoned him (accepted his repentance). Allah forgave Adam and Eve but as a symbolic punishment he sent them on earth. However, the decision was already taken when Allah announced that He will create a viceroy on earth. Hazrat Adam had to face many problems inexistent in Jannah like weathering, cyclones, old age, wife, children and the Everyday chores. Above all, he had to struggle with the spirit of evil. Satan, the cause of his expulsion from Paradise, continued to beguile him and his children in an effort to have them thrown into the eternal hellfire. The battle between good and evil is continuous.

The pinnacle of earthly bliss was reached when Adam and Eve witnessed the birth of their first children, a set of twins. Adam was a devoted father and Eve a contented mother. The twins were Cain (Qabil) and his sister. Later Eve gave birth to a second set of twins, Abel (Habil) and his sister. The family enjoyed the bounties and fruits of the earth provided by their Lord. The children grew up to be strong and healthy young adults. Cain tilled the land while Abel raised cattle. The time arrived when the two young men desired life partners. This was part of Allah's plan for mankind, to multiply and form nations with different cultures and colors. Allah revealed to Adam that he should marry each son to the



twin sister of the other. Adam instructed his children according to Allah's command, but Cain was displeased with the partner chosen for him, for Abel's twin sister was not as beautiful as his own. Adam was in a dilemma. He wanted peace and harmony in his family, so he invoked Allah for help. Allah commanded that each son offer a sacrifice, and he whose offering was accepted would have right on his side. Abel offered his best camel while Cain offered his worst grain. His sacrifice was not accepted by Allah because of his disobedience to his father and the insincerity in his offering. This enraged Cain further. Realizing that his hopes marrying his own beautiful sister were fading, he threatened his brother. "I will kill you! I refuse to see you happy while I remain unhappy!" Abel feeling sorry for his brother, replied, "It would be more proper for you, my brother to search for the cause of your unhappiness and then walk in the way of peace. Allah accepts the deeds only from those who serve and fear Him, not from those who reject His Commands."

Abel was intelligent, obedient, and always ready to obey the will of Allah. This contrasted sharply with his brother who was arrogant, selfish and disobedient to his Lord. Abel did not fear his brother's threats, but neither did he want his brother to be hurt, Allah had blessed Abel with purity and compassion. Hoping to allay the hatred seething in his brother Abel said, "My brother, you are deviating from the right path and are sinful in your decisions. It is better that you repent to Allah and forget about your foolish threat. But if you do not then I will leave the matter in the hands of Allah. You alone will bear the consequence of your sin, for the Fire is the reward of the wrong-doers." This brotherly plea did nothing to lessen the hatred in Cain's heart, nor did he show fear of Allah's punishment. Even familial considerations were cast aside. Cain struck his brother with a stone killing him instantly. This was the first death and the first criminal act committed by man on earth. When Abel had not appeared for some time, Adam began to search for him but found no trace of his beloved son. He asked Cain about Abel's whereabouts. Cain insolently replied that he was neither his brother's keeper nor his protector. From these words his father understood that Abel was dead and Adam was filled with grief.

Meanwhile Cain did not know what to do with his brother's corpse. He carried it on his back wandering from place to place trying to hide it. His anger had now subsided and his conscience was saddled with guilt. He was tiring under the burden of the corpse which had started to have a stench. As a mercy, and to show that dignity could be retained Even in death, Allah sent two ravens that began fighting, causing the death of one. The victorious bird used its beak and claws to dig a hole in the ground, rolled its victim into it and covered it with sand. Witnessing this, Cain was overcome with shame and remorse. "Woe unto me!" he exclaimed. "I was unable to do what this raven has done, that is to hide my brother's corpse." Cain then buried his brother. This was also the first burial of man.

### **Hazrat Musah (as)**

Since the creation of Mankind Allah has sent numerous prophets and messengers to guide His creatures. Among them we have Hazrat Musah (as). Through his life great lessons can be derived and can be traced as similarities with the story of the last prophet of Islam Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w).

During the time of Pharaoh in Egypt through a year in which boys were to be slain, the mother of Musah gave birth to Musah (as). It was a time where the soothsayers of Pharaoh have predicted that a boy from Israelites would dethrone him. So he decided to kill all new born from the Israelites. Allah says in surah al Qasas that Pharaoh has made himself great on land and has caused mischief. The mother of Musah (as) was afraid he would be slain, so she nursed him secretly. Allah inspired the mother of Musah saying: *"Suckle him (Musah), but when you fear for him, then cast him into the river and fear not, nor grieve. Verily! We shall bring him back to you, and shall make him one of (Our) Messengers."* (Ch 28: 2-7 Quran). No sooner had the divine revelation finished that she obeyed the sacred and merciful call. She was commanded to make a basket for Musah and threw it into the water. She was aware that Allah was much more merciful to Musah than to her, that He loved him more than her. She instructed her daughter

to follow the course of the basket and to report back to her. The basket came to rest at the riverbank, which skirted the king's palace. The palace servants found the basket with the baby and took it to the Pharaoh and his queen. When the queen beheld the lovely infant, Allah instilled in her a strong love for this baby. Pharaoh's wife Aasiyah was very different from Pharaoh. He was a disbeliever; she was a believer. He was cruel; she was merciful.

She was sad because she was infertile and had hoped to have a son. She requested her husband: 'Let me keep the baby and let him be a son to us'. The queen called for some wet nurse but the baby was not ready to accept anyone. Musah's sister was anxious and she told the queen that she knew someone who could feed him. She reunited the mother and the child. (*Ch. 28:10-13*). Allah had granted Musah (as) good health, strength, knowledge, and wisdom. The weak and oppressed turned to him for protection and justice. One day in the main city, he saw two men fighting. One was an Israelite, who was being beaten by the other, an Egyptian. On seeing Musah, the Israelite begged him for help. Musah became involved in the dispute and, in a state of anger, struck a heavy blow on the Egyptian, who died on the spot. Upon realizing that he had killed a human being, Musah's heart was filled with deep sorrow, and immediately he begged Allah for forgiveness. The next day he saw the same Israelite involved in another fight. Musah went to him and said: "You seem to be a quarrelsome fellow. You have a new quarrel with one person or another each day." Fearing that Musah might strike him, the Israelite warned Musah: "Would you kill me as you killed the wretch yesterday?"

Soon thereafter, a man approached and alerted him: "O Musah, the chiefs have taken counsel against you. You are to be tried and killed. I would advise you to escape." (*Ch 28:15-21 Quran*). Musah left Egypt in a hurry without going to Pharaoh's palace or changing his clothes. Nor was he prepared for travelling. He travelled in the direction of the country of Midian. His only companion in this hot desert was Allah, and his only provision was piety. He travelled for eight nights, hiding during the day. After crossing the main desert, he reached a watering hole outside Midian where shepherds were watering their flocks. He went to the spring, where he saw two young women preventing their sheep from mixing with the others. Musah sensed that the women were in need of help. Forgetting his thirst, he drew nearer to them and asked if he could help them in any way. (*Ch 28:22-24 Quran*). The young ladies returned home earlier than usual, which surprised their father. Musah's gentle behaviour was noticed by the father and his daughters. The kind man invited him to stay with them. The old man proposed him to stay and work for 8 years or more and in return he could marry one of his daughters. He stayed and became a shepherd and served the old man for more than 8 years. (*Ch 28:25-28 Quran*)

One day after the end of this period, a vague homesickness arose in Musah's heart. He wanted to return to Egypt. He was fast and firm in making his decision, telling his wife: "Tomorrow we shall leave for Egypt." Musah left Midian with his family and travelled through the desert until he reached Mount Sinai. There Musah discovered that he had lost his way. He sought Allah's direction and was shown the right course. At nightfall they reached Mount Tur. Musah noticed a fire in the distance and said to his family: "I shall fetch a firebrand to warm us." As he neared the fire, he heard a sonorous voice calling him: "O Musah, I am Allah, the Lord of the Universe." Musah was bewildered and looked around. He again heard the strange voice. "And what is in your right hand, O Musah?" Shivering, Musah answered: "This is my staff on which I lean, and with which I beat down branches for my sheep, and for which I find other uses." The same voice commanded him: "Throw down your staff!" He did so, and at once the staff became a wriggling snake. Musah turned to run, but the voice again addressed him: "Fear not and grasp it; We shall return it to its former state." The snake changed back into his staff. Next, Allah commanded

him to thrust his hand into his robe at the armpit. When he pulled it out, the hand had a brilliant shine. These were the two signs given to Musah.

He wanted his brother Haroon to accompany him and Allah made both prophets. Musah (as) and Haroun (as) went together to Pharaoh and delivered their message. Musah spoke to him about Allah, His mercy and His Paradise and about the obligations of monotheism and His worship. Pharaoh recognized him as the same kid he sheltered. (*Ch 26:16-31 Quran*). Musah (as) wanted to show him his miracle. Musah threw his stick which turned into a serpent. He drew out his hands and they were white. Then there was the contest between Musah and Pharaoh's magicians. Musah's big serpent ate all the snakes of the magicians. (*Ch 20:58-76 Quran*). Pharaoh was angry, called his men and ordered them to build a tower for him to see whether there was another god in heaven. He started persecuting the believers. As a portent of the punishment which Allah would meet out, the Nile did not flood its banks to soak the dry land as it normally did. As a result, crops failed, leading to famine. Then another sign came, the sign of lice, which spread amongst the Egyptians, carrying diseases. A sign of frogs was revealed. The land suddenly filled with frogs. Then the last sign was revealed, the sign of blood. The Nile water was changed into blood. When Musah and his people drank the water, it was, for them, ordinary water. However, if any Egyptian filled his cup with the water, he discovered his cup full of blood. They hurried to Musah as usual, but as soon as everything returned to normal, they turned their backs on Allah.

It appeared that Pharaoh would never believe in Musah's message, nor would he stop the torture of the children of Israel. Allah inspired Musah to conduct his people of Egypt, but only a few of his people believed in his message. Allah commanded Musah to depart and they prepared themselves to leave Egypt. In the darkness of night, Musah led his people towards the Red Sea, and in the morning they reached the beach. By then Pharaoh was aware of their departure, so he mobilized a huge army to pursue them. The impatient children of Israel soon became agitated and Joshua (Yusha), Ibn Nun, exclaimed: "In front of us is this impassable barrier, the sea, and behind us the enemy; surely death cannot be avoided!". Musah replied that he would wait for further guidance from Allah. These words filled them with some hope, but man is always impatient for results: they were willing to surrender themselves back into slavery. At that moment Allah revealed to Musah: "Smite the sea with your staff!" Musah did as he was commanded. A fierce wind blew, the sun shone brightly, and in a flash the sea parted, the crests of the waves standing like mountains on each side. Musah led his people across. As they looked back, they saw Pharaoh and his army approaching, about to take the very path which had been opened for them. Pharaoh and his army had seen the miracle, how the sea had parted, but being the pretender that he was, Pharaoh turned to his men and proclaimed: "Look! The sea has opened at my command so that I may follow those rebels and arrest them!" They rushed across the parted waters, and when they were midway, Allah commanded the sea to return to its former state. Terror-stricken Pharaoh, realizing his end had come, declared out of fear: "I believe that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah in Whom the children of Israel believe, and I am of those who surrender to Him." But Allah did not accept this declaration from the tyrant, and the waters closed over him, drowning him and his entire army. (*Ch 26:52-68 Quran*) (*Ch 10:90-92 Quran*).

**Through** the story of Hazrat Musah (as) we can see similarities with the life of the prophet (s.a.w). Topics like their childhood, their call to prophethood, their experience of persecution, their fleeing their homes, their eventual triumph, their experience of being misunderstood, their resolve and commitment to their call will be discussed as such. **At the outset**, it can be well said that both Hazrat Musah (as) and Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w) were brought up in an environment that they had to leave at a certain period of their lives. During the time of Musah there was the need for him to be separated from his

mother for survival as Pharaoh had decided to kill all new born. However for the last prophet (s.a.w) he had to leave his mother for 6 years as it was a custom of the pre Islamic Arabs to have their babies suckled by a wet-nurse in the desert. Nevertheless mothers and children were reunited later on. **Secondly**, both the environment in which Musah and the last prophet were born was polytheistic. Their people were polytheists and idol worshippers. They were brought up among the idol worshippers but both never worshipped anything or anyone apart from Allah. Both were monotheist in search of the one God that is Allah. Moreover they were both against the idea of polytheism. **Moreover**, there came a time where due to the level of degradation and injustice found in their respective societies, they decided to help those in need. Hazrat Musah was alongside with the poor and the destitute and would always help the oppressed. That was the same situation for the prophet (s.a.w) who created an organisation with the help of youngsters and elders through Half ul Fuzul. Their aims were to help those in need and to bring some kinds of justice to those who are oppressed both physically and mentally. **Fourthly**, due to the above situation which developed the situation and environment of persecutions, both prophets were disgusted with their respective societies. On one side we have Pharaoh who used to oppress the people of Israelite and on the other side the rich Jewish and Arabs oppressed the poor. The societies were deeply rooted then in injustice. Leaving the city was the final option. **Furthermore**, attached with the above idea, the society of Musah and that of the last prophet (s.a.w) were deeply rooted in crimes, adultery, fornication, prostitution, bribes, interest, levies, taxes, sins among others. In fact both societies were immoral ones without leaders. Both prophets were thus fed up with these societies and a need to change environment was important.

**Sixthly**, as both were in these kinds of societies they were in search of Allah or rather we can say that Allah came to them as a rescue. In the case of Hazrat Musah he found Allah on the mount of Tur with the voice coming from the blessed tree with 2 miracles as gifts. On the other side, the prophet was approached by Hazrat Jibril in the cave of Hira with the first five verses of Surah Al 'Alaq as gift from Allah. Both thus were given the Torah and the Qur'an. **Added to the above ideas**, after having the blessing of Allah, both prophets decided to gather their respective people to call them to the religion of Allah. Their messages were the same that is Tawheed was the main theme. They spread the same message with the same good news of Jannah if they were accepted and followed and with the same warnings as Jahannam if they were to be rejected. As history witnessed they were both rejected but accepted only by a few poor destitute people. **Besides**, due to persecutions and uncertainties, both prophets had to leave their cities and countries for the Hijrah. As it was impossible to be accepted or the other way being rejected, both prophets left their homeland to Midian and Yathrib (Madina). And what was more surprising was that both were accepted and protected by their new friends and environment. It marked the start of both real spreading of Islam in a much better way with a more peaceful life. **More to the point**, both prophets were persecuted by their people and by the chiefs of their societies. In the case of Musah it was Pharaoh who was the persecutor with his hosts. On the other side the prophet and the Muslims were persecuted, beaten and ill treated by the chiefs of Macca like Abu Lahab and his friends. Hazrat Musah and his people at one time was chased by the hosts of Pharaoh and it also occurred that the prophet (s.a.w) was chased by the unbelievers at Ta'if, for the Hijrah and in the different battles fought. **Last but not least**, it is good to mention that both prophets at a certain moment had a homesick. As such Hazrat Musah (as) returned to Egypt and Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w) returned to Macca. These were their homelands and they were attached to them. Returning there was a great risk taken by both prophets. They could have been murdered. In fact, when Musah returned to Egypt he was later on chased by the Egyptians and when the prophet entered Macca in the 8<sup>th</sup> year of Hijrah, the division led by Khalid bin Walid (ra) was attacked.



Both prophets had faith in Allah and they didn't give up in warning the people concerning their ill-founded deeds and the punishment of Allah. Though they were faced with serious problems they were honoured by Allah throughout their lives and their people converted to Islam.

### **Hazrat Yusuf (as)**

It is related that among the reasons for its revelation is that the Jews asked the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to tell them about Hazrat Yusuf (as) (pbuh) who was one of their old prophets. Allah the Almighty declared: *"We relate unto you (Muhammad) the best of stories through Our Revelations unto you, of this Quran. And before this (i.e. before the coming of Divine Inspiration to you), you were among those who knew nothing about it (the Quran)."* (Ch 12:3 Quran)

The story begins with a dream and ends with its interpretation. Hazrat Yusuf (as) said: *"O my father! Verily, I saw (in a dream) eleven stars and the sun and the moon, I saw them prostrating themselves to me."* (Ch 12:4). His father's face lit up. He foresaw that Hazrat Yusuf (as) would be one through whom the prophecy of his grandfather, Prophet Ibrahim (as), would be fulfilled, in that his offspring would keep the light of Abraham's house alive and spread Allah's message to mankind. However, the father was well aware of the jealousy of Hazrat Yusuf (as)'s brothers, so he warned him against telling his dream to his brothers. *"O my son! Relate not your vision to your brothers, lest they arrange a plot against you. Verily! Satan is to man an open enemy! Thus will your Lord choose you and teach you the interpretation of dreams (and other things) and perfect His Favor on you and on the offspring of Hazrat Yaqoub (as), as He perfected it on your fathers, Ibrahim, and Ishaaq aforetime! Verily! your Lord is All-Knowing, All-Wise."* (Ch 12:5-6)

Hazrat Yusuf (as) heeded his father's warning. He did not tell his brothers what he had seen. It is well known that they hated him so much that it was difficult for him to feel secure telling them what was in his heart and in his dreams. Hazrat Yusuf (as) was eighteen years old, very handsome and robust, with a gentle temperament. He was respectful, kind and considerate. His brother Benjamin was equally pleasant. Both were from one mother, Rachel. Because of their refined qualities, the father loved the two more than his other children, and would not let them out of his sight. To protect them, he kept them busy with work in the house garden. Due to jealousy it is said: *"One from among them (his brothers) said: 'Kill not Hazrat Yusuf (as), but if you must do something, throw him down to the bottom of a well, he will be picked up by some caravan of travellers.'" (Ch 12:8-10)*

Their next movement opened the scene between them and their father Hazrat Yaqoub (as) (pbuh): *They said: "O our father! Why do you not trust us with Hazrat Yusuf (as), when we are indeed his well-wishers? Send him with us tomorrow to enjoy himself and play, and verily we will take care of him." He (Hazrat Yaqoub (as)) said: "Truly, it saddens me that you should take him away. I fear lest a wolf should devour him, while you are careless of him." They said: "If a wolf devours him, while we are Usbah (a strong group) (to guard him), then surely we are the losers." (Ch 12:11-14).* Hazrat Yaqoub (as) suggested a point, which had not occurred to them in their discussion: he feared that the wolves within them would eat him. They were excited that they could now get rid of Hazrat Yusuf (as) for after this they could stand a better chance of receiving their father's affection. On leaving home, they went directly to the well, as they had planned, on the pretext of drinking water. One of them put his arms around Hazrat Yusuf (as) and held him tightly. Startled by this unusual behaviour, Hazrat Yusuf (as) struggled to free himself. More brothers rushed to hold him. One of them removed his shirt. Some more joined in to lift Hazrat Yusuf (as) up and cast him into the deep well. Hazrat Yusuf (as)'s piteous pleas made no difference to their cruel hearts. Then Allah revealed to Hazrat Yusuf (as) that he was safe and should not fear, for he would meet them again someday to remind them of what they had done.



The brothers returned to their father and it is said: *"And they came to their father in the early part of the night weeping."* (Ch 12:16). The scene here is dark night, broken by the crying of ten men. The father is sitting in his house when the sons enter, the darkness of night covering the darkness of their hearts and the darkness of their lies struggling to come out. Hazrat Yaqoub (as) wondered aloud: *"Why this weeping? Has anything happened to our flock?"* They answered crying: *"O our father! We went racing with one another, and left Hazrat Yusuf (as) by our belongings and a wolf devoured him; but you will never believe us even when we speak the truth."* (Ch 12:17). *They brought his shirt stained with false blood.* (Ch 12:18). Deep down in the heart Hazrat Yaqoub (as) knew that his beloved son was still alive and that his other sons were lying. He held the blood stained in his hands, spread it out and remarked: *"Nay! But your ownelves have made up a tale. So for me patience is more fitting. It is Allah Alone whose Help can be sought against that which you assert."* (Ch 12:18)

Then it follows: *"And there came a caravan of travellers; they sent their water drawer, and he let down his bucket into the well. He said: 'What a good news! Here is a boy.'" So they hid him as merchandise (a slave). And Allah was the All Knower of what they did. They sold him for a low price, for a few Dhirhams (for a few silver coins). They were of those who regarded him insignificant. He (the chief, the Aziz) from Egypt who bought him said to his wife: 'Make his stay comfortable, may be he will profit us or we shall adopt him as a son.' Thus did We establish Hazrat Yusuf (as) in the land, that We might teach him the interpretation of events.* (Ch 12:19-21)

Hazrat Yusuf (as) smiled at his benefactor (the chief), thanked him, and promised to be loyal. Hazrat Yusuf (as) felt at ease, for at last he was sheltered and would be well cared for. He thanked Allah over and over and wondered at the mysterious of life. However, his heart ached with longing for his parents and brother Benjamin, and he shed tears daily. Hazrat Yusuf (as) was made the personal attendant of the chief minister's wife. He was obedient and ever-obliging. With his pleasant manners and charming behavior, he won everybody's heart. The days passed and Hazrat Yusuf (as) grew. Almighty Allah said: *"And when he (Hazrat Yusuf (as)) attained his full manhood, We gave him wisdom and knowledge (the Prophethood), thus We reward the doers of good."* (Ch 12:22). He was given wisdom in affairs and knowledge of life and its conditions. He was given the art of conversation, captivating those who heard him. He was given nobility and self-restraint, which made him an irresistible personality. His master soon knew that Allah had graced him with Hazrat Yusuf (as). Therefore, he put Hazrat Yusuf (as) in charge of his household, honored him, and treated him as a son. The wife of the chief minister, Zulaikha, watched Hazrat Yusuf (as) from day to day. She at with him, listened to him, and her wonder increased over the passion of time. Hazrat Yusuf (as) was soon confronted (with his second trial). The chief minister's wife, Zulaikha could not resist the handsome Hazrat Yusuf (as), and her obsession with him caused her sleepless nights. She fell in love with him.

Allah the Almighty told us: *"And she, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him (to do an evil act), she closed the doors and said: 'come on, O you.'" He said: 'I seek refuge in Allah (or Allah forbid)! Truly he (your husband) is my master! He made my stay agreeable! (So I will never betray him). Verily, the Zalimun (wrong, evildoers) will never be successful.'" Indeed she did desire him and he would have inclined to her desire had he not seen the evidence of his Lord. Thus it was, that We might turn away from evil and illegal sexual intercourse. Surely, he was one of Our chosen, guided slaves.* (Ch 12:23-24)

Hazrat Yusuf (as)'s refusal only heightened her passion. As he moved to the door to escape, she ran after him and caught hold of his shirt. It is said: *"So they raced with one another to the door, and she tore his shirt from the back. They both found her lord (her husband) at the door."* (Ch 12:25). She immediately changed her tone to anger, and, showing the torn piece of the shirt in her hand, asked her husband: *"What is the recompense (punishment) for him who intended an evil design against your wife, except that he be put in prison or a painful torment?"* (Ch 12:25). She was now accusing Hazrat Yusuf (as) of molesting her and it is said: *He (Hazrat Yusuf (as)) said: 'It was she that sought to seduce me,' and a witness of her household bore witness saying: 'If it be that his shirt is torn from the front, then her tale is true, and he is*

*a liar! but if it be that his shirt is torn from the back, then she has told a lie and he is speaking the truth!" So when he (the husband) saw his (Hazrat Yusuf (as)'s) shirt was torn at the back; (her husband) said: "Surely, it is a plot of you women! certainly mighty is your plot! O Hazrat Yusuf (as)! turn away from this! (O woman)! Ask forgiveness for your sin. Verily, you were of the sinful." (Ch 12:26-29 Quran).*

Almighty Allah related the scene of the banquet which Zulaikha prepared to show that other women could be under the beauty of Hazrat Yusuf (as) in His words: *"So when she heard of their accusation, she sent for them and prepared a banquet for them; she gave each one of them a knife (to cut the foodstuff with), and she said (to Hazrat Yusuf (as)): "Come out before them." Then, when they saw him, they exalted him (at his beauty) and (in their astonishment) cut their hands. They said: "how perfect is Allah (or Allah forbid)! No man is this! This is none other than a noble angel!" She said: "This is he (the young man) about whom you did blame me (for his love) and I did seek to seduce him, but he refused. And now if he refuses to obey my order, he shall certainly be cast into prison, and will be one of those who are disgraced." He said: "O my Lord! Prison is more to my liking than that to which they invite me. Unless You turn away their plot from me, I will feel inclined towards them and be one of those who commit sin and deserve blame or those who do deeds of the ignorant." So his Lord answered his invocation and turned away from him their plot. Verily he is the All Hearer, the All Knower."* (Ch 12:31-34)

That evening, Zulaikha convinced her husband that the only way to save her honor was to put Hazrat Yusuf (as) in prison; otherwise she would not be able to control herself or to safeguard his prestige. He was left with no choice and he sent Hazrat Yusuf (as) to prison for a few years, but he made patience his own, praying to Allah who gave him the ability to interpret dreams. As such he explained the king's dream (He sees himself on the banks of the Nile river. The water is receding before him, becoming mere mud. The fish begin to skip and jump in the mud. Seven fat cows come out of the river followed by seven lean cows. The seven lean ones devour the seven fat ones) as: *"There will be seven years of abundance. If the land is properly cultivated, there will be an excess of good harvest, more than the people will need. This should be stored. Thereafter, seven years of famine will follow, during which time the excess grain could be used."* He also advised that during the famine they should save some grain to be used for seed for the next harvest. After seven years of drought, there will be a year during which water will be plentiful. If the water is properly used, grapevines and olive trees will grow in abundance, providing plenty of grapes and olive oil." The cupbearer hurried back with the good news. The king was fascinated by Hazrat Yusuf (as)'s interpretation. He commanded that Hazrat Yusuf (as) be set free from prison and presented to him at once. The king's envoy went to fetch him immediately, but Hazrat Yusuf (as) refused to leave the prison unless his innocence was proven. The king felt that Hazrat Yusuf (as) had been harmed unfairly but he did not know exactly how. Under request of the king, the wife of the chief minister came and boldly confessed that she had lied and he had told the truth.

The king informed Hazrat Yusuf (as) that his innocence was established and ordered him to come to the palace for an interview. The king recognized his noble qualities. When Hazrat Yusuf (as) came, the king spoke to him in his tongue. Hazrat Yusuf (as)'s replies astonished the king with his cultural refinement and wide knowledge. Then the conversation turned to the dream. Hazrat Yusuf (as) advised the king to start planning for years of famine ahead. He informed him that the famine would affect not only Egypt but the neighbouring countries as well. The king offered him a high position. Hazrat Yusuf (as) asked to be made controller of the granaries, so that he could guard the nation's harvest and thereby safeguard it during the anticipated drought. By this Hazrat Yusuf (as) did not mean to seize an opportunity or personal gain; he merely wanted to rescue hungry nations for a personal gain; he merely wanted to rescue hungry nations for a period of seven years. It was a sheer nobleness on his part in that he wanted to ensure that many people would not die as a result. The wheels of time turned. During the seven good years, Hazrat Yusuf (as) had full control over the cultivation, harvesting, and storage of crops. During the following seven years, drought followed and famine spread throughout the region, including Canaan, the homeland of Hazrat Yusuf (as). Hazrat Yusuf (as) advised the king that as his kingdom was blessed with reserved grain, he should sell his grain to the needy nations at a fair price. The king agreed, and the good news spread all over the region. Hazrat Yaquob (as) sent ten of his sons, all except Benjamin, to Egypt to

purchase provisions. Hazrat Yusuf (as) heard of the ten brothers who had come from afar and who could not speak the language of the Egyptians. When they called on him to purchase their needs, Hazrat Yusuf (as) immediately recognized his brothers, but they did not know him. Hazrat Yusuf (as) received them warmly. After supplying them with provisions, he asked where they had come from. They explained: "We are eleven brothers, the children of a noble prophet. The youngest is at home tending to the needs of our aging father." On hearing this, Hazrat Yusuf (as)'s eyes filled with tears; his longing for home swelled up in his heart, as well as his longing for his beloved parents and his loving brother Benjamin. "Are you truthful people?" Hazrat Yusuf (as) asked them. Perturbed they replied, "What reason should we have to state an untruth?" "If what you say is true then bring your brother as proof and I will reward you with double rations. But if you do not bring him to me, it would be better if you do not return," Hazrat Yusuf (as) warned them. They assured him that they would gladly fulfil his command but that they would have to get their father's permission. As an inducement to return with their brother, Hazrat Yusuf (as) ordered his servant to secretly place the purse, with the money they had paid, into one of their grain sacks.

The brothers returned to their father. Before they could unload the camels, they greeted him, then criticised him: "We were denied some supplies because you did not let your son go with us. They would not give us food for absentees. Why would you not entrust him with us? Please, send him with us, and we shall take care of him." At first Hazrat Yaqoub (as) was reluctant but accepted after his sons promised him to return his younger son safe and sound. In brief, the 2 brothers finally met. Allah revealed to us what happened at their meeting with their father: *"Return to your father and say: 'O our father! Verily, your son (Benjamin) has stolen, and we testify not except according to what we know, and we could not know the unseen! And ask the people of the town where we have been, and the caravan in which we returned and indeed we are telling the truth.'"* He (Hazrat Yaqoub (as)) said: *"Nay, but your own selves have beguiled you into something. So patience is most fitting for me. Maybe Allah will bring them back all to me. Truly He! Only He is All-Knowing, All-Wise."* And he turned away from them and said: *"Alas, my grief for Hazrat Yusuf (as)!"* And he lost his sight because of the sorrow that he was suppressing. (Ch 12:81-84)

The father was deeply hurt. Only prayer could comfort him and strengthen his faith and patience. Weeping all those years for his beloved son Hazrat Yusuf (as) - and now one more of his best sons had been snatched from him - Hazrat Yaqoub (as) almost lost his sight. The other sons pleaded with him: "O father, you are a noble prophet and a great messenger of Allah. Unto you descended revelation and people received guidance and faith from you. Why are you destroying yourself in this way?" Hazrat Yaqoub (as) replied: "Rebuking me will not lessen my grief. Only the return of my sons will comfort me. My sons, go in search of Hazrat Yusuf (as) and his brother; do not despair of Allah's mercy." The caravan set out for Egypt. The brothers - on their way to see the chief minister (Hazrat Yusuf (as)) - were poor and depressed. On reaching Egypt they called on Hazrat Yusuf (as), to whom they pleaded: *"O ruler of the land! A hard time has hit us and our family, and we have brought but poor capital, so pay us full measure and be charitable to us. Truly, Allah does reward the charitable."* (Ch 12:88). At the end, they begged Hazrat Yusuf (as) who said: *"I am Hazrat Yusuf (as), and his is my brother (Benjamin). Allah has indeed been Gracious to us"* (Ch 12:90). They were forgiven and Hazrat Yusuf (as) embraced them, and together they wept with joy. It was not possible for Hazrat Yusuf (as) to leave his responsible office without proper replacement, so he advised his brothers: *"Go with this shirt of mine, and cast it over the face of my father, he will become clear-sighted, and bring to me all your family."* (ch 12:93) And so the caravan headed back for Palestine. *"And when the caravan departed, their father said: 'I do indeed feel the smell of Hazrat Yusuf (as), if only you think me not a dotard (a person who has weakness of mind because of old age).' They said: 'By Allah! Certainly, you are in your old error.' Then, when the bearer of the glad tidings arrived, he cast the shirt over his face, and he became clear sighted. He said: 'Did I not say to you, I know from Allah that which you know not.'"* They said: *"O our father! Ask Forgiveness from Allah for our sins, indeed we have been sinners."* (Ch 12:94-97)

The story began with a dream and it ends with the interpretation of the dream. Almighty Allah narrated: *He said: 'I will ask my Lord for forgiveness for you, verily, He! Only He is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most*



*Merciful." Then, when they entered unto Hazrat Yusuf (as), he betook his parents to himself and said: "Enter Egypt, if Allah will, in security." And he raised his parents to the throne and they fell down before him prostrate. And he said: "O my father! This is the interpretation of my dream of old! My Lord has made it come true! He was indeed good to me, when He took me out of prison, and brought you all here out of the Bedouin life, after Satan had sown enmity between me and my brothers. Certainly, my Lord is the Most Courteous and Kind unto whom He will. Truly He! Only He is the All Knowing, the All-Wise." (Ch 12:98-100). Before he died, Hazrat Yaqoub (as) (pbuh) advised his children to adhere to the teachings of Islam, the religion of all of Allah's prophets. Allah the Almighty revealed: "Or were you witnesses when death approached Hazrat Yaqoub (as)? When he said unto his sons: "What will you worship after me?" they said: "We shall worship your Ilah (God-Allah) the Ilah (God) of your father. Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, One Ilah (God), and to Him we submit in Islam." (Ch 12:133 Quran). Hazrat Yusuf (as) (pbuh), at the moment of his death, asked his brothers to bury him beside his forefathers if they were to leave Egypt. So when Hazrat Yusuf (as) (pbuh) passed away, he was placed in a coffin until such a time as he could be taken out of Egypt and buried beside his forefathers, as he had requested. It was said that he died at the age of one hundred ten*

### **Hazrat Isa (as)**

#### **The Birth of Mariam (ra)**

*Allah chose Adam, Noah, the family of Abraham and the family of Imran above the Alamin (mankind and jinns)(of their times). Offspring, one of the other, and Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower. Remember when the wife of Imran said: "O my Lord! I have vowed to You what (the child that) is in my womb to be dedicated for Your services (free from all worldly work; to serve Your Place of worship), so accept this, from me. Verily, You are the All-Hearer, the All Knowing." Then when she delivered her (child Mariam (ra)), she said: "O my Lord! I have delivered a female child," and Allah knew better what she delivered, - "and the male is not like the female, and I have named her Mariam (ra), and I seek refuge with You (Allah) for her and for her offspring from Satan, the outcast."*

#### **Mariam's (ra) Sustenance - Quranic**

So her Lord (Allah) accepted her with goodly acceptance. He made her grow in a good manner and put her under the care of Hazrat Zakariyyah (her grandfather) (Prophet Zakariyyah's (pbuh) wife's sister had a daughter named Hannah who had a daughter called Mariam (ra)). Every time he entered Al-Mihrab (a praying place or a private room), he found her supplied with sustenance. As Allah recounted in the Glorious Quran: *She said: "From Allah. Verily, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills, without limit." (Ch 3:37 Quran)*

#### **Mariam (ra)'s Birth - Longer Version**

Prophet Zakariyyah's (pbuh) wife's (Elizabeth) sister, Asiyah had a daughter named Hannah. She was married to Imran, a leader of the Israelites. For many years, the couple remained childless. Whenever Hannah saw another woman with a child, her longing for a baby increased. Although years had passed, she never lost hope. She believed that one day Allah would bless her with a child, on whom she would shower all her motherly love. She turned to the Lord of the heavens and the earth and pleaded with Him for a child. She would offer the child in the service of Allah's house, in the temple of Jerusalem. Allah granted her request. When she learned that she was pregnant, she was the happiest woman alive, and thanked Allah for His gift. Her overjoyed husband Imran also thanked Allah for His mercy. However, while she was pregnant her husband passed away. Hannah wept bitterly. Alas, Imran did not live to see their child for whom they had so longed. She gave birth to a girl, and again turned to Allah in prayer: *"O my Lord, I have delivered a female child," and the male is not like the female, and I have named her Mariam (ra), and I seek refuge with You (Allah) for her and her offspring from Satan, the outcast." (Ch 3:36 Quran)*

## **Hazrat Zakariyyah (as) Becomes Mariam (ra)'s Guardian**

Hannah had a big problem in reference to her promise to Allah, for females were not accepted into the temple, and she was very worried. Her sister's husband Zakariyah (as), comforted her, saying that Allah knew best what she had delivered and appreciated fully what she had offered in His service. She wrapped the baby in a shawl and handed it over to the temple elders. As the baby was a girl, the question of her guardianship posed a problem for the elders. This was a child of their late and beloved leader, and everyone was eager to take care of her. Zakariyah said to the elders: "I am the husband of her maternal aunt and her nearest relation in the temple; therefore, I will be more mindful of her than all of you." As it was their custom to draw lots to solve disagreements, they followed this course. Each one was given a reed to throw into the river. They had agreed that whoever's reed remained afloat would be granted guardianship of the girl. All the reeds sank to the bottom except Zakariyah's. With this sign, they all surrendered to the will of Allah and made him the guardian.

## **Mariam (ra)'s High Status**

To ensure that no one had access to Mariam (ra), Zakariyah (as) built a separate room for her in the temple. As she grew up, she spent her time in devotion to Allah. Zakariyah (as) visited her daily to see to her needs, and so it continued for many years. One day, he was surprised to find fresh fruit, which was out of season in her room. As he was the only person who could enter her room, he asked her how the fruit got there. She replied that these provisions were from Allah, as He gives to whom He wills. Zakariyah understood by this that Allah had raised Mariam (ra)'s status above that of other women. Thereafter, Zakariyah spent more time with her, teaching and guiding her. Mariam (ra) grew to be a devotee of Allah, glorifying Him day and night.

## **Mariam (ra) Receives News of Hazrat Isa (as)**

While Mariam (ra) was praying in her temple, an angel in the form of a man appeared before her. Filled with terror, she tried to flee, praying: *"Verily! I seek refuge with the Most Beneficent (Allah) from you, if you do fear Allah."* The angel said: *"I am only a Messenger from your Lord, (to announce) to you the gift of a righteous son."* She said: *"How can I have a son, when no man has touched me, nor am I unchaste?"* He said: *"So (it will be), your Lord said: 'That is easy for me (Allah): And (We wish) to appoint him as a sign to mankind and a mercy from Us (Allah), and it is a matter (already) decreed, (by Allah).'"* (Ch 19:18-21 Quran)

## **The Birth of Hazrat Isa (as)**

The angel's visit caused Mariam (ra) great anxiety, which increased as the months went by. How could she face giving birth to a child without having a husband? Later, she felt life kicking inside her. With a heavy heart, she left the temple and went to Nazareth, the city in which she had been born where she settled in a simple farm house to avoid the public. But fear and anxiety did not leave her. She was from a noble and pious family. Her father had not been an evil man nor was her mother an impure woman. How could she prevent tongues from wagging about her honor? After some months, she could not bear the mental strain any longer. Burdened with a heavy womb, she left Nazareth, not knowing where to go to be away from this depressing atmosphere. She had not gone far, when she was overtaken by the pains of childbirth. She reached Bethlehem valley, about four to six miles from Jerusalem. She saw down against a dry palm tree, and here she gave birth to a son. Looking at her beautiful baby, she was hurt that she had brought him into the world without a father. She exclaimed: "I wish I had died before this happened and had vanished into nothingness!" Suddenly, she heard a voice nearby: "Grieve not, your Lord has placed a rivulet – small stream of water - below, and shake the trunk of this tree, from which ripe dates will fall. So eat and drink and regain the strength you have lost; and be of good cheer, for what you see is the power of Allah, Who made the dry palm tree regain life, in order to provide food for you." For a while she was comforted by Allah's miracle, for it was a sure sign of her innocence and purity.



## **Mariam (ra) Returns to the City with Hazrat Isa (as)**

Mariam (ra) decided to return to the city. However, her fears also returned. What was she going to tell the people? As if sharing his mother's worry, the baby began to speak: "If you meet any person say: 'I have vowed to fast for The Beneficent and may not speak to any human today.'" With this miracle, Mariam (ra) felt at ease. As she had expected, her arrival in the city with a new born baby in her arms aroused the curiosity of the people. They scolded her: "This is a terrible sin that you have committed." She put her finger to her lips and pointed to the child. They asked: "How can we speak to a new born baby?" To their total amazement, the child began to speak clearly: *"Verily! I am a slave of Allah. He has given me the Scripture and made me a Prophet; and He has made me blessed wherever I be, and has enjoined me prayer, and Zakat, as long as I live, and dutiful to my mother, and made me not arrogant, unblessed. And Salam (peace) be upon me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I shall be raised alive!"* (Ch. 19:27 – 33). Most of the people realized that the baby was unique, for it Allah wills something, He merely says "Be" and it happens. Of course, there were some who regarded the baby's speech as a strange trick, but at least Mariam (ra) could now stay in Nazareth without being harassed.

## **Hazrat Isa (as) Upsets the Jews**

The Jewish priests felt this child Hazrat Isa (as) was dangerous, for they felt that the people would turn their worship to Allah the Almighty Alone, displacing the existing Jewish tenets. Consequently, they would lose their authority over the people. Therefore, they kept the miracle of Hazrat Isa (as)'s speech in infancy as a secret and accused Mariam (ra) of a great misdeed.

## **Hazrat Isa (as)'s Ability to Debate**

As Hazrat Isa (as) (pbuh) grew, the signs of prophethood began to increase. He could tell his friends what kind of supper waited for them at home and what they had hidden and where. When he was twelve years old, he accompanied his mother to Jerusalem. There he wandered into the temple and joined a crowd listening to the lecture of the Rabbis (Jewish priests). The audience were all adults, but he was not afraid to sit with them. After listening intently, he asked questions and expressed his opinion. The learned rabbis were disturbed by the boy's boldness and puzzled by the questions he asked, for they were unable to answer him. They tried to silence him, but he ignored their attempts and continued to express his views.

## **Hazrat Isa (as) Does Not Observe the Sabbath**

Hazrat Isa (as) grew up to manhood. It was Sabbath, a day of complete rest: no fire could be lit or extinguished nor could females plait their hair. Musah (as) had commanded that Saturday be dedicated to the worship of Allah. However, the Pharisees (one of a group of Jews who thought that they kept all God's rules) were guardians of the law, they were ready to sell it when their interests were involved so as to obtain personal gains. Hazrat Isa (as) was on his way to the temple. Although it was the Sabbath, he reached out his hand to pick two pieces of fruit to feed a hungry child. This was considered to be a violation of the Sabbath law. He made a fire for the old women to keep themselves warm from the freezing air. Another violation. He went to the temple and looked around. There were twenty thousand Jewish priests registered there who earned their living from the temple. The rooms of the temple were full of them.

## **Hazrat Isa (as) Receives His Prophethood**

Hazrat Isa (as) observed that the visitors were much fewer than the priests. They worshipped nothing but money. The poor people who could not afford the price of the sheep or dove were swept away like flies by the Pharisees and Saducees. Hazrat Isa (as) was astonished. On this blessed night, the two noble prophets Yahya (as) and Zakariyah (as) died, killed by the ruling authority. On the same night, the revelation descended upon Hazrat Isa (as) (pbuh). Allah the Exalted commanded him to begin his call to

the children of Israel. To Hazrat Isa (as), the life of ease was closed, and the page of worship and struggled was opened.

### **Hazrat Isa (as)'s Message**

Like an opposing force, the message of Hazrat Isa (as) came to denounce the practices of the Pharisees and to reinforce the Law of Moses. In the face of a materialistic age of luxury and worship of gold, Hazrat Isa (as) called his people to a nobler life by word and deed. Hazrat Isa (as) continued inviting the people to Almighty Allah. His call was based on the principle that there is no mediation between the Creator and His creatures. However, Hazrat Isa (as) was in conflict with the Jews' superficial interpretation of the Torah. He said that he did not come to abrogate the Torah, but to complete it by going to the spirit of its substance to arrive at its essence. He made the Jews understand that the Ten Commandments have more value than they imagined.

### **Hazrat Isa (as) Denounces Materialism**

Hazrat Isa (as) was therefore in confrontation with the materialistic people. He told them to desist from hypocrisy, show and false praise. There was no need to hoard wealth in this life. They should not preoccupy themselves with the goods of this passing world; rather they must preoccupy themselves with the affairs of the coming world because it would be everlasting. Hazrat Isa (as) told them that caring for this world is a sin, not fit for pious worshippers. The disbelievers care for it because they do not know a better way. As for the believers, they know that their sustenance is with Allah, so they trust in Him and scorn this world. Hazrat Isa (as) continued to invite people to worship the Only Lord, Who is without partner, just as he invited them to purify the heart and soul.

### **Jewish Priests Try to Embarrass Hazrat Isa (as)**

His teaching annoyed the priests, for every word of Hazrat Isa (as) was a threat to them and their position, exposing their misdeeds. The Roman occupiers had, at first, no intention of being involved in this religious discord of the Jews because it was an internal affair, and they saw that this dispute would distract the Jews from the question of the occupation. However, the priests started to plot against Hazrat Isa (as). They wanted to embarrass him and to prove that he had come to destroy the Mosaic Law. The Mosaic Law provides that an adulteress be stoned to death. They brought him a Jewish adulteress and asked Hazrat Isa (as): "Does not the law stipulate the stoning of the adulteress?" Hazrat Isa (as) answered: "Yes." They said: "This woman is an adulteress." Hazrat Isa (as) looked at the woman and then at the priests. He knew that they were more sinful than she. They agreed that she should be killed according to Mosaic Law, and they understood that if he was going to apply Mosaic Law, he would be destroying his own rules of forgiveness and mercy. Hazrat Isa (as) understood their plan. He smiled and assented: "Whoever among you is sinless can stone her." His voice rose in the middle of the Temple, making a new law on adultery, for the sinless to judge sin. There was none eligible; no mortal can judge sin, only Allah the Most Merciful. As Hazrat Isa (as) left the temple, the woman followed him. She took out a bottle of perfume from her garments, knelt before his feet and washed them with perfume and tears, and then dried his feet with her hair. Hazrat Isa (as) turned to the woman and told her to stand up, adding: "O Lord, forgive her sins." He let the priests understand that those who call people to Almighty Allah are not executioners. His call was based on mercy for the people, the aim of all divine calls.

### **Hazrat Isa (as)' Brings the Dead to Life**

Some Qur'anic commentators said that Hazrat Isa (as) brought four people back from the dead: a friend of his named Al-Azam, an old woman's son, and a woman's only daughter. These three had died during his lifetime. When the Jews saw this they said: "You only resurrect those who have died recently; perhaps they only fainted." They asked him to bring back to life Sam the Ibn Noah. When he asked them to show him his grave, the people accompanied him there. Hazrat Isa (as) invoked Allah the Exalted to bring him back to life and behold, Sam the Ibn Noah came out from the grave gray-haired. Hazrat Isa (as) asked:

"how did you get gray hair, when there was no aging in your time?" He answered: "O Spirit of Allah, I thought that the Day of Resurrection had come; from the fear of that day my hair turned gray."

### **The Miracles of Hazrat Isa (as) - Quranic**

Allah the Almighty said: *"Remember when Allah will say (on the Day of Resurrection): 'O Hazrat Isa (as), son of Mariam (ra)! Remember My Favor to you and to your mother when I supported you with Ruh-ul-Qudus (Gabriel) so that you spoke to the people in the cradle and in maturity; and when I taught you writing, Al Hikmah (the power of understanding), the Torah and the Gospel; and when you made out of the clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, by My Permission, and you breathed into it, and it became a bird by My Permission, and you healed those born blind, and the lepers by My Permission, and when you brought forth the dead by My Permission; and when I restrained the Children of Israel from you (when they resolved to kill you) since you came unto them with clear proofs, and the disbelievers among them said: 'This is nothing but evident magic.'" And when I (Allah) put in their hearts of the disciples (of Hazrat Isa (as)) to believe in Me and My Messenger, they said: "We believe. And bear witness that we are Muslims." (Ch 5:110-111 Quran)*

### **Hazrat Isa (as)' Disciples - Quranic**

Almighty Allah also revealed:

*Then when Hazrat Isa (as) came to know of their disbelief, he said: "Who will be my helpers in Allah's Cause?" The disciples said: "We are the helpers of Allah; we believe in Allah, and bear witness that we are Muslims (we submit to Allah)." Our Lord! We believe in what You have sent down, and we follow the Messenger (Hazrat Isa (as)); so write us down among those who bear witness (to the truth, La ilaha ill Allah - none has the right to be worshipped but Allah). And they (disbelievers) plotted (to kill Hazrat Isa (as)), and Allah planned too. And Allah is the Best of the planners. (Ch 3:48-54 Quran)*

### **Allah Sends the Disciples a Feast**

Hazrat Isa (as) continued calling people to Almighty Allah and laying down for them what might be called "the law of the Spirit." Once when standing on a mountain surrounded by his disciples, Hazrat Isa (as) saw that those who believed in him were from among the poor, the wretched, and the downtrodden (oppressed), and their number was small. Some of the miracles which Hazrat Isa (as) performed had been requested by his disciples, such as their wish for a "holy table" to be sent down from heaven. Allah the Exalted said: *"Remember when the disciples said: 'O Hazrat Isa (as), son of Mariam (ra)! Can your Lord send down to us a table spread (with food) from heaven?' Hazrat Isa (as) said: 'Fear Allah, if you are indeed believers.' They said: 'We wish to eat thereof and to be stronger in Faith and to know that you have indeed told us the truth and that we ourselves be its witnesses.' Hazrat Isa (as), son of Mariam (ra), said: 'O Allah, our Lord! Send us from heaven a table spread (with food) that there may be for us - for the first and the last of us - a festival and a sign from You; and provide us sustenance, for You are the best of sustainers.' Allah said: 'I am going to send it down unto you, but if any of you after that disbelieves, then I will punish him with a torment such as I have not inflicted on anyone among all the Alamin (mankind and jinn).*

### **Those Worshipping Hazrat Isa (as) and Allah's Questions to Hazrat Isa (as)**

The Day of the Table became one of the holy days for the disciples and followers of Hazrat Isa (as). Later on, the disciples and followers forgot the real essence of the miracles, and so they worshipped Hazrat Isa (as) as a god. Almighty Allah asserted: *"And remember when Allah will say (on the Day of Resurrection): 'O Hazrat Isa (as), son of Mariam (ra)! Did you say unto men: 'Worship me and my mother as two gods besides Allah?'" He will say: "Glory be to You! It was not for me to say what I had no right to say. Had I said such a thing, You would surely have known it. You know what is in my inner self though I do not know what is in Yours, truly, You, only You, are the All Knower of all that is hidden and unseen. Never did I say to them aught except what You (Allah) did command me to say: 'Worship Allah, my Lord and*

*your Lord', And I was a witness over them while I dwelt amongst them, but when You took me up, You were the Watcher over them, and You are a Witness to all things. (This is a great admonition and warning to the Christians of the whole world). If you punish them, they are Your slaves, and if You forgive them, Verily You, only You are the All Mighty, the All Wise." Allah will say: "This is a Day on which the truthful will profit from their truth: theirs are Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise) - they shall abide therein forever. Allah is pleased with them and they with Him. That is the great success (Paradise). To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and all that is therein, and He is Able to do all things." (Ch 5:116-120 Quran)*

### **The Jews Plot to Kill Hazrat Isa (as)**

So the forces of evil accused him of magic, infringement of the Mosaic Law, allegiance with the devil; and when they saw that the poor people followed him, they began to scheme against him. The Sanhedrin (assembly of twenty-three to seventy-one men), the highest judicial and ecclesiastical council of the Jews, began to meet to plot against Hazrat Isa (as). The plan took a new turn. When the Jews failed to stop Hazrat Isa (as)'s call, they decided to kill him. The chief priests held secret meetings to agree on the best way of getting rid of Hazrat Isa (as). While they were in such a meeting, one of the twelve apostles of Hazrat Isa (as), Judas Iscariot, went to them and asked: "What will you give me if I deliver him to you?" Judas bargained with them until they agreed to give him thirty pieces of silver known as shekels. The plot was laid for the capture and murder of Hazrat Isa (as). The priests had no authority to pass the death sentence at that time, so they convinced the Roman governor that Hazrat Isa (as) was plotting against the security of the Roman Empire and urged him to take immediate action against him. The governor ordered that Hazrat Isa (as) be arrested. The Glorious Qur'an affirms that Allah the Exalted did not permit the people of Israel to kill Hazrat Isa (as) or crucify him. What happened was that Allah saved him from his enemies and raised him to heaven. They never killed Hazrat Isa (as), they killed someone else. Allah the Almighty declared: *" And because of their saying (in boast), "We killed Messiah Hazrat Isa (as), son of Mariam (ra), the Messenger of Allah," but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but the resemblance of Hazrat Isa (as) was put over another man (and they killed that man) and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no certain knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely; they killed him not (Hazrat Isa (as), son of Mariam (ra)): But Allah raised him (Hazrat Isa (as)) up (with his body and soul) unto Himself (and he is in the heavens). And Allah is Ever All Powerful, All Wise. And there is none of the people of the Scripture (Jews & Christians), but must believe in him (Hazrat Isa (as), son of Mariam (ra), as only a Messenger of Allah, and a human being, before his (Hazrat Isa (as) or a Jew's or a Christian's ) death (at the time of the appearance of the angel of death). And on the Day of Resurrection, he (Hazrat Isa (as)) will be a witness against them. ( Ch 4:157-159 Quran)*



### Articles Of Faith

#### **Describe the six Articles of Faith in Islam (Imaan Mufasssil).**

A Muslim is not a complete Muslim if there are weaknesses in his belief. We must believe in whatever the prophet (s.a.w) has asked us to believe in. As such, there are six articles of faith and they are to believe in Allah, and His angels, and His books, and his Messengers, and in the Last Day and to believe in divine destiny both good and evil. They are important in our lives.

**The first element** is Tawhid that is the Oneness of Allah. It is the main principal ingredient of Islam. When we say that we believe in Allah, this means that we must accept his uniqueness in being, attributes, actions and worship. Allah is unique and no one is like unto Him. He is the Creator and Sustainer of all worlds. He is the Master of the Day of Judgement and He will be our Judge. He has no partner and anyone associating anyone or anything to Him is an act of Shirk and it is an unforgivable sin unless the person repents sincerely. By believing in Allah, Muslims must have complete trust and hope in Allah. We must submit to His will and rely on His aid. **The second article** is to believe in Angels who are obedient to Allah and act as His messengers. They are creatures made out of light and possess two, three or four pairs of wings. Allah conveyed his revelations to the Prophet by the angel Jibril (Gabriel). They have no knowledge except what Allah has taught them. They are not endowed with free will and they act as per the will of Allah. They are invisible to ordinary mortals but have appeared in human form too e.g. to Ibrahim foretelling the birth of a son, to Lut (Lot) warning him of impending doom and to the prophet as Dahyah Qalbiy (ra). There are four Archangels, namely Jibril who brought revelations, Izrail who is the angel of death, Israfil who will blow the trumpet on Judgement Day and Mikail who is responsible for nourishment of the body and soul). **The third article** is to believe in Books which are revealed scriptures sent as guidance from Allah to man. There are the Suhuf of Ibrahim, Zaboor of Dawood, Torah of Musah, Injeel of Isa and the Qur'an of the prophet (s.a.w). The message is basically the same that is unity of Allah and His attributes. It enlightens on the belief in the prophets of Allah, concept of rewards and punishments for actions on the Day of Judgement, and belief in the Afterlife. The Qur'an is the only one that remains unchanged for over 1400 years and Allah Himself has promised to safeguard it from corruption and change. It is the last and most comprehensive book and a complete code of life sent by Allah.

**The fourth article** is to believe in the Messengers sent by Allah to guide mankind through the ages. Among them the names of Adam, Ibrahim, Isma'il, Ishaq, Ya'qoub, Ayyoub, Nuh, Swalih and many others can be cited. They were all mortal and had to taste death. However we also believe that prophets like Idris and Isa will taste death one day. They conveyed His message in the language of the people they were sent to guide. Allah helped and strengthened them against unbelievers. Allah makes no distinction between His Messengers. Among them, Prophet Mohammad was the last messenger and the Seal of the prophets. He was sent for all humanity, just as the Qur'an is guidance for all mankind. **The fifth article** is to believe in Aakhirah. Muslims must believe in the Day of Judgement and in accountability on that day. Everything will be clear and obvious on that day. There will be reward for good actions such as being in Paradise and there will be Hell for bad actions. This life will be everlasting. Muslims believe that this life on earth is a preparation for the next. **The sixth article** of faith is to believe in Qadr. This means that Allah has already created what is best for mankind. He has given human beings freedom of choice and made them responsible for their actions. Following the orders of Allah and the footsteps of the prophet will lead us to the path set by Allah. As such one's qadr or destiny will be rightly guided. Allah's knowledge is limitless and as a result He exhorts us to think, plan and make sound judgements to avoid pitfalls and influence of Shaitaan. Ultimately it is Allah who determines all that happens, for He has complete authority over His creation.

**Discuss your understanding of any two of them. (I elaborate on all of the 6 but if you go by the question you will choose only 2)**

Belief in the articles of faith has many implications. When we say that we must believe in **Allah**, this implies that we must accept His uniqueness without conditions. When Allah is said to be unique in Being this is to be understood that no one can be like Him in physical body or mental or psychological capacity. We can't think Allah as a body or mass. He is a light. When we say that He is unique in Attribute, this means that no one can possess anyone of His characteristics as we are the weak servants with lots of weaknesses. A single example of His ability to be eternal is enough to show our weaknesses. When we say that Allah is unique in Actions this means that as He is able to create anything out of nothing with the mere saying of "Be" and the thing is, we are not able to act as such. When we say that Allah is unique in worship this means that worship, 5 daily prayers and Ibaadah are only for Allah. We are the worshippers and He is the object of worship. Belief in **angels** is to be understood that they are the creatures of Allah assigned for different tasks. They are not superior to Allah but are servants of Allah. It must be understood that they are created to praise Allah, to deliver Wahy to messengers, to help the pious people, to say Ameen on our du'a, to help in the creation and maintenance of the world, to help in the distribution of food and drink, to help Mankind in this world and the next and to be witnesses of our deeds. Belief in **Books** is to be understood that they are the words of Allah. They are the sacred books without any mistake of the Creator of the worlds. These books are meant for our guidance and to avoid pitfalls. They are also used as tutorial on who Allah is and why were we sent on earth. They are reminders of the favours and warnings of the punishment of Allah. They are codes of conduct for the believers and means to attain piety and wisdom. They are instruments to tenderise the hearts and means to distinguish between halal and haram or between the right and the wrong path.

Belief in **Messengers** is to be understood as the chosen people of Allah, the friends of Allah, the beloveds of Allah and the vicegerents of Allah. They have been chosen not because of their deeds but because of the love of Allah for them. They have been sent to deliver the messages of Allah, to explain these messages, to purify the hearts of their followers and to be our guides. They were the magnets of blessings from Allah and shields from punishment from Allah. They are a source of knowledge from Allah and any concise and precise details on Allah could be obtained from them. They are not superior to Allah but superior to us. They are infallible people blessed by Allah with assurance of success in the next world. As their titles (messengers) suggest, they are people with messages from Allah and equipped with the ability to perform miracles. Belief in the **Day of Judgement** implies that we must have faith that one day we will be accountable for all our deeds and Allah will be our Judge. It is also to be understood that fear of that day can bring a person to stop committing sins and lead to the right path adhering to the Islamic Law. It is also a means to have the shafa'ah of the prophet, the forgiveness of Allah and the salvation through entering Jannah. It must be understood that it is a very difficult day for those who have not prepared themselves well and for the unbelievers and at the same time a pleasant day where the blessed friends of Allah will have the so long awaited moment of contemplating Allah. Belief in **Qadr** means to believe in what comes from Allah is always good. Whatever state we are in as a test from Allah must be accepted and taken as blessings from Allah. However when an ill comes to us due to our disobedience and breaching of the law of Allah, then either it is a punishment from Allah or again a blessing as it is a means of purification and salvation of our sins. When we have been given the choice to choose between the right and the wrong path, it is that Allah didn't want to impose on us but He wanted to give us the time to come to Him or rather to return to Him. At the end, Allah does not want us to suffer in Qabr or in Aakhirah but to have lives of pious and obedient servants. All good and bad are from Allah depends on the servant's deeds.

## 5 Pillars Of Islam

### Shahaadah

#### **What is meant by the first pillar of Islam, the Declaration of Faith (kalimah) ?**

Shahaadah is from the verb shadida meaning to witness. According to Islamic terminology Shahaadah means to witness, to know or to believe without any doubt that there is no god except Allah (la ilaaha illallah) and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah (Muhammadur rasoolullah).

**Firstly**, the Kalimah (Laa ilaaha Illallah Muhammadur Rasoulullah) is the basic essence of Islam. Everything resides in these words. Our whole existence is based on Allah and our guidance is through His prophet. **Secondly**, it is also known as the kalimah tayyabah meaning purity. As such when a person utters these words he is bound to become purified from disbelief and he enters the fold of Islam. **Thirdly**, it is also said that the whole Qur'an is an explanation of this one statement, meaning that if we want to know what is meant by Tawheed in the first part of the Kalimah and what is implied by Risaalah in the second part, then we just have to study the Qur'an elaborating on Allah, prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) and mankind. **Fourthly**, when we utter these words of faith, we accept Allah with all His words from His book known as the Holy Qur'an and we must accept the holy prophet (s.a.w) with all his teachings from his hadith (sayings) and sunnah (deeds). **Fifthly**, by this declaration of faith we are engaging ourselves to bear witness to the truth it conveys and it must be with total submission and sincerity. We can't be firm believers of this Kalimah and at the same time not sincere to it.

**Sixthly**, the first part of this kalimah is the belief in the Oneness of Allah that is tawhid which is the fundamental teaching of Islam. By believing in Allah this implies to believe in His uniqueness in being, attributes and action. No one can equal Him or be better than Him. **Seventhly**, the second part deals with the Risalah of the holy Prophet (s.a.w) and this is vital to accept him. Accepting the prophet as Allah's prophet implies accepting his uniqueness also through him as being the best and the last of prophets, the universal prophet with the universal book as Qur'an and as a mercy for all worlds. **Eighthly**, this kalimah describes the relationship between Allah the Creator and the created. When we say that there is no god except Allah this means among others that there is no Creator other than Allah. He is our Creator, Lord, Cherisher and Sustainer among other of His qualities. **Ninthly**, it symbolises an active statement which is repeated by Muslims many times in formal worship that is Swalaat in the position of Qa'dah before the prayer ends and it is present in the call to prayer (adhan) five times daily. **Tenthly**, all Muslims need to profess this belief while acting and living their lives in accordance with its requirements. It will not serve its purpose if we don't act upon it.

In fact a true Muslim is one who is completely aware of the meaning of the kalimah and proclaims it with sincerity and devotion. According to the prophet (s.a.w) it serves as purifying the heart and brings the soul to a return journey to Allah in the best way.

### Swalaat

#### **What are the requirements for Swalaat or describe how Muslims perform the ritual of preparing for prayer?**

The second pillar of Islam is Swalaat. Also known as prayer or namaz, swalaat is obligatory on all Muslims throughout their life time. There is no place or instance where swalaat can be abandoned. We have been gifted by Allah with five daily swalaat such as Fajr, Zohr, Asr, Maghrib and Isha. Moreover they are divided into Fard, Wajib, Sunnah and Nafil. However, to perform swalaat there are many conditions that must be considered.

**Firstly**, for someone to perform swalaat and for swalaat to be fard on him, he must be a Muslim who has already attained the age of puberty. A non Muslim is not allowed to enter the mosque and it is

not a sin for someone who has not attained the age of puberty to miss swalaat. **Secondly**, the place to perform the swalaat must be clean and tidy. Cleanliness is an essential part of faith (Iman). **Thirdly**, the clothes used by the Muslims must be clean and not covered or imprinted with any impurity as Allah addresses to the children of Adam (as) in the Qur'an to look to our adornment at every place of worship. We must be appropriately dressed and our private parts must be well covered. **Fourthly**, in order to perform swalaat a Muslim must perform his ablution washing his hands, mouth, nose, face, arms, head and feet. However, in the absence of water, the symbolic washing known as tayyammum must be done. **Fifthly**, the Muslim must face the Qiblah which is the direction towards the Ka'bah. If another direction is taken voluntarily then the swalaat will not be accepted.

**Sixthly**, the person performing swalaat must be sane of mind and not lunatic. He must be able to concentrate on whatever he is saying and doing through swalaat. **Seventhly**, swalaat can't be performed in advance. We must wait for the appropriate time and for the prayer call that is the adhan. **Eighthly**, when is iqamah that is the announcement for the swalaat to be done in jama'ah that is congregation, the Muslim must be ready in a standing position, in a straightened line and standing close by the side of his brother in Islam. **Ninthly**, the Muslim must be ready physically and mentally to follow the Imam that is the leader of the prayer at any cost. He will not be allowed to start the prayer before the Imam or to do any action before the Imam in course of the swalaat or to end the prayer before the Imam. He must be prepared to follow the Imam. **Tenthly**, when standing in swalaat the Muslim must know and declare the intention to pray and to perform such and such swalaat. Niyat that is intention is important.

### **How do Muslims perform daily prayers (swalaat)?**

Swalaat is one of the five pillars of Islam and it is obligatory on all Muslims. It is fard on us to perform the five daily prayers such as Fajr, Zohr, Asr, Maghrib and Isha. However, there are steps that must be respected when performing swalaat.

**Firstly**, the Muslim must have his ritual purification known as tahaarat (purity) divided into wudu and Ghusal and in the absence of water the Tayyammum is done. Alongside with purity, his cloth must be clean and deprived of any impurity and it must be covering his private parts. **Secondly**, it is allowed to pray anywhere as long as it is clean because the earth of Allah is wide as it is told in the Qur'an. Once the place is spotted, the Muslims must face the direction of the Ka'bah as Qiblah before the swalaat. **Thirdly**, the Muslim must be aware of the intention of what swalaat he will offer. **Fourthly**, the Muslim must pronounce the Takbir by saying Allahou Akbar at the beginning of the prayer. For men, both hands will be lifted till both thumbs touch the lobes of the ears. For women the hands will be elevated till the shoulders. **Fifthly**, there is the position of the Qiyam where Thana, surah Faatiha and other verses are recited. For men the right hand must be tied over the left hand supporting it below the navel. For women, both hands are tied on the breast.

**Sixthly**, there is the rukuh where we praise Allah. For men, they must bend till the back makes a 90 degree with the leg. However, for women, as soon as their hands are placed on their knees, they stopped bending. **Seventh**, there is the sajdah where the toes, knees, the hands, the nose and the forehead touch the ground. For men the elbows are spread apart and their hips are upraised. However, for women, the elbows are squeezed to the sides of their bodies and the hips are levelled to the thighs. **Eighthly**, there is the Jalsa and the Qa'dah where verses from hadith are recited. For men, the right foot is elevated on the toes and the left foot is turned to the right side. But for women both feet are turned to the right. **Ninthly**, there is the salaam which is composed of turning the head to the right and then to the left to complete the swalaat. Both men and women act likewise. **Tenthly**, there is the du'a (personal invocation) which can be said the Muslims. According to the prophet (s.a.w) the du'a after the swalaat is accepted by Allah.



## Why prayer (salat) is considered the foundation of religion? What is its importance / significance?

There are different reasons why prayer is considered the foundation of religion. **Firstly**, being the second pillar of Islam, Muslims believe that they will be questioned about this on the Day of Judgement. Both the quality and sincerity of ibaadah will be asked. **Secondly**, it is an institution which gives a structure to the day enabling Muslims to remember Allah. It marks the whole day with spiritual stamp and blessings from Allah. **Thirdly**, it is important to Muslims as the prophet (s.a.w) said that Prayer is the key to Paradise. It aims at encouraging the Muslims to strive harder. **Fourthly**, it is an occasion given by Allah to Mankind to thank Allah for all His blessings and favours as it provides inner peace and comfort to the soul. **Fifthly**, it strengthens our belief and relationship with Allah as it is direct communication with Him purifying the heart and gives spiritual strength to become a better person.

**Sixthly**, the congregational prayers strengthen the bonds of brotherhood among Muslims. There is a sense of solidarity and it also increases awareness of the plight of less fortunate Muslims and a desire to help. **Seventhly**, Allah reminds Muslims to do more and to strive harder in order to cultivate true piety in the love of Allah through Swalaat. **Eighthly**, it cultivates a sense of belonging to a specific community under a common Imam as leader. It thus serves its purpose. **Ninthly**, it creates a sense of discipline in the habits of Muslims. We are bound to five daily prayers which are performed at specific time. They are not done as per our wish but through the wish of Allah. **Tenthly**, when we perform swalaat we approach Allah to such an extent that we obtain the beauty of the Swalih (the pious) and the Swabir (the patient). Allah will love us and we will be blessed in this world, Qabr and Akhirah.

## How far is the mosque (Masjid) a focal point in the lives of Muslim?

In Islam the mosque is the symbol of Islamic architecture. It is not a mere building but it is a focal point in the lives of Muslims through different ways. **Firstly**, it is a space provided for the congregational Friday (jum'ah) prayers and individual prayer which can be offered at any time. **Secondly**, the mosque is vital for both men and women, though predominantly men, to perform the five daily swalaat in congregation. **Thirdly**, the mosque is also used twice a year for both 'id that is 'id-ul-fitr and 'id-ul-adha. **Fourthly**, the mosque through its loudspeaker and its minaret is a means to notify Muslims concerning the various daily times for prayer. **Fifthly**, the mosque is used especially for tarawih prayers in the evening where both men and women can attend.

**Sixthly**, the mosque is used as a place for teaching and learning. Usually a Madrasah is attached to the mosque to teach Qur'an, Hadith, Islamiyat and many other fields. **Seventhly**, the mosque is vital for those who use it as a place of retreat for I'tikaaf during the month of Ramadan. Usually this is applied to men. **Eighthly**, the mosque can be used for both Nikah and Janaza prayers. It is a blessed place where blessings are sent upon mankind. **Ninthly**, the mosque can also be used as a centre for the community whenever there is any topic of discussion or sharing of ideas or organising of any religious or civil programmes. **Tenthly**, the mosque can be used by Muslims to read the Qur'an, Hadith, books of Fiqh, relax, and to sleep between prayers. This can be seen in Macca and Madina where families group with small children.

## Sawm

## What are the main observances followed by Muslims during the month of Ramadan?

Sawm is another institution found among the five pillars of Islam and has been instituted in the second year of Hijri. It is the keeping of fast for a period of 29 to 30 days during the month of Ramadhan. Before the time of the prophet of Islam (s.a.w), the number of days was 40 for all prophets (as) from Hazrat Adam (as) till the time of Hazrat Isa (as). It is fard in Islam on all Muslims and not abiding to it

without any proper reason, renders the Muslims sinners. During that month there are many observances that are followed by the Muslims.

**Firstly**, it is recommended to all Muslims to wake up early in the morning for the swalaat-ul-Tahajjud and to fast from before dawn (fajr) till sunset during Ramadan. **Secondly**, it is sunnah of the prophet (s.a.w) when beginning the fast to eat suhoor (Sehri) and to make the niyat (intention) that the fast is for Allah and done in His obedience. **Thirdly**, as from the time of Fajr where the muslims will be gathered in the mosque for swalaat, it is vital to abstain from eating, drinking, smoking and having sex till the time of sunset. **Fourthly**, as usual it is recommended for a validated fasting to abstain from all evil thoughts, careless chatter, and undesirable actions respectively with our thought, tongue and limbs. **Fifthly**, it is recommended on Muslims to exert their utmost in patience and humility. This will help them to face the evil in this world.

**Sixthly**, as swalaat is already and always fard on Muslims, the latter are recommended to perform all swalaat on time with jama'ah till the breaking of fast (iftar) at sunset (maghrib) usually with dates and followed by a light meal depending on people taste and habit. **Seventhly**, it is recommended to read the qur'an and much of Darood Shareef especially before maghrib swalaat and then to invoke Allah through sincere du'a. During that month after swalaatul Isha, we have the tarawih prayers which are recommended with the lecture of one part of the Qur'an in each night to complete the whole recitation by the end of the month. **Eighthly**, it is recommended to read the Qur'an individually during this month which is also beneficial and after its completion to at least learn by heart a few verses. **Ninthly**, it is sunnah for some Muslim men to spend the last ten days in I'tikaf in the mosque giving up all worldly occupations for the sake of Allah. **Tenthly**, it is recommended to spend the night of Lailat-ul-qadr in ibaadah. According to the Qur'an this night is worth more than one thousand months.

#### **Give reasons why this month is special? What is the significance / importance of Ramadhan?**

The month of Ramadhan is special in various ways. **Firstly**, fasting (sawm) during Ramadan is a pillar of Islam hence it is by itself obligatory on every responsible and fit Muslim. Its importance lies in its being vital to accept to be considered as a complete Muslim with the remaining pillars. **Secondly**, Allah says in the Qur'an that Ramadan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur'an as a guide to mankind and it acts as a training period for Muslims to apply in the remaining months of a whole year. **Thirdly**, it is special as in this month Allah forgives us and purifies us from our sins and this leads to obedience to Him, and by exercising self control, patience and humility in all matters, fasting gives Muslims a sense of hope in the mercy of Allah. **Fourthly**, this month is special as in it the Muslims increase their study of their faith and the recitation of the Qur'an. It is a way towards the return to Allah or to approach Him nearer. **Fifthly**, this month helps Muslims to unite as a community in acts of worship, especially for last ten days in I'tikaaf and the night of power or destiny known as Lailatul Qadr.

**Sixthly**, the mere fact of not able to eat and drink for specific hours makes Muslims more aware of the suffering of the poor and needy. This will lead to being more generous during Ramadan ending with the annual zakat to be given to the poor. **Seventhly**, a big part of this month symbolises the celebrating the idea of brotherhood and sharing especially during the breaking of the fast at the time of Iftar. There is sharing of sweets or meals among neighbours or in the mosque. **Eighthly**, it is a month allowing Muslims the opportunity to purify their egos, their hearts and their deeds. It is a spiritual month leading to the elevation of Muslims in the eyes of Allah. **Ninthly**, that month which is headed by abstinence helps Muslims to stop and abstain from common evils such as telling lies, backbiting, quarrelling, eating haraam item, earning through unlawful means and any act which may harm or cause grief to a person. **Tenthly**, it has been proven scientifically that a person who does not eat or reduce eating for a few days on monthly basis will be benefited physically. As such the month of Ramadhan is for both physical and spiritual benefits.

## Zakaat

### **What does Islam teach about Zakaat and who are the people entitled to be recipients of zakat?**

Among the various pillars of Islam, Zakaat also known as the poor due is obligatory on Muslims. It has been instituted for the community of our prophet (s.a.w) since the second year of Hijri. Zakaat is the amount of money taken from the better off or the rich and to be given to those in need. Allah says in the Qur'an to spend in His way as in surah 36 verse 47 it is mentioned to spend on others out of what Allah has provided you. Zakaat is taken from different sources like money, gold, silver, mines and land tax. Normally it is 2 ½ % of our money or wealth that is given as Zakaat. If the Nisab; the minimum amount on which zakaat is taken, equals or exceeds 598.40 gm on silver and 85.5 gm on gold, then zakaat must be paid. Zakaat must be taken from mines as 1/5 of the produce and on land tax as 1/10 if the land is watered by a lack or a river or 1/20 if not watered naturally.

There are many people entitled to be recipients of zakaat. **Firstly**, all Muslim poor people who are not able to support themselves or their families are liable to take zakaat. These people are in need of our help to face life. **Secondly**, all new Muslim converts who are not able to settle into their new life are in need of Zakaat money. They need a help to start over their life as they left everything behind them. **Thirdly**, if there is the necessity to pay the ransom of any prisoner of war and to give them their freedom, then zakaat can be taken. It is the responsibility of the Muslim state to safeguard the interest of the people. **Fourthly**, any Muslim in need due to huge amount of debt and who is under persistent pressure can take zakaat. He is still responsible towards his families and has to meet their expenses. **Fifthly**, zakaat can be taken by any Muslim traveller who is in difficulty abroad. It is the responsibility of the Islamic state to ensure the return of the traveller.

**Sixthly**, Zakaat can be taken by those who are engaged by the state or government to collect zakaat. They are employed by the Muslim ruler. **Seventhly**, zakaat can be given to cover the expenses of Muslims in the service of Allah. They are those who spend their time and energy in inviting others to Islam. **Eighthly**, zakaat can be given to those who beg and those who out of humility don't beg. These people need our help. **Ninthly**, zakaat can be given to those women who lost their husbands or those who divorced but are still in need of money for the survival of their children. **Tenthly**, zakaat can be distributed to madrasah, dar-ul-uloom or any Islamic centre to help the students in their studies and to spread Islam. Allah says in surah 57 verse 7 to spend on others out of that of which He has made you trustees for those of you who have attained faith and who spend freely in Allah's cause Will have a great reward.'

### **Why is zakat important in Muslim life? What is the significance / importance of Zakaat?**

Zakaat is important for Muslims in different ways. **Firstly**, it is a pillar of faith and it is an act of worship. It has been enjoined by Allah in the Qur'an and undertaken by Muslims in the interest of society as a whole. **Secondly**, we are also responsible towards our fellow Muslims and by giving in kind or money to the rightful beneficiaries we are fulfilling our Islamic duties. This will create the sense of sharing and thinking of others. **Thirdly**, when we give zakaat generously, such actions will purify the heart of selfishness and greed and we will be blessed by Allah in doing so. This will remove the love of wealth and money from our heart. **Fourthly**, when we give Zakaat this will minimise the suffering of the needy and the poor members of society. At the same time we will know the worthiness and value of money. **Fifthly**, this will foster goodwill and gratitude in the hearts of the recipients towards the giver and hence this will create unity in the society benefits.

**Sixthly**, there will be a manifestation of spiritual and humanitarian interactions between individual Muslims and the society he lives in. This will bridge the link between materialism and spirituality. **Seventhly**, when we give zakaat with love from our heart this in fact symbolises our gratitude towards Allah. He is the One who has given us wealth and we in return are being kind towards the poor. **Eighthly**,

giving zakaat will help us to keep a flow of money in the society. The poor will not forever be poor or poorer. This will also lead to the prevention of monopolies in the society. **Ninthly**, giving zakaat will lead to the purification of our money. Once zakaat is paid, our money becomes pure and goes under the assurance of Allah. Indeed we will never be deprived of blessings in our life. **Tenthly**, when we give zakaat the moral degradation of society lowers and ultimately finishes because the frustration of people and their depression lowers down. There will be fewer thieves for instance.

Zakaat has been granted to mankind as a means to purify both our materialistic and spiritual dealings. At the same time it aims at helping those in need and creating a better society.

## Hajj

### **Describe the rites performed during the Hajj. How is the hajj performed?**

Hajj is the fifth and last pillar of Islam. It has been given to the prophet (s.a.w) during the Madinan phase and it is obligatory on all Muslims having the means to make it to Macca in Saudi Arabia. The hajj is obligatory on each Muslim and must be accomplished at least once during our lifetime. This institution englobes a few acts of different great personalities of Islam. There are some requirements and steps that are important in Hajj.

**Firstly**, when performing the Hajj, Muslims must be in the state of purification (wudu/Ghusal) done at boundary (miqat) and must wear the pilgrim dress known as ihram. It is a two pieces of unstitched cloth for men and for women it can be any appropriate dress or jilbab. **Secondly**, each Muslim must know the different stages and what must be read or intended when going through each one of them. As such, the Niyyat or intention for Hajj is done with a two rakat (unit) prayers before entering the boundary of the Haram shareef. **Thirdly**, there is the continuous repetition of the talbiyah loudly ('Here I am O Lord' – Labbaik Allaahoummah Labbaik) when proceeding to Macca. This can be done either individually or in group. **Fourthly**, when entering Macca Muslims must do the tawaf 7 times which is known as tawaf-e-qudoom starting at the corner of hajr aswad (the Black Stone). Then this is followed by the Hastening (sai) of 7 times between the hills of Safa and Marwa and the shaving of the head for men and clipping of the hair for women. **Fifthly**, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of Dhu'l Hijjah Muslims proceed from Mecca to Mina before noon where they have to pray zuhr, asr, maghrib and Isha swalaat. They spend that night at Mina.

**Sixthly**, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Hijjah they proceed to Arafah after swalaatul fajr reaching there before Zawaal (zenith). This is the location of Mount of Mercy (Jabal al Rahmah). This is the main day of Hajj and if someone misses that day, he has missed Hajj. On that day, Muslims will combine swalaat zuhr and asr in the manner of the travellers, they will listen to the sermon, they will pray and supplicate for forgiveness and success in this world and the next. This is known as the Standing (wuquf). **Seventhly**, after sunset without performing swalaat maghrib, Muslims proceed to Muzdalifah where they will pray swalaat maghrib and isha together. They will spend the night there praying and gather 49 pebbles for rami, that is the beating of Shaitaan. **Eighthly**, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Hijjah the Muslims will leave Muzdalifa after swalaat fajr returning to Mina to beat the first Shaitaan. Then they will return to Macca to perform the tawaf known as tawaf Ziyarah. The pilgrims will offer the sacrifice, individually or collectively, in memory of Hazrat Ibrahim (as) after which the men will shave their hair and women may clip a small lock of hair and change out of ihram. **Ninthly**, on the same day the pilgrims will return to Mina where they will beat the three Shaitaan on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of the same month. They may engage in any kind of ibaadah. **Tenthly**, the pilgrims will return from Mina to Mecca to perform tawaf al wida before leaving for home or madina. Muslims will pray at maqam Ibrahim, kiss hajr al aswad, drink water from Zamzam and engage in ibaadah of their choice.



## **Explain how the Hajj unites the Muslim community. What is the significance / importance of Hajj?**

There are different ways how the Hajj unites the Muslim community. **Firstly**, by wearing the 2 pieces of white unstitched cloth worn by all men as their pilgrim dress (ihram) this shows equality before Allah. It symbolises the burial shroud in which all Muslims are wrapped (all are equal before Allah on the Day of Judgement). **Secondly**, all believers forget their outward appearance concentrating on the rites required by Allah. There is no rich no poor no person from rich or poor countries. **Thirdly**, the recitation of the talbiyah ('Here I am O Lord') constantly said by all the pilgrims symbolises unity as it resonates everywhere. **Fourthly**, the tawaf of the Ka'bah is a symbol of unity for Muslims. Everyone is doing the same thing with the same intention to please Allah practically at the same time. **Fifthly**, there is a brotherhood which is created when Muslims come to perform Hajj from all over the world. It englobes people of all countries at the same place and time.

**Sixthly**, the mere standing at Arafat is the climax of Hajj where all people are equal before Allah. At the time of zawal (zenith) and before swalaat maghrib everyone is standing in the sun for supplication. It will be the same on the day of judgement. **Seventhly**, it symbolises no hierarchy in Islam or during Hajj as beliefs and actions unite the community in feelings of brotherhood and fraternity. **Eighthly**, there is sharing of meat or food and happiness on the day of sacrifice in the remembrance of Hazrat Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son. **Ninthly**, relationships and friendships are created among different people and countries through their meeting during the Hajj period. It is seen that after that period, the pilgrims will keep that relationship. **Tenthly**, the hajj unites Muslims under the same flag of Islam and under the same five pillars of Islam as hajj englobes the fundamental aspects of Islam and of how to be a Muslim.

## **Discuss the importance of ihram and wuqf.**

Among the different elements of Hajj both the ihram and the wuqf are important for the pilgrims. The ihram is the cloth of the pilgrims during the period of hajj. For the men it consists of two unstitched pieces of white cloth. The upper one is known as the rida and the lower one is the izhar. **Firstly**, when someone wears the ihram, it signifies purification of his state. It symbolises purity where ghusl and wudu are important. **Secondly**, wearing the ihram signifies renouncing all the daily habits, wears and vanities. It signifies humility. **Thirdly**, there is an uniformity among all Muslims when performing the hajj. There is no difference. **Fourthly**, this will create a brotherhood and fraternity where pride no more exist when wearing the ihram. **Fifthly**, it reminds Muslims of the cloth covering at burial having the same colour with no trappings or wealth or status as help.

Another important aspect is the Wuqf. The wuqf (standing) of 'Arafat is the climax and is the most vital part of Hajj. **Firstly**, its importance lies in the fact that if we miss the wuqf, well, then there is no hajj. Our hajj is not accepted. Our presence is important. **Secondly**, it is important as when doing the wuqf sincerely, our sins will be forgiven by Allah and it is said that after the hajj we will be considered as the sinless people. **Thirdly**, it is important as it helps us to know the spot where the prophet (s.a.w) pronounced his last address with his last advices. It is also said that he received his last wahy – revelation there. It reminds us of the place and time Hazrat Adam (as) and Bibi Hawa (ra) met and the name came to be as 'Arafat. **Fourthly**, it is really the place where we go through the process of once again recognizing our Lord. We assess our past. We ask for His forgiveness, and resolve to worship only Allah (swt). **Fifthly**, it is not only physical but also spiritual. It must be done with the heart meaning that our hearts also must be present there and concentrating on what we are saying and benefit from the purification of the hearts.

## Jihaad In Islam

In this present world there have been so many misconceptions concerning the word Jihad. In fact, the views that some people, especially the non-Muslims, have on the term Jihad in Islam is totally wrong. After all there are different kinds of Jihad.

The Arabic word “*jihad*” comes from the root of the word “*juhd*” which means “effort.” Jihad is the process of “exerting one’s best efforts”, to achieve a particular goal. The word “jihad” does not necessarily imply violence or war. Contrary to the common belief that “jihad” is considered as “holy war,” Islamic jihad does not refer solely to fighting in the way of Allah. The Qur’anic concept of jihad refers to exerting efforts for the sake of Allah. This effort can be fighting back armed aggression, but can also be resisting evil drives and desires in one’s self. As such there are different types of Jihad, internal as well as external.

At the outset, we have Jihad of the heart/soul; in Arabic: *jihad bin nafs/qalb*. It is referred as “**the greater Jihad**” (*al-jihad al-akbar*). It is one’s inner struggle of good against evil; refraining oneself from the whispers of Shaitan (Satan). This process involves allowing Islam to transform one’s soul to achieving internal peace; and forgoing the hatred and anger. “Jihad is ordained for you (Muslims) though you dislike it, and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows but you do not know.” {Quran, Surah 2: Al-Baqarah, Verse 216; Mohsin Translation. Added to the above, we have Jihad by the tongue; in Arabic: *jihad bil lisan*. It is defending Islam and spreading Islam by scholarly lectures, speeches and debates. It often overlaps with Da’awah (invitation to Islam, or spreading the message of Islam). In The Last Sermon, Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) asked the listeners whether he has passed on the message to them; and they confirmed affirmatively. Then the Messenger of Allah ordered all those present today to pass on the same message to those who are not here today; and the last person to hear the message should understand it better than the people here. Thirdly we have Jihad by the pen/knowledge; in Arabic: *jihad bil qalam/ilm*. This form of Jihad involves scholarly research of Islam in aiding the spread and defence of Islam; and publishing written articles in clearing misconceptions and correction lies against Islam. Examples of such Jihad include the research and discovery of scientific evidences, literature miracles and mathematical miracles from the Quran. Messenger of Allah once stated that the ink of a scholar is holier than the blood of a martyr; and one who is reading looks handsome in front of Allah.

Next we have, Jihad by the hand; in Arabic: *jihad bil yad*. This is a Jihad of action rather than words. At certain areas, it overlaps with Zakart (charity) and Hajj (pilgrimage). Some of its examples include giving charity to the poor and needy, performing Hajj or Ummrah, helping those who need help, saving people’s lives, etc. These are more of physical deeds instead of words. “A person whose feet become dust ridden because of [striving] in the way of Allah will never be touched by the flames of Hell” { Sahih Bukhari 2811}. The most beautiful of all Jihad is a perfect Hajj. It involves testing of one’s patience and piety to the apex. The whole period of Hajj, with just one intention and aim, worshiping Allah! Moreover we have Jihad by the sword; in Arabic: *jihad bis saif*. In contrary to Jihad of the heart/soul; this form of Jihad is referred as “**the lesser jihad**” (*al-jihad al-asghar*). Sometimes it is necessary to undertake Jihad by the sword. This would include usage of arsenals and engaging in a combat. This could be simply a bunch of freedom fighters or an organised campaign of army. Jihad by the sword is use of arms to engage into a combat. It is **not** misuse of arms to create violence. There are only two situations were Jihad by the sword is allowed to be undertaken. 1) **For self-defence**. When someone attacks you or when your nation has been attacked. Engaging into combat due to self defence. 2) **Fighting against evil and unjust**. It is also a

sin if a Muslim sees unjust been done, capable of stopping it, yet not doing anything about it. This can include war on drug, war on child labour as well as war on terror! The American administration today seems to be launching a global war on terror, but are they the first to launch the war on terror? The Muslims already announced the war on terror fourteen centuries ago, under the name of Jihad bis saif! There are many rules and limitations when engaging in combat under the title of Jihad. For example, civilians are not to be harmed; trees are not to be cut down; asylum should be granted to surrendering enemy soldiers; etc. “And if anyone of the Mushrikun seeks your protection then grant him protection, so that he may hear the Word of Allah, and then escort him to where he can be secure, that is because they are men who know not.” {Quran, Surah 9: At-Taubah, Verse 6; Mohsin Translation}. The above verse states that when an enemy soldier surrenders during a battle, the Muslim soldiers must grant asylum and in addition, escort him to safety! The treatment for prisoners of war is also clearly stated in the Quran. Prisoners of war under Muslim prisons are to eat, drink and dress the same Muslim soldiers eat, drink and dress. And even under the unfortunate event of shortage of food, it is the prisoners who are to eat first before the Muslim soldiers guarding them!

Thus, as we have seen, Jihad is not a violent concept. Jihad is not a declaration of war against other religions. Those who misunderstand the Qur’anic term jihad as armed jihad only have totally failed to notice, among other things, that Jihad is first through our own ego. The term jihad actually refers to the more general concept of exerting efforts in the way of Allah.

## 'Id ul Fitr And 'Id ul Adha

### **Explain how the id ul Fitr / Adha is celebrated?**

Literally speaking 'id means feast, festival or holiday. Fitr means separation or breaking. As such, 'id-ul Fitr means the feast of the breaking and here it implies the breaking of the fast of the month of Ramadhan, the 9<sup>th</sup> Islamic month ('id ul adha is the feast of sacrifice during the month of Dhul Hijja). When the holy prophet (s.a.w) entered Madina, there were two days ('id-ul Fitr and 'Id-ul Adha) which were moments of amusement and joy. So the prophet (s.a.w) declared them as feast for Muslims.

**Firstly**, it starts as from the sighting of the moon on the last day of Ramadhan by Swalaatul Maghrib. According to the prophet (s.a.w) that night is considered as full of blessings and the Swalaat Fajr must be done in Jama'ah. It is recommended to take a bath (Ghusal), wear good (or new) clothes according to the Islamic practice and pay Zakaat if not yet paid. **Secondly**, the Swalaatul 'Id can be offered either in open field or Masjid (depending on population). It is done after sunrise and can't be offered before sunrise. **Thirdly**, there is no Azan and no Iqaamah before the Namaaz 'Id and it is done in 2 Rakaat (units) of Swalaat Waajib with 6 additional Takbeer or 12 according to other schools of thought. **Fourthly**, in the 1<sup>st</sup> Rakaat there are 3 Takbeer before Qiraat and for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rakaat there are 3 Takbeer before Ruku'. According to others there are 6 Takbeer in both Rakaat or there are 7 in the first Rakaat and 5 in the second Rakaat. **Fifthly**, after the Swalaat there is a khutbah which is read for the occasion. The main topic will be on id and how it is important to stay in good terms with relatives and families and also not to forget the poor and destitute.

**Sixthly**, there is the du'a which can be made in any language. Special mentions are made for the Ummah and the country without forgetting our worldwide brothers. **Seventhly**, (for id ul adha there will be the slaughtering of the animal and the sharing of meat into 3 portions, namely for the family members, the poor and for our own use). There will be will greetings by the Muslims. It is recommended to forget all our quarrels and differences on that day as it is a blessed day in Islam. **Eighthly**, there can be family union or gathering for the feast. This is usually done around a meal for lunch or dinner. At this level it varies from one family to another. **Ninthly**, it is an opportunity for parents and relatives to distribute gifts as a means of happiness. This is to show to our young generations that 'id is our feast not other unislamic concepts. **Tenthly**, amusement can be conducted as long as there must be no show off. No haram eating and drinking is allowed on that day. It is good to note that though it is a feast, our obligatory swalaat must not be neglected.

### **What is the religious significance of Id-ud-Doha / Id ul Fitr ?**

Each feast in Islam has its importance and significance. Id ul Adha being celebrated in the month of Dhul Hijjah is a celebration of the achievement of a Muslim who has completed the rites of Hajj (or one whole month of Ramadhan in Ibaadah). It is a blessed moment in the life of a Muslim accomplishing the 5<sup>th</sup> pillar of Islam (or the 3<sup>rd</sup> pillar). **Secondly**, it is also a day of thanksgiving when Muslims offer gratitude to Allah for helping them fulfil their spiritual obligation. It is also extended to our gratitude towards our parents and families. **Thirdly**, it is a day of sacrifice and it reminds us of Ibrahim's sacrifice of his son. He was willing and on the point to sacrifice his son for the pleasure of Allah. (it reminds us of the sufferings of the poor, the hunger and the deprived). At the same time it is a way to sacrifice what we have in terms of meat and money for the poor and needy to receive alms. **Fourthly**, it is a day of festive



remembrance beginning with a collective act of worship glorifying Allah's name followed by utterances of greetings and good wishes and praying for the souls of the deceased. **Fifthly**, it is a means for congregational prayers as occasions of creation of brotherhood where Muslims pray for forgiveness and strength of faith to purify the heart and soul.

**Sixthly**, it is an occasion given to each one of us contributing in helping the needy, visiting elders and the sick. It enhances the remembrance of over many areas of human life. **Seventhly**, it is a day of peace. When a Muslim establishes peace in his heart by obeying Allah's law and leading a disciplined life he/she is at peace with Allah and the rest of the universe. There must be no fighting. **Eighthly**, it is a day of reward as it is on that day that Allah will reward us for all our sacrifices during the month of Ramadhan (or for pilgrimage). We are blessed by Allah. **Ninthly**, it is a day for change. It is the right moment for anyone to change his attitudes and enter the fold of Islam completely by abstaining from sins. **Tenthly**, it is a day appropriate to think of all the favours our Lord has bestowed upon us. It is important that we realise to what extent He loves us and what are we doing or can do to please Him.

## Birth In Islam

### **Describe the ceremonies that follow the birth of a baby in a Muslim family.**

In Islam there are some ceremonies at specific times. All of them must be based on Shari'ah or the Islamic Law. They have been given by Allah and the prophet in specific way and for specific reasons. Among them we have birth. Its significance benefits both the individual and the community.

Birth in Islam is one of the most important moments and blessings for a couple. The couple is delighted when it comes to be parents. According to Islam there are some steps which are recommended to be followed. **Firstly**, it is recommended to the future mother to continue with her ibaadah as far as her condition and state permit her and to make the Tilaawat Qur'an the more often. Accordingly, the baby in her womb will be positively and spiritually benefited from that tilawat. **Secondly**, soon after the birth, the call to pray (adhan) must be recited in the right ear to imprint the basic faith on the baby's memory and the call to stand up for prayer (iqamah) must be recited in the left ear. **Thirdly**, it is the sunnah of the prophet to put something sweet in the baby's mouth known as Tahneek. This symbolises a sweet nature. If there is a scholar or a real believer, then it is sunnah to allow him to chew a date and then give to the baby. **Fourthly**, it is recommended as Abdul Muttalib did and as many 'Ulama advocate to bring the baby to the Ka'bah or in the mosque of the locality to present the baby to Allah and to leave it in His care. There are prayers and du'a which will be said invoking Allah's help for baby's future whether it is health, prosperity, knowledge and spiritual growth.

**Fifthly**, there will be the naming ceremony which is held soon after the birth. Accordingly, it is recommended by the prophet that a good name is to be chosen. This name will have effect on the child. He / she will be framed as such. Then a beautiful and meaningful name must be chosen. **Sixthly**, there will be the slaughtering of an animal for the Aqiqah. If it is a boy, 2 animals will be sacrificed but if it is a girl, an animal will be slaughtered. In that sacrifice Allah does not need the money, blood or meat but He wants the intention of the sacrifice that is the love of Allah after all. **Seventhly**, the meat of the animal will be distributed to poor. Sharing and distributing meat to the poor signifies sharing of the joyful and blessed moment. **Eighthly**, it is sunnah of the prophet to shave the head of the baby. The hair will then be weighed and an equivalent amount of money based on the weight of silver will be given to the poor as Sadaqa. **Ninthly**, it is sunnah of the prophet for boys to be circumcised (khitan / khatnah) soon after the birth and to read the first five verses of surah al 'Alaq. Circumcision is also a sunnah of the prophet Ibrahim (as). **Tenthly**, it is recommended as the right of the baby to be breastfed for a duration of two years by the mother or any available woman. This will protect him / her from illness and this will reinforce his physical immune system.

### **Explain its significance.**

The birth of a baby in Islam has various meanings and significances. **Firstly**, the birth of a baby is a blessing from Allah. It is said in the Quran that "your wealth and your children are only a trial, and by Allah with Him is an immense reward". Through our children and our efforts to meet their needs we will be rewarded. **Secondly**, it is said that the birth of a baby is a purity. According to the prophet, all babies are born pure without sin. Allah says that we must "be just, that is nearer to piety and fear God". Having children is a means for parents to reach salvation. **Thirdly**, the significance of birth is like an opportunity for the parents to guide the children on the path of Islam. According to the Qur'an there is great lesson to be derived from the prophet Luqman who advised his son to worship Allah in jama'ah / congregation. **Fourthly**, having babies and upbringing them is rewarded with Jannah. According to the prophet if someone has one girl and set her on the right path till she gets married, then the parents will receive a Jannah as reward. If they have 2 or 3 or more children, the reward will be proportionately. **Fifthly**, the mere fact of pronouncing the adhan and iqamah in the ears of the baby confers to the baby the importance

of Islam. The first part is the importance in believing in Allah and his prophet through the adhan and the second part is to get ready to worship Allah through Iqaamah.

Attached to that, **sixthly**, the birth of a baby means the sending of the baby to this world and the reason for our existence on earth is to worship Allah as He says that “and we have not created the jinn and Man but only to worship”. So we came to earth to worship Allah. **Seventhly**, the significance of birth is in why we were sent to earth. Allah says in the Qur’an that “I am going to create a vicegerent on earth”. This means that the birth of a baby signifies his future mission is accepting Allah and to represent the religion of Islam. **Eighthly**, the birth of a child and the sending of the baby to earth is to remember the pact we made with Allah when our souls were in ‘Aalamul Arwah (the world of souls). As such Allah asks these souls in the ‘aalamul arwah as “am I not your Lord?” and we did reply by “yes, verily we testify”. We were sent to complete our vows. **Ninthly**, the birth of a child is a comfort and company for the parents. Allah himself says in the Qur’an as an invocation “our Lord, bestow upon us from our wives and children the comfort of our eyes”. Children bring joy in the family. **Tenthly**, the birth of a child is an occasion and opportunity allocated to the parents to gather their relatives and to share their joy over a meal through the Aqiqah. This will renew ties among members of the family.

### **Marriage / Nikah In Islam**

#### **How is a marriage ceremony conducted?**

Among the various religious institutions in Islam there is the Nikah ceremony also known as marriage. It is not a new one as it has been in existence since the creation of Mankind. Though it existed in different forms, the reasons behind its celebration are practically the same. There are steps to be followed when someone wants to get married or when a Nikah is to be validated.

A Muslim marriage is mainly divided into the Nikah and the Walimah. There are various conditions for a Nikah to be accepted in Islam. **Firstly**, there must be the proposal and acceptance. It is imperative that both the bride-to-be and the groom must consent to marry. If any party refuses then there is no Nikah as forced marriage is not valid in Islam. **Secondly**, there must be an Imam to conduct the Nikah. It is Sunnah of the prophet (s.a.w) that the father of the girl should conduct the Nikah but in this present world, due to lack of formation it is more practical for the Imam. **Thirdly**, it is recommended upon the Imam to deliver a sermon to elaborate on what the Nikah is, why do we have to get married and specially to remind the couple of their duties towards Allah and towards each other. **Fourthly**, the marriage contract will be done and duly signed by the respective parties. There can be different kinds of conditions and terms. For instance, allowing the girl to work or receiving no permission to have a second wife as long as the first one is alive, can be stipulated. **Fifthly**, each one of the couple will be asked thrice whether they wish to marry. There will be two witnesses who will sign the contract as well. Being a contract it can be terminated by either side if the conditions are not respected.

**Sixthly**, there must be the dowry which is a gift the groom gives to the bride. It can be any reasonable amount or wealth. **Seventhly**, the du’a and prayers will be said by the Imam for the happiness of the bride and groom. This will lead to all Muslims congratulating the groom. **Eighthly**, there will be the Walima which is the feast given a few days later after the marriage has been consummated. This is a recommended action which is wajib. **Ninthly**, there must be no singing, no dancing, no show off, no wastage and no illicit or immoral activities or happenings during the Nikah or the Walimah. It is allowed, as it is found in the Hadith and Sunnah of the prophet, to beat the Daf. **Tenthly**, in Mauritius we have several instances which are added. For example, a religious ceremony and Qur’anic recital in a gathering known as Mawlood is done before the Nikah as a means to ask du’a for the couple. On the eve of Nikah, there is another ceremony of applying the henna on the hands and feet of the bride. On the day after the

Nikah there is a gathering, known as the Chawtari, of the closest relatives around a meal to thank all those who help in the Nikah.

### **What is the Significance of Marriage in Islam?**

The institution of Nikah is very important and significant for the Muslims. **Firstly**, Nikah is significant in itself by the mere fact that it is a command from Allah as saying “marry those among you who are single”. So, when getting married we are fulfilling the command of Allah. **Secondly**, Nikah and Walimah are significant as they are Sunnah of the prophet (s.a.w) by his saying that “getting married is my sunnah, whoever does not follow my Sunnah is not one of my Ummah”. By getting married we are following the Sunnah and Hadith as part of the Islamic Law. **Thirdly**, the importance of Nikah lies in a verse of the Qur’an as “and among His signs is that He created for you mates from among yourselves that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them and He has put love and mercy between your hearts”. So the aim of getting married is to live on earth in tranquillity having love and mercy for our partners. **Fourthly**, by getting married this will help us to be free from all kinds of sins especially the sins of the eyes, thought and heart. The prophet (s.a.w) advised us saying “o you young men, whoever is able to marry should marry, for that will help him to lower his gaze and guard his modesty”. **Fifthly**, the prophet said that “marriage is half of faith”. The Prophet (s.a.w) considered marriage for a Muslim as “half of his religion” because it may shield him from promiscuity, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, and the life which ultimately lead to many other crimes including slander, quarrel, homicide, loss of property and finally the disintegration of the ideal family system on which so much stress has been placed by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w).

**Sixthly**, it is said in the Qur’an that “Allah has made for you mates of your own nature, and made for you, out of them, sons and daughter and grandchildren, and provided for you sustenance of the best”. In this verse it is clear that Nikah is significant for procreation and the creation of families. They will act as blessings and supports for the parents during their old days. **Seventhly**, based on the above verse, it is clear that when we get married, Allah will give us the best of sustenance, that is food and blessings in our daily activities and lives. It is a provision better than that of the beasts. **Eighthly**, Nikah is significant due to the fact that it allows a husband a support in the wife and vice versa. Allah says that “they are clothing for you and you are clothing for them”. The word clothing connotes the idea of equality, complementarily and support of both a psychological and physical nature. Both have their roles. **Ninthly**, Nikah is significant in the sense that it helps both the husband and the wife to become more responsible. As long as they were bachelors, the degree of responsibility and comprehensiveness was unstable for most people. Marriage comes as a regulator of our lives. **Tenthly**, the result of Nikah is among others having children. The main aim of having children in the eyes of Allah is to populate the earth with Muslims and to spread the deen of Islam. These children may be well a means to raise the flag of Islam in their own ways. As such the pious children will be the revivers of Islam.

### **What do you think is meant by the Hadith ‘Marriage is half of faith’?**

Marriage or Nikah is one of the religious institutions in Islam with great significance. It is important and it regulates different aspects of our lives. According to the prophet (s.a.w) “Marriage is half of faith”. This can be explained through the Qur’an and the Hadith.

**Firstly**, it must be noted that before the spreading of Islam women were badly treated during the pre Islamic Arabia. So when the prophet said that marriage is half of iman, he wanted to propound the view that as long as the pre Islamic Arabs didn’t change their attitude towards their wives, their iman and religion would be never complete. He equated it to a religious duty and the value of marriage takes on special meaning when it is connected with faith. **Secondly**, marriage is half of iman when the Qur’an and the Prophet speak of the rights and responsibilities of both husbands and wives towards each other. It deals with role of the husband to treat the wife with kindness, honour, patience, or free her from marital bond honourably without harm as Allah says “But consort with them in kindness”. **Thirdly**, by marriage



is half of iman, Islam wanted to raise the status of women and at the same time show men their roles as trustees, guardians, protectors of their wives as Allah says “Men are in charge of women”. The degree of superiority of men over women as Allah says in the Qur’an “men are a degree above them” is based on the responsibilities of men towards women but not as many may think of. **Fourthly**, when the prophet says that marriage is half of iman it also means that both partners in a marriage are equal as Muslims in the eyes of Allah. There is no difference in between them. The only superiority recognised in Islam and reiterated by the Prophet is that of piety and good deeds as Allah says “Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct”. **Fifthly**, by marriage is half of iman this means that both the husband and the wife have to strive to fulfil the other half of faith, to make a good marriage and be ‘a comfort to each other’. The Prophet said that ‘the best of you is the one who is best towards his wife’ encouraging men to change their attitude towards women.

**Sixthly**, the prophet said that “marriage is half of faith” as it may shield the person from promiscuity, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, and the life which ultimately lead to many other crimes including slander, quarrel, homicide, loss of property and finally the disintegration of the ideal family system on which so much stress has been placed by the Prophet (s.a.w). **Seventhly**, when propounding that marriage is half of faith, it signifies that a good marriage strengthens the bonds of brotherhood between two families. There will always be sharing, good relationship and understanding. **Eighthly**, relationship with the outer world towards other human beings is also part of Iman. As such, marriage is half of iman means it helps both the husband and the wife to become more responsible and intends to lead to more socialisation. Marriage comes as a regulator of our lives. **Ninthly**, when we propound that marriage is half of Iman this means that the core of the family must be based on the religion and faith. As such, parents who are good Muslims and have a caring, stable relationship are able to bring up happy, well-adjusted children able to carry the torch of Islam further. **Tenthly**, by marriage is half of iman means that the institution of marriage can at a certain point ensure Jannah for both the husband and the wife. According to the prophet, if at the death bed of the husband, the latter is satisfied with the wife, the latter will obtain Jannah. The other way also is true that through the wife the husband will be allowed paradise.

### **Funeral In Islam**

#### **Describe the religious rites that are performed when a Muslim dies.**

In the life of every Muslim there are various steps which are natural and inevitable. Among them we can see that the sending of Man to earth, the ageing of Man and the death of Man. However, each step is met with specific code of conduct set by Allah and His prophet. Accordingly, there are several steps to be followed at the death of a person in Islam.

**Firstly**, it is required that when a Muslim is on the point to die and also at the moment of death, the kalimah of Laa ilaaha illallah Muhammadur Rasoulullah is recited repeatedly continuously. The idea behind that is to give the chance to the dying person to recite the kalimah before his death. **Secondly**, it is recommended to read the holy Qur’an and especially the chapter Surah Yaaseen and surah Mulk during the last moment. **Thirdly**, after the death of the person the body is washed like one when performing ghusl. It must be done in the same way as when someone is alive. **Fourthly**, it is recommended and imperative that the body of a man must be washed by men and the body of a woman must be washed by women. It is unlawful though at that time to see and look at the body of the opposite sex. More often it is the responsibility of the family members. **Fifthly**, the whole washing of the body and everything attached to it must be done with respect and the private parts of both the man and the woman are to be washed without being seen. **Sixthly**, the dead body is then put and enveloped in white unstitched cloth known as kafan. Normally three pieces of cloth are used for men and five are used for women. Only the face is allowed to be visible if mourners want to see the person for a last time.

**Seventhly**, it is a practice that the Qur'an is read and du'a of forgiveness is asked for the dead. Then the body is carried by men where friends and family jostle to get blessings to have carried the body even on a short distance. Throughout the way the kalimah is constantly recited for blessings and to avoid useless takings. **Eighthly**, the body is then carried to mosque or to an open space near the graveyard for funeral prayers. The men have to stand in rows with the body in front of them. The funeral prayer is said standing where there is no sajdah, no ruku' and no qa'dah. It consists of five Takbeer. The first Takbeer is followed by Thana, the second Takbeer is followed by surah Al Faatiha, the third Takbeer is followed by Darood Ibrahim, the fourth Takbeer is followed by Du'a of Maghfirat and the fifth Takbeer is immediately followed by Salaam. After that the Imam will lead some invocations like "O Allah grant forgiveness to our living and to our dead...". **Ninthly**, then the body is lowered for burial with the face resting in the direction of Macca. The body is laid on its back with wood covering the grave and leaving a vacuum in the grave. Then it is covered with earth. The imam presiding the burial will again ask du'a for the dead. **Tenthly**, returning home the Qur'an is read and generally on the third day a prayer is held and sometimes around the fortieth day friends and relatives come to read the Qur'an again to convey blessings of the reading on the soul of the departed.

### What is the significance of death in Islam?

There are various significances of death in Islam. **Firstly**, according to Islam it is recommended to get prepared for death and to make provision for sharing of wealth. Allah says in the Qur'an that "when one of you approaches death, if he leaves wealth, that he bequeath unto parents and near relatives in kindness". It is done to avoid conflict among relatives. **Secondly**, its importance lies in the fact that it is inevitable and as it is said in the Qur'an that "every soul must taste death" and it is a departure from this world to the next world. **Thirdly**, death signifies the return to Allah the One who has created us and our return is towards Him. Allah says to the soul in the Qur'an as "return to your Lord in content". **Fourthly**, death signifies the start of a new blessed life in the next world. Whatever we have done good in this world will be rewarded as from the moment we are dead. Allah says in the Qur'an that "every soul will taste death. And ye will be paid on the Day of Resurrection only that which ye have fairly earned". **Fifthly**, death also signifies that we will never live forever on earth and that at the same time we are not in control of our lives. At any time death can reach us at any moment and we are thus weak and perishable. This can be proved by the above verses where Allah says that we all will taste death and when Allah says that "everything is perishing except the face of Allah".

**Sixthly**, death signifies a deep and serious sign to the Muslims that there will be their turn soon to taste death. As such it is an indication that we will be put to the severe test of Qabr with the three questions as who is your Lord?, what is your religion?, and what do you think / say on that person?. Success of these questions lies in leading a real Muslim life on earth. **Seventhly**, for those who have not prepared for the next world and have lived on this earth as irresponsible servants of Allah, death for them signifies pain, suffering and real trial. The prophet said that at the death of these kinds of persons, their souls are afraid to step to the next world as they are afraid of punishment. Allah says that "no doubt they will see it with certainty". **Eighthly**, however for those who have prepared and spent their lives in the obedience of Allah, for them death signifies a relief from this world and the coming of blessing, tranquillity, safety, perfume and mat of paradise and assurance or prelude of what is waiting them in paradise. For these persons Allah says that "there is no fear on them and they are not sad". **Ninthly**, for these kinds of persons death signifies the sight of the Holy Prophet as from the grave and the possibility of the beatific hearing of the voice of Allah giving the good news to them as "sleep as the groom sleeps". **Tenthly**, for these kinds of persons there is the hope of the possibility of the beatific vision of Allah. The real believers are those who long for their death and the meeting with their Lord. For them death signifies the start of the eternal peace and beauty of Akhirah.

For a Muslim, death must be a moment where he is delighted to meet his Lord in the next world. Akhirah for the real Muslims is symbolised by the lack of pain, sorrow, hardship, difficulties, suffering and the wait for Jannah. Death can also be painful and grievous for those who have forgotten or abandoned their Lord.