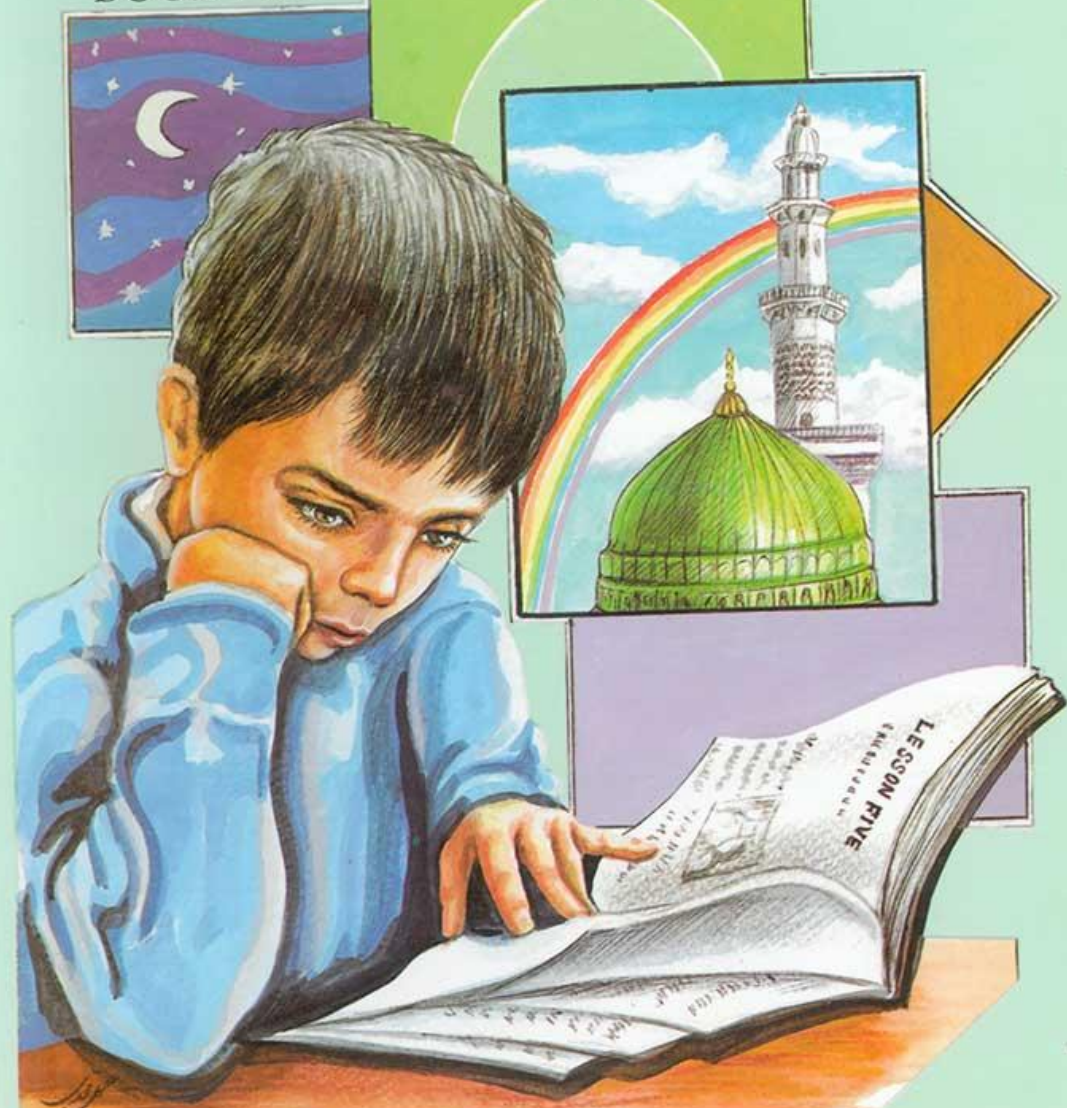


The Children's Book On Islam

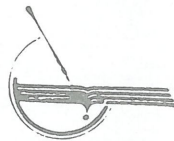
BY:
AYETTULLAH IBRAHIM AMINI

BOOK TWO



THE CHILDREN'S BOOK
ON ISLAM
BOOK TWO

BY:
AYETTULLAH IBRAHIM AMINI



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
THE BENEFICENT, THE MERCIFUL**

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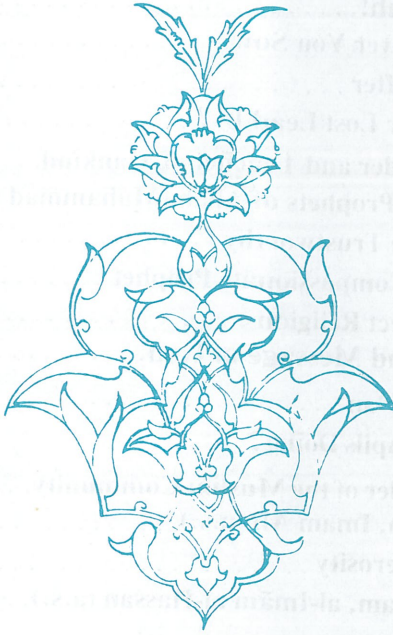
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Lesson One

The Pretty Baby

Zahrā' had a new little brother. His name was Majīd.

Zahrā, was happy and loved her baby brother very much.

One day Zahrā' was standing at the side of Majīd's cradle watching him.

"Dear mother!" she said "When will Majīd be old enough for me to play with? I love him very much"

"Be patient Zahrā' my love," said her mother. "In sha'Allah, Mājīd will grow up and you will play with each other."

Suddenly Mājīd woke up and in his tiny voice began to cry. Zahrā' became sad and said, "Mother, why is Majīd crying?"

"I think he is hungry," her mother replied.

Zahrā' ran and picked up a biscuit to give to Majīd; she wanted to put it in his mouth.

Her mother told her, "No, Zahrā' dear! Majīd can't eat biscuits. Look he hasn't any teeth. God forbid that you put anything in his mouth. It might get stuck in his throat and suffocate him."

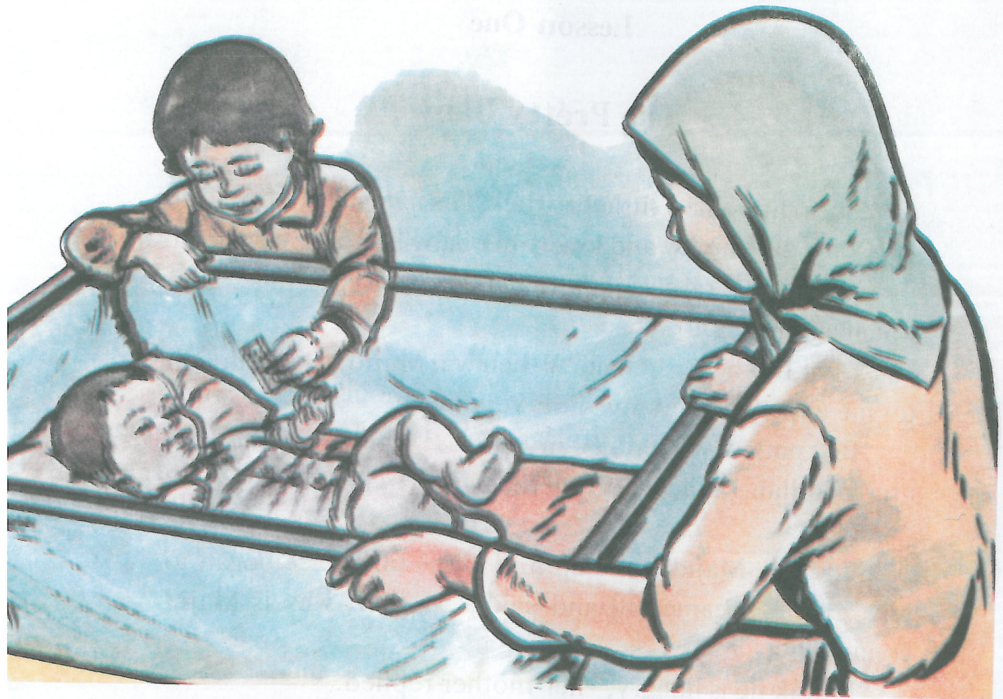
Zahrā' was surprised, and asked her mother, "Then what

does Majīd eat?”

Her mother told her that Majīd’s food was milk. “He can drink milk and become fully nourished”, she said.

Then mother stood up, picked up the baby, placed him in her lap, and pressing him against her bosom, started breast-feeding him. Majīd snuggled close to his mother and using his tiny lips began to suckle.

Zahrā’ was even more surprised, she looked at Majīd and



her mother for a while, then she said, “Mother! did your breasts always have milk?”.

“No” said her mother, “They didn’t have milk before, but my breasts have been full of milk from the day Majīd was born.”

“How do you make Majīd’s milk, mother?” asked Zahrā’:

“I only eat food, and from the food I eat, Majīd’s milk is made.”, said her mother

“But you ate food earlier also,” said Zahrā’. “So why didn’t you have milk then?”

“Yes” said her mother. “I did eat food earlier and I didn’t have milk, but ever since the time Majīd was born, my breasts have been full of milk, for otherwise Majīd might starve.”

“So who was thinking of Majīd?” Zahrā’ asked her mother in surprise.

“Allah created Majīd,” her mother replied. “and was also thinking of Majīd’s food”

“Allah knows that when a baby is born, it needs food. He knows that Majīd doesn’t have teeth and can’t eat food like us, that is why He fills my breasts with milk so that my helpless little baby can have the best and most healthy type of food.

“Zahrā’ my love, milk is a complete and perfect food. It contains all that the little baby needs and agrees perfectly with its little digestive system.”

“Really mother”, zahrā’ said, “Allah is so kind and clever. If there was no milk, what would the little babies eat?”

“Yes my daughter”, said the mother, “It is Allah Who has created the baby and Who gives it food. Allah is knowing and is kind to have given it milk and a digestive system.”

“He knew about the baby’s weakness and put love of the baby in its mother’s heart so that she will take care of it.”

“And Allah taught the strengthless, speechless little baby to cry whenever it is hungry, so that people will come and help it.”

Think and Answer

1. What did Zahrā' say to her mother while she was watching Majīd?
2. Did Zahrā' like her little brother? How do you know?
3. Does the mother make the baby's milk herself? Why not?
4. How do you know that Allah knew about Majīd's future life?
5. How do you know that Allah is clever and kind?
6. What would little babies eat if there was no milk?
7. What would happen if mothers didn't love their babies?
8. Who puts the love of her baby in a mother's heart?
9. What would happen if the little baby didn't cry when it was hungry?
10. How would the mother breastfeed the child if the baby didn't know how to suckle?
11. Who taught the babies how to cry and suckle?

Discuss these questions with the mother of a new-born baby.



Lesson Two

Discussions with My Aunt

I had gone with my parents to a little village. My aunt lived there and we stayed with her. My aunt is very intelligent, and she works hard and takes good care of her guests. She keeps two cows in her yard for their milk. She and her son

Abbas brings straw,



hay and grass for the cows and my aunt waters and feeds them. She milks them and makes cheese, yoghurt and butter. For lunch my aunt had prepared rice cooked in milk. It was delicious. She also served us some cheese and yoghurt.

When it was nearly sunset, my aunt said that she was going to milk the cows. She picked up a clean bucket and went to the barn. Abbās and I went along to help her. We held the calf so that my aunt could milk the cow, the calf's mother.

The calf was only ten days old but it was pretty and very strong. It wouldn't keep still, it wanted to escape from us and drink the milk

My aunt milked the cow until there was just enough milk left in its udders for the calf to drink.

"Let the calf go now", she said "And it can come and have its milk". The calf leapt away from us and rushed towards its mother's udders. It took a teat in its mouth and began to suckle the milk. I was amazed at the calf's agility and strength.

"Aunt!", I said, "What does the calf eat that has made it so strong and nimble?"

"It only drinks milk", said my aunt. "But milk is a complete and very beneficial food. All that is necessary for the health and growth of the body is to be found in milk. Vitamines, minerals, fat, glucose and other things all exist in



milk. Milk alone is enough to provide the calf all its bodily needs.”

“Aunt!”, I asked, “Did the cow know about the needs of the calf’s body? Does it know what to produce in its milk for its young? Does it know how to produce such a rich, complete food?”

“No”, replied my aunt. “The cow doesn’t know anything about the needs of the calf’s body, nor about the ingredients of its milk. The cow doesn’t produce the milk with an awareness and will of its own.”

She continued, “It was Allah Who knew about the needs of the calf, and it was Allah Who placed this fully equipped milk-producing factory in the cow’s body, thus providing enough milk both for the calf to drink and grow upon and, for us to use, from what is left.

“Jawād, my dear” she continued, “We live in an amazing, harmonious world. Plants benefit from water, earth and sunlight. Cows eat grass which is changed into milk in their bodies. The calf drinks the milk, and we also benefit from what the calf doesn’t need.”

“Who is it other than Allah the Almighty and All-



knowing, who was aware of our needs and the needs of the calf and, created milk for us with such order and harmony.”

“Jawād, my dear, come closer. Look at the teat of the cow’s udder. The tip of the cow’s udder is full of tiny holes, and when the calf suckles, the milk comes out through these holes. The milk doesn’t drip through these holes, nor does too much milk enter the calf’s throat.”

“Our Merciful Allah was thinking about our food and also about the food of the calf. And that is why He made more milk in the cow’s udder than what the calf needs for itself.”

“Our knowing and Powerful Allah created this pleasant and beneficial food for us to become healthy and strong, to worship Him and thank Him, to work hard and cultivate the land that He has put at our disposal, and for us to always try our hardest to help those of us who need our help. This is what Allah expects from us in return for all His blessings.”

Questions:

1. What was Jawād surprised at?
2. What food was the cause of the calf’s strength?
3. What does “milk is a complete food” mean?
4. Does the cow know about the ingredients of its milk?

Did it specially produce its milk to contain them?

5. Who has created the “fully-equipped milk-factory” in the cow’s body?
6. What did Jawād’s aunt tell Jawād when she showed him the teat of the cow’s udder?
7. Is there more milk in the cow’s udder than what the calf needs itself?
8. Who benefits from the extra milk?
9. What do we understand from the order and harmony of

the world of creation?

10. What duty do we have in the face of Allah's blessings?

Exercises

1. Ask your friend to answer the above questions.
2. Read the lesson to the members of your family.

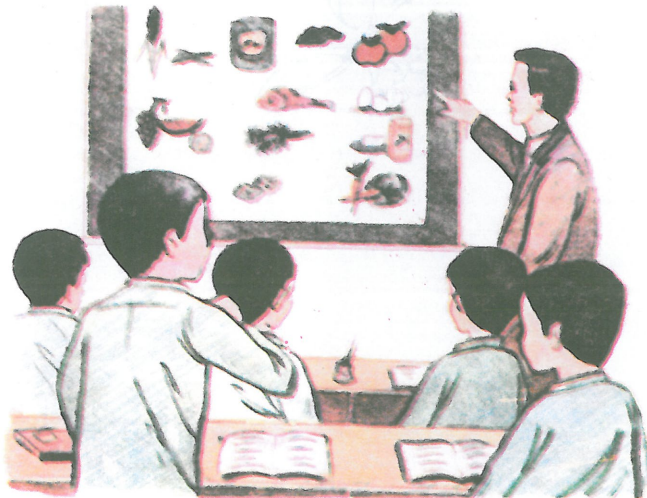


Lesson Three

The Inquisitive Boy

Hasan is in the second grade at school. He is very clever and inquisitive . He likes to learn his lessons well. He thinks about everything and if he doesn't understand something, he asks about it.

One day during class the teacher said, "Our body has need for various types of food. Eating, besides taking away



our hunger, also benefits our body, and each type of food we eat has a special benefit.

“If we want to run and play, we need energy. Energy keeps our bodies warm, and gives us the ability to play and to do other activities.”

“Some of the foods we eat give us energy, like potatoes, rice, sugar, oil, dates, apples, raisins, peanuts and many others.”

“All of us have need for these foods, but those who do more work, have extra need.”

“Some foods are necessary for the growth of the body, like meat, eggs, milk, cheese and so on.”

“Our body also has need for vitamins and minerals. Fresh fruits and fresh greens have vitamins, while meat, milk, liver, eggs, spinach and the other greens also have minerals.

“Our body needs lots of things for its growth and health, but everything it needs exists in the different types of food.”

“In order to grow and remain healthy we have to eat these different types of food.” said the teacher finally.

Hasan asked permission to speak and said, “I thought that eating food only took away our hunger, but I’ve realised now that our body needs different types of food for us to grow and be healthy and strong. Now I know that we need to eat a lot of different things to remain healthy.”

“Yes,” said the teacher, “but happily everything that our body needs exists in the world. We have various fruits and different types of green vegetables, rice, wheat, peas, beans, lentils, and various kinds of nuts. In short, there is everything.”

“Trees produce fruits for us to eat and the animals give us milk and meat.”

“So, children, tell me: Who was thinking of us and knew about all our needs, and created all that would become

necessary for us in advance?”

“Yes, children. It is Allah Who with His mercy has created everything for us and has given us the strength and intelligence to cultivate the land so that we can grow what we need. We benefit from His blessings ourselves, we thank Him, and we use them to help others.”

“Any able person who doesn’t work nor help the needy people has no right to benefit from the efforts of others. You, too, must help your parents and benefit society, for you know that Allah doesn’t love those who are selfish and lazy. Help and care for the poor and hungry of the world and try to defend their rights”.

Think and answer

1. If you don’t understand something, what do you do?
2. If you don’t eat for a while, what state will you be in?

Why?

3. Can you count all the needs of your body?
4. How are the needs of our body met?
5. How do animals and plants serve us?
6. Who is it that was thinking of us and created all that is necessary for us?
7. What is our duty in the world?
8. Who must cultivate the land?
9. Who has no right to benefit from the efforts of others?
10. Do you help your parents? How?
11. How must we help and care for the world’s poor and hungry?



Lesson Four

Our Bodily Needs

Allah, the Knowing, the Mighty

Our bodies are in need of a variety of different foods. What would we do if we didn't have a variety of food? Could we be able to walk and carry out our activities?

For the health of our bodies, we must drink a certain amount of water. What would we do if there was no water?

What would we do if we didn't have a mouth to eat and drink with?

What would we do if we didn't have teeth to chew our food with?

Happily, everything we need in life exists in the world. We need various fruits-which exist. We need various kinds of



vegetables—which exist. We become thirsty and need water which exists.

Do you know Who knew all our needs, and created things to meet each and every one of them? How do we give our thanks for all these blessings?

We also have a mouth to eat and drink with. We have hands to pick up food and put it in our mouths. We have a



stomach to digest the food with. We have eyes to see with, ears to hear with and a tongue to taste and speak with.

Whatever we are in need of for our health and growth exists in the world.

From this order and special relationship that exists between ourselves and the rest of creation, we realise that:

It was the All-Knowing and Almighty Creator Who created us, and that He foresaw all the things that we would be in need of.

That Creator is Allah, Who is both All-Knowing and Almighty.

If He wasn't All-Knowing, He would not have known what things we need.

If He wasn't Almighty, He would not have been able to create those things.

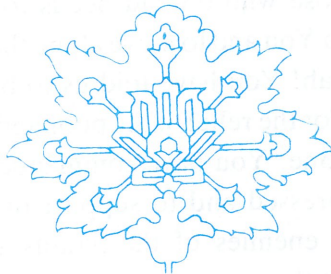
So now we realise that Allah is All-Knowing ('Alīm) and

Almighty (Qadīr).

Allah is kind and loving to all His creatures. He has created all these blessings for everyone. All of us have the right to life and to enjoy His blessings. But many of us are deprived of His blessings by the crimes of criminal oppressors. Many of us do not have sufficient access to the proper amount of food and fruit. Some of us are even deprived of drinkable water. Muslims must think and care about others. A Muslim must never eat and drink as much as he or she likes, without sparing a thought for the poor and deprived. We must all strive hand in hand to make this world a better place to live in and meet the needs of the poor and defend their trampled rights.

Exercises

- a. Can you recite this lesson fluently without committing any error? Conduct a recitation competition with your friend to find out which one of you is better.
- b. Think up three questions from this lesson and ask your friend to answer them.
- c. Think up another exercise and carry it out.



Lesson Five

O Merciful Allah!

O Merciful Allah! You Who have created all Your creatures! You Who love them all!

O Merciful Allah! You have created all these blessings for human beings, all of whom receive their sustenance from you.

You have created us to be happy in this world and to live in bliss in the Hereafter.

O Merciful Allah! You were especially kind to us when You sent us Prophets and selected Imams or leaders to guide us to the right path and teach us the proper way of living, for us to be happy in the world and in the Hereafter.

O Lovely Allah! You like all Your creatures to do good deeds and wish those who do bad deeds to come to their senses and return to You and to move along the straight path.

O Merciful Allah! You have told us to be kind to each other and to strive for the relief of the poor and deprived, and not to trouble anyone. You have commanded us to be the helpers of the oppressed and to support them. You have instructed us to be enemies of the tyrants and oppressors and to strive against them.

O Holy Allah! Make us aware of our duties and help us to perform them and be among Your most righteous servants.

Exercises

- a. Practise reciting the lesson as well as you can.
- b. Write a summary of the lesson.
- c. Recite the lesson to the members of your family.



Lesson Six

You Reap Whatever You Sow

Every action has a result. No action is without a result. The name of this man is Hājj 'Ali. Hājj 'Ali is a clever and hard-working man. He works hard, plants trees: and nurtures them. Look at this pretty orchard. It is the orchard of Hājj 'Alī. His trees have grown and borne fruit. Hājj 'Alī and his family are picking the fruit. They will use some for themselves and whatever they can't use they will sell. Thus



they will benefit from the price they receive.

Hājj 'Alī has a good life himself, and he also renders service to others.

Whoever does a good deed receives a just reward. This world is also the “farm” for the Hereafter. Whoever does good in this world will receive a just reward in the Hereafter.

Whoever does good deeds and serves mankind in this world, will receive rich rewards in the Hereafter.

This man is lazy and idle. His land is barren and lies in waste. It doesn't have any trees or flowers.

In summer, when all the other country-folk are reaping their crops and picking their fruits, he will be sorry. He will say:

“How I wish I had also planted trees!

How I wish I also had an orchard!”

So, whoever does no work receives no profit, whoever does no work remains sad and helpless.



Think and Answer

1. What type of man is Ḥājj ‘Alī?
2. What does Ḥājj ‘Alī do and what result does he obtain?
3. What does it mean that the world is the “farm” of the Hereafter?



4. What is the result of not doing anything? Why do those who don't work become sad and sorry?

Complete the following sentences:

- a. Whoever does no work receives noand remains and
- b. Those who do no work regret and say to themselves
- c. The land of the lazy man is
- d. This world is the of the Hereafter.
- e. Since Ḥājj ‘Alī hard, he has a good life and also others.

The Return of Our Deeds

Mas'ūd is standing facing the mountains. He is shouting, "Hey! Hey!...".

The sounds of Mas'ūd's voice hits the mountain and bounces back towards Mas'ūd. When Mas'ūd hears it, it seems to him as if the mountain is also saying, "Hey! Hey!..."

All our deeds also have an "echo", and will one day bounce back on us. If the deeds we have done are good ones, their return to us will also be good and we will be rewarded for it. But if we have done bad deeds, their return will be bad for us and make us unhappy.

We will receive the complete and perfect return of all our deeds, good and bad, in the Hereafter.

Reflect and Answer

1. What is Mas'ūd shouting in front of the mountain?
What does he hear when the sound of his voice returns?
2. Do we like the return of our good deeds? Why?
3. Where do we experience the perfect return of all our deeds?

Complete the following sentences

- a. All of our actions have an "....." and have no choice but to to us.
- b. Our good deeds will have a return.
- c. Our bad deeds will have a bad for us and will make us unhappy.
- d. We will receive the full and perfect return of our deeds in the

Lesson Seven

Life in the Hereafter

Sa'īdah is nine years old and is in the third grade. She is a clever and inquisitive girl. She is often asking questions and always remembers the answers.

One day, she asked her mother, "Mother, what is all this? Every morning we wake up and eat breakfast. Father goes off to work and I go to school, while you stay here and do all your work. At night Father comes home from work. We eat, and then we sleep again until next morning!

"Then we do the same things again, and the next day, and the next day after that and so on."

"What's it all for, Mother? Why do we all live? Boys become men, girls become women, we all become old and then, when we die, our life is all over! We do all this work just to die?! Just like grandmother died! What pointlessness. What futility!"

Sa'īdah was trying to explain to her mother that the life we have here is completely useless. Every day we just repeat the pattern of the preceding day: We eat, we sleep, we work and, at the end of our lives, we die, all alone, with nothing to show for all our efforts. She was trying to say that we die, and

do not exist any more for us to have anything.

“Sa’idah, my dear,” said her mother, “Our lives and efforts are not pointless and without result. We are not destroyed at the approach of death, our life does not come to an end. On the contrary, we go from this world to the world of the Hereafter, and there we have to answer for all our deeds.

“Dear Sa’idah, we will stay alive in the Hereafter forever. Those who do good will go to Paradise and live in comfort and bliss, and those who do bad will go to Hell and be punished for their sins in this world.

“The blessings and pleasures of the Hereafter are better than the blessings and pleasures of this world. They have no fault or shortcoming. Those who go to Paradise are eternally subject to the special love and attention of Allah, their Divine Exalter, and He is always bestowing new blessings on them. Those who go to Paradise enjoy the new blessings and favours and the Holy Affection of their Lord, and they live eternally in bliss and felicity.

Allah tells us in the Qur’an:

“We did not create you in vain, and you will return to Us in the Hereafter.”

Reflect and Answer

1. What did Sa’idah think as useless and pointless? Why?
2. What did her mother tell her?
3. Are we destroyed at death? If we were destroyed at death, would our lives be in vain?
4. Where do we have to answer for all our deeds?
5. How will those who do good deeds live in the Hereafter? How will the sinners live?
6. What does it mean that “this world is the ‘farm’ of the

Hereafter”

Exercises

- a. Discuss the contents of this lesson with a member of your household.
- b. Write the answers to the above questions and read them to your classmates.
- c. Copy the discussion between Sa‘idah and her mother and hang it on your classroom wall.



Lesson Eight

Can the Blind or Lost Lead Us?

This man has lost his way and is walking around in circles.
Can someone who is himself lost and walking around in
circles lead someone else?



Can he take others to their destinations?

Would you follow someone who didn't know the way?

Can someone who doesn't know how to read and write teach others how to read and write?

So, a leader and guide must be knowing and aware. Otherwise, he cannot lead and supervise the people and take them to their destination.

What are these children doing?

Who is teaching them?

Did you know how to read and write before you were taught?

Who taught you how to read and write?

Could you have learnt how to read and write without the help of a guide and teacher?

So, the class needs a teacher.

The teacher is the pupil's guide. He gives order to the class and teaches the pupils.

The prophets are also the people's teachers. They direct the people and show them the best way of life. They guide the people so that they can do good deeds and follow the correct way to salvation.

The Teachers of Mankind

Human beings are simple in nature. They cannot properly distinguish between good and bad by themselves. They don't properly know Allah, their Creator. They have no proper order or law if they are left to themselves. They don't recognise the correct ways and procedures of life.

They aren't sympathetic or well-wishing towards each other. They know nothing of the Hereafter. They don't know what to do in order to enjoy felicity in this world and in the next.

They need a guide and teacher to show them the better path of life. Therefore, Allah selected prophets to be the teachers of mankind and indicate for them the best and highest way of life.

The Prophets teach the people beautiful ethics and how to worship the One God.

The Prophets sowed the seed of beautiful ethics among the people. They established worship of Allah and love of one's fellow man in society, and showed mankind the better, nobler life.

It was the Prophets who led mankind to progress to the level they have reached today. We all need prophets so as to profit from their teachings and live in felicity in this world and in the Hereafter.

From the beginning of time, the Prophets were among the people and have always spoken to them about Allah and goodness.

Think and Answer

1. Who chose the prophets?
2. Who shows mankind the better, nobler life?
3. Can a lost person guide and lead others?
4. Can someone who cannot read and write teach others to read and write?
5. Who has planted the seed of beautiful behaviour among the people?
6. What responsibility has Allah given to His prophets?

Complete the following sentences

- a. The leader and guide must be and
Otherwise, he cannot take them to their

- b. The prophets show the better, nobler way of life
- c. Allah has them this path.
- d. All people prophets so as to profit from their



Lesson Nine

The Aware Leader and Teacher of Mankind

The prophet is the people's aware teacher and leader. He knows all that is necessary for leading the people. He knows all the instructions of religion and he knows all the good and bad actions.

The prophet knows Allah well. He is informed of the nature of the Hereafter, and knows about Paradise and Hell. He is perfectly aware of good and bad ethics and behaviour. He is the foremost of the people in knowledge and no one can attain his position.

Allah, the All-Knowing and Almighty, has put all this knowledge at the prophet's disposal so that he can lead and supervise the people. The prophet is the people's teacher and their perfect leader.



Lesson Ten

The Last of the Prophets of Allah The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.)

Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) was born on the seventeenth of Rabī' ul- 'Awwal, in the town of Meccah to parents named 'Abdullāh and Aminah. He had not yet been born when his father 'Abdullāh passed away. His mother remained alive until Muḥammad was six, and then she too passed away.

After the demise of Aminah he was looked after by his grandfather, 'Abd ul-Muttalib.

After the demise of Aminah he was looked after by his grandfather, 'Abd ul-Muttalib.

'Abd ul-Muttalib loved Muḥammad very much and was very affectionate towards him. He had heard from the Jewish and Christian scholars that a great Prophet would be raised in Meccah, and in Muḥammad (s.a.w.) he saw those signs.

'Abd ul-Muttalib was very respected among the Arabs. He would sit beside the Ka'bah and the people would sit around him. Muḥammad was the only person who used to sit next to him. Sometimes, when they wanted to stop Muḥammad from approaching his grandfather, 'Abd ul-Muttalib would tell them:

“Let my child come. I swear by Allah, there are great signs evident on his face. I can see the day when he will be your great leader and deliver you from degradation, injustice and oppression.”

Abd ul-Muttalib would place Muḥammad beside himself and pat him on the back. And, because he knew about Muḥammad’s future, he would always be with him, eating with him, attending to him, and was only separated from him when necessary.

From his childhood Muḥammad (s.a.w.) was very alert and intelligent. His uncle Abu Talib said of him!

“Whenever Muḥammad would start to eat he would say ‘Bismillāh’, and after finishing his meal he would thank Allah, saying ‘al-hamdu lillāh’,”.

“I never heard Muḥammad tell a lie, nor did I ever see him do anything wrong. Never did he laugh out loud and his laughter was a smile. He was kind to the other children and never called anyone by bad names.”

Think and Answer

1. In what year was Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.) born? In what month and on what day?

2. What was the name of his father? What was the name of his mother?

3. What was the relationship between Muḥammad (s.a.w.) and ‘Abd ul- Muttalib? What did ‘Abd ul-Muttalib say about him?

4. What had the Jewish and Christian scholars been saying?

5. How did Muḥammad (s.a.w.) behave during his childhood? What did his uncle say about him?

Exercises

- a. Read the lesson to one of the members of your family.
- b. Write the answer to question five.
- c. Think up and write two more questions from this lesson.



Lesson Eleven

“Muḥammad al-Amīn”

(Muḥammad the Trustworthy)

One year, the people of Meccah were rebuilding the holy Ka‘bah. The holy Ka‘bah is the first house of worship ever built on earth, and it was the Holy Prophet Ibrāhīm and his son Ismā‘il (a.s.) who built it. Now all the people of Meccah were working together to rebuild it.

The wall of the Ka‘bah reached the special place where the black stone called ‘al-Ḥajar al-‘Aswad’ had to be placed. ‘Al-Ḥajar al-‘Aswad’ is a very respected part of the Ka‘bah. Each of the nobles of Meccah wanted to gain prestige and honour for himself and his tribe by placing the black stone in its special position. Gradually a huge quarrel broke out and work came to a halt. All the nobles were saying, “No, I must be the one to place Al-Ḥajar al-‘Aswad in position.”

The conflict became very severe, and the situation became dangerous. Meccah was on the verge of civil war, and the nobles began giving instructions to their tribes and clans to make ready for battle.

It was then that a wise man spoke up. “Oh people, he said, “Do not make war upon each other. War leads to the destruction of houses and cities and causes misery and

hardship amongst the people. Do not follow the ways of ignorance; find the solution to your problem.”

“What shall we do?” asked the Meccan nobles. “What is the solution to our problem?”

“You must select an arbitrator, said the wise man, “to arbitrate between you and put an end to your conflict.”

“We accept,” the nobles said, in unison. “This is a good suggestion, but who is to arbitrate?”



All the nobles wanted the arbitrator to be from their own tribe, so that he would rule in their favour. Again the project led to a dispute.

That same wise man then made another suggestion. “Since you are unable to agree in choosing an arbitrator,” he said, “appoint the first person who enters al-Masjid al-

Ḥarām to arbitrate among you.

“The first person to enter from this door.” he added, pointing to one of the Sacred Mosque’s doors.”

“We agree.” they all said.

Their eyes were staring at the door. They were all anxious and their thoughts were centred on who was going to enter the door and arbitrate between them and in favour of which tribe.

A young man entered, and everyone was relieved.

“It’s Muhammad,” they started saying. “Muḥammad al-’Amīn, Muhammad the Trustworthy, who could be better? We accept his arbitration.”

As Muḥammad entered the Sacred Mosque, all the people crowded around him and told him all about this conflict. Thinking for a moment, Muḥammad then told them:

“All the leading men of Meccah must share in this important work.”

The people were surprised. “How is it possible?” they asked themselves.

Muḥammad gave instructions for the head of each tribe to be present. When they were all present, Muḥammad (s.a.w.) took his cloak, spread it on the ground, and placed al-Ḥajar al-’Aswad upon it. Then he told all the chiefs to pick up the cloak together, and bring it to the side of the Ka’bah.

Then, when they had done so, Muḥammad gently nudged al-Ḥajar al-’Aswad into its special position.

All the people of Meccah were satisfied and pleased, and congratulated Muhammad on his expertise.

At that time, Muḥammad was still young and had not yet been given his prophetic mission. However, he was so honest and truthful that he was known as Muḥammad al-Āmīn, meaning “Muḥammad the Trustworthy”. The people had

complete confidence in him and entrusted to him their valuables. He took great care to look after these trusts and to return them safely to their owners whenever they wanted them. The people used to turn to him to settle their differences and disputes, and everyone used to accept his arbitrations.

***Peace and blessings upon our honest and trustworthy Prophet. ***

Think and Answer

1. What was Muhammad known as when he was a young man?
2. What did the people say when Muḥammad entered al-Masjid al-Ḥarām?
3. Which of your friends is the most trustworthy?
4. Do your friends trust you? Do they accept your arbitration?
5. Have you borrowed a book from a library? How do you look after it?

Exercises

- a. Write a summary of the story of this lesson and read it to your classmates.
- b. Draw a picture of a scene of this story.
- c. Read the lesson to the members of your family.



Lesson Twelve

The Kind and Compassionate Prophet

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) was always kind and compassionate towards the weak, the old and the young. He even used to refrain from prolonging the bowing and prostrations in congregational prayers so as not to cause difficulty for the aged or ill.

One day he prolonged one of the prostrations longer than usual. One of the Prophet's Companions who was performing his prayer in that congregation, tells us:

“I raised my head from prostration as normal, but then I realised that the Holy Prophet was still in prostration. I returned to prostration and this time, I waited for the Holy Prophet to come out of prostration and say ‘Allāhu Akbar’. After a long time I heard him say ‘Allāhu akbar’ and I raised my head from the prostration. No one knew why he had prolonged the prostration for such a long and unusual period.”

“When the prayer was over, one of the Companions approached the Prophet, saying, “O Prophet of Allah you always perform the prostrations in congregational prayer very briefly. What happened that made you prolong the

prostration today?”

“The Holy Prophet told him, ‘When I was in the state of prostration, I was just about to raise my head, when my little grandson Husayn came and sat on my back. He wanted to sit there for a moment and I didn’t want to disappoint him, so I prolonged the prostration until he himself chose to get off.’”

Our Holy Prophet loved children so much that he was even sympathetic towards them in prayer. The Holy Prophet used to tell his Companions:

“Kindness and affection towards children are part of the behaviour of prophets.

“Whoever does not respect elders or shows no kindness and compassion towards children is not a Muslim.”

Think and Answer

1. Why did the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) perform short prostrations during the congregational prayer?
2. Why did he prolong a prostration that day?
3. How did the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) behave towards children?
4. What does he tell us about children?
5. What does he tell us about elders?
6. How do prophets behave towards children?
7. How do you act towards your parents and teachers?
8. How do you treat those younger than you?

Exercise

Think up some interesting and useful exercises for this lesson.



Lesson Thirteen

Islam, the Perfect Religion

The religion of Islam is the best and most perfect of all religions. In His mercy and kindness Allah sent us the religion of Islam through the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) who taught us the way of worshipping Allah and the best path of life. Allah tells us in the Qur'an: "Whenever a person refuses Islam and chooses some other religion, it will not be accepted from him and he will be among the losers in the Hereafter."

The religion of Islam teaches us the true knowledge of Allah, how to behave with our parents, how to behave with others, and what things to do in order to be happy in this world and the Hereafter.

The religion of Islam teaches us the permitted (halāl) things that we can do and the forbidden (ḥarām) things that we must not do.

The religion of Islam is the key to freedom for all the oppressed people of the world.

Who is a Muslim?

A Muslim is a person who:

- a. Believes in the One Allah and the Hereafter.
- b. Recognizes Muḥammad (s.a.w.) as the last of Allah's prophets.
- c. Submits to the instructions of Allah and Muḥammad (s.a.w.) in all things.
- d. Befriends and helps Muslims, but is an enemy to the oppressors.

The Qur'an, and Message of God

The Qur'an is a heavenly message and the programme of our lives. Allah in His Mercy sent this book of light and guidance to mankind through His Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.).

The Qur'an is a book of truth, justice and freedom. It teaches us the highest, noblest path of life. It teaches us knowledge of Allah and the way of worshipping Him. It teaches us complete discernment of good and bad in ethics and behaviour.

It teaches us self-sacrifice, for the Qur'an is a message of martyrdom. It says to us: Do not oppress, but don't submit to oppression. Do not be afraid of death with martyrdom, and do not compromise with the oppressors.

The Qur'an tells us: rely on the power and might of Allah and do not be afraid of other than Him. Be stern and severe with the disbelievers and oppressors, and bring them to their knees, but towards one another be kind and merciful.

The Qur'an tells us: be united and cry out for truth and justice in unison. Obey the religious leadership and carry out the command of fighting against the oppressors and delivering people from the claws of oppression. In this way, you will live in freedom and honour in this world and have felicity and bliss in the Hereafter.

Muslims must learn how to read the Qur'an and, with the help and guidance of the religious scholars, understand its contents. The Muslim must practise the Qur'an's life bestowing and liberating instructions himself, and also teach others to do the same.

Our Holy Prophet tells us: "The best of you is he who learns the Qur'an and teaches it to others."

He has also told us: "Whoever follows the Qur'an will go to Paradise, and whoever ignores the Qur'an will go to Hell."

Think and Answer

1. What things are called the religion of Islam? What does the religion of Islam teach us?
2. In the Hereafter, who are the losers?
3. What are halāl things? What are harām things?
4. Who is a Muslim? What does a Muslim submit to?
5. Whose word and message is the Qur'an?
6. What programme do you have in order to learn the Qur'an?
7. If a person acts according to the instructions of the Qur'an, how will he live here and in the Hereafter?
8. Who are the best people?

Complete these sentences:

- a. The religion of Islam gives the key of of the world.
- b. The Muslim follows the in all things.
- c. The Muslim must be a friend and helper to and an enemy to the oppressors.
- d. The Qur'an is a heavenly message and of our lives.
- e. The Qur'an is a book of and
- f. It teaches us the highest, noblest of life.

g. It teaches us discernment of and in and

h. The Qur'an is a message of

i. The Qur'an tells us not to oppress and not submit to not to be of death and not to with the oppressors.

j. The Qur'an tells us to rely on the might and power of Allah, and not to be of other than Allah.

k. The Qur'an tells us to be united and cry out for truth and justice in unison. It says we must obey the and carry out their command in oppressors and delivering.....from the claws of oppression.

l. Our Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has told us:



Lesson Fourteen

The Sacred Qur'an

The Holy Qur'an
The Holy Qur'an, Book of guidance and light
That Sacred Lamp, that makes the truth so bright
Removes the blinkers, and frees our sight
Shows to us the path, that is straight and right
He from Whom this Book we received.
Then the Qur'an will be your best friend,
Till in Paradise, joy without end
But if the Qur'an you choose to ignore,
Then before you Hell is in store
Thus our Qur'an, we hold dearer and dearer,
As towards perfection we come nearer and nearer,
A sacred book that inspires the wise
We defend most bravely, with our wealth and lives.

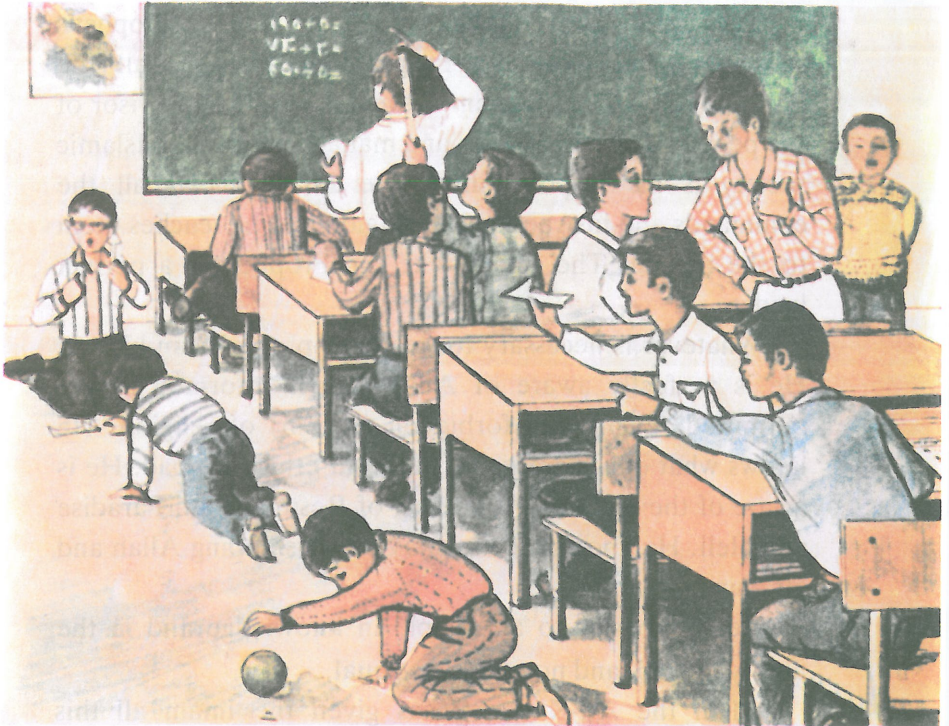
Memorize this poem



Lesson Fifteen

What Are the Pupils Doing?

What are the pupils doing in the classroom? Can an



ignorant person be a teacher? If the teacher couldn't come to the class for a while, who could teach in his place? Can an ignorant person take the teacher's place? Do you know who does the work of the Prophet after his departure?

Do you know who are the people's leaders after the Prophet?

Do you know who safeguards the laws of religion after the Prophet?

Do you know who leads and supervises the Islamic nation after the Prophet?

Imam

The Leader of the Muslim Community

The Imam is the religious leader and the Prophet's successor, and after the Prophet he performs all the Prophet's duties. The Imam is the leader and supervisor of the people. The supervision and management of the Islamic society is his responsibility. The Imam knows all the commands and instructions of religion and he teaches them to the people. The Imam, like the Prophet, is a perfect leader.

Whatever is necessary for leadership, the Imam knows. He is perfectly aware of Allah. He is informed of the permitted (ḥalāl) and forbidden (ḥarām) of religion. He knows what ethics are good and what ethics are bad. He is aware of the realities of the Day of Resurrection, Paradise and Hell. He knows the real way of worshipping Allah and attaining salvation.

He is superior to all people in knowledge and in the ability to lead, and no one is his equal.

Allah the All-Knowing has given the Imam all this

knowledge through the Prophet, and it is the Prophet who, by the order of Allah, has entrusted the Imam with the leadership and supervision of the Islamic nation.

The Imam is the protector of religion and the supervisor of the Islamic society.

Questions and Exercises

1. Do you know who is the Imam?
2. Who appoints the Imam? With what duties does he entrust the Imam?
3. What type of knowledge and awareness does the Imam have? Does anyone else reach his level?
4. Who has put this knowledge and awareness at the disposal of the Imam?

Complete the following sentences

- a. The Imam is the of religion and the successor of the Prophet.
- b. The Imam is the leader of the people and the of society is his responsibility.
- c. Allah the All-Knowing has put all this knowledge at the disposal
- d. The Imam is the of religion and the of society



Lesson Sixteen

The First Imam

Imam 'Alī (a.s.) Amīr ul-Mu'minīn

Our first Imam is Imam 'Alī, 'alayhi as-salām. By the order of Allah, the Holy Prophet of Islam introduced him to the people and entrusted to him the guardianship and supervision of the Islamic community, in order that Imam 'Alī (a.s.) could lead the people after him and be their Imam and their guide.

Imam 'Alī (a.s.) was born in Meccah on the thirteenth of the month of Rajab. The name of his father was Abū Ṭālib. The name of his mother was Fāṭimah, the daughter of Asad.

Imam 'Alī was the Holy Prophet's young cousin. From his very childhood he lived in the household of the Prophet. He was brought up by the Prophet and learnt from him the ethics and true values of life.

As a child Imam 'Alī was bright and intelligent. He understood perfectly the words of the Holy Prophet and put them into action. He never told a lie. He never abused anyone. He was always cheerful, polite and well-mannered. He treated people with respect. He was truthful and honest. He would often help the Holy Prophet. He was also strong



and brave. He was friendly and kind to people. He never annoyed them, and no one had the nerve to annoy him either.

One month every year, before he received his Prophetic mission, the Holy Prophet would go to a cave to worship there in solitude. The name of that cave was Ḥirā: During this month 'Alī would bring the Prophet food and water.

Imam 'Alī (a.s.) said later: "I was in the mountain of Ḥirā with the Prophet and I witnessed the signs of Prophethood in him."

Imam 'Alī (a.s.) was the first man to declare himself a Muslim. At that time he was about ten years old, but he was so intelligent and deep-thinking that he perfectly understood good and bad and realised that Muḥammad (a.s.w.) was telling the truth, and that he was really Allah's appointed messenger.

Think and answer

1. What is the name of our first Imam? Who appointed him for Imamate?
2. Where was he born? In which month? On what day?
3. What were the names of his parents? What was his relationship with the Prophet?
4. What kind of boy was he? Did he annoy the other children? Did the other boys annoy him? Why not?
5. Who brought him up? How old was he when he declared himself a Muslim?
6. Who was the first man to become a Muslim?
7. Who is bringing you up? How do you behave?
8. Do you properly follow Imam 'Alī (a.s.).



Lesson Seventeen

Work and Generosity

Imam 'Alī (a.s.) was a hard-working man with a pleasant personality. He worked hard while farming and cultivating orchards. He developed several plots and orchards and then gave them all away for the sake of Allah.

One day, he acquired a piece of barren land outside Madīnah which he wanted to cultivate. In order to do this, he decided to dig a well, he chose a suitable place and, putting his hopes in the grace of Allah, he began to dig.

Several days went by, but still there was no sign of any water coming out of the well.

One day, Imam 'Alī picked up a pick-axe, entered the well and, using all his strength and energy, worked very hard for a while, but still there was no sign of water. Exhausted, he came out of the well, wiped away the sweat of his brow, rested for a while, and then re-entered the well. He was swinging the pick-axe with such vigour that the sound of his breathing could be heard all around. After receiving a strong, hard blow with the pick-axe, the ground suddenly split open, and fresh, clear water bubbled up.

He climbed quickly out of what had now become a



wonderful well in the dry desert which would soon turn all the surrounding area into a lovely orchard. Soon the people gathered around to see it. Each of them was commenting on it.

“What a hard-working man is ‘Alī!” one said

“since ‘Alī is a good and generous man,” said another.

“Allah has been generous to him and given him goodness.”

“‘Alī and his descendants have become rich forever,” said some.

Some congratulated Imam ‘Alī, while some were jealous.

“Bring me a paper and pen” said ‘Alī (a.s.) and when

they had done so, he sat down and wrote the following:

I have endowed this well and the land surrounding it in charity for its income to be used as follows:

- a. In helping the poor and destitute.
- b. In helping the travellers far away from their homes.
- c. In providing the means for the marriages of orphans.
- d. In providing medical care for the poor.
- e. In the doing of good works of public benefit.

I have endowed this well in charity so as to seek the pleasure of Allah and the rewards of the Hereafter, and in order to be saved from the fire of Hell.

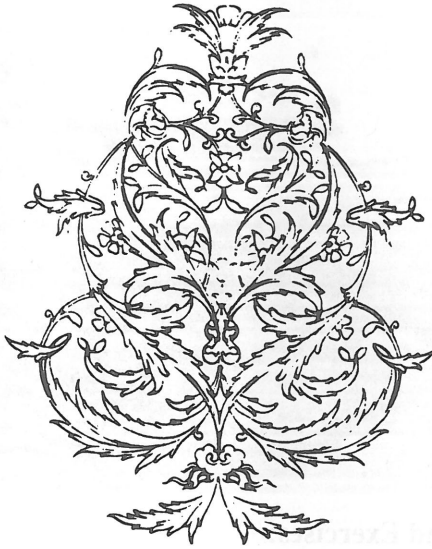


Questions and Exercises:

1. In which ways did Imam 'Alī (a.s.) determine that the income of the well was to be spent?
2. Count some good works that are of public benefit.
3. Count the works you can do which would benefit your friends.
4. Why did Imam 'Alī (a.s.) endow that well in charity?

5. What works do you do in order to be saved from the fire of Hell?

6. Tell your friends the lesson that must be learnt from this story.



Lesson Eighteen

The Second Imām

Imām Hasan(a.s.)

The second Imam is Imām Ḥasan (a.s.). His father is Imam ‘Alī (a.s.) and his mother is Fātimah (a.s.), the daughter of the Prophet (s.a.).

He was born in the city of Madīnah on the fifteenth of the month of Ramaḍān, in the year 3 AH.

The Holy Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.) loved Imām Ḥasan very much and treated him with great honour and respect. He would kiss Imām Ḥasan (a.s.) and say: I love Hasan and I love the friends of Ḥasan.

He would also say: Ḥasan and Husain are the leaders of the youths of Paradise.

Imām Ḥasan was very intelligent and virtuous. He was very careful about worship and prayer.

He was friendly with the poor and helped them.

Imam ‘Alī (a.s.), in accordance with the decree of the Prophet, introduced Imām Ḥasan as his successor and the leader and guardian of the people after him.

Imām Ḥasan continually increased the people’s awareness, and he made great efforts to reveal the true nature of the oppressors in order that their lies and deceit

should become known, and for the grounds to be prepared for resistance.

Finally, he was martyred on the 28th of the month of Šafar, in the year 50 AH, and his holy body was buried in Madīnah. Eternal peace be upon him.

Think and Answer

1. In what year was Imām Ḥasan (a.s.) born? In what month? On what day?
2. What was the name of his father? What was the name of his mother?
3. What did the Holy Prophet say about Imām Ḥasan
4. How did he behave towards the helpless?
5. Who appointed Imām Ḥasan (a.s.) to be the people's Imam and guide? Upon whose decree?
6. When was Imām Ḥasan (a.s.) martyred?
7. Where did they bury his holy body?



Lesson Nineteen

The Merciless Enemy

Imām Hasan (a.s.) had just arrived home. He was tired and intended to rest. Just then, a man knocked on the door. He asked permission and came in. He greeted the Imam with his salām and sat down. Imām Hasan returned his salām, treated him respectfully and asked him how he was. The man sat very still. It was clear that he had something in his mind, but was embarrassed to speak about it. Imam looked at his face and became sad. He knew that the man had a problem. Patiently, he waited for the man to tell him his troubles. The man sighed "o son of the Prophet." he said at last, "I have come to you to seek refuge from an enemy, A cruel, dangerous, merciless enemy. An enemy that neither shows respect to the aged, nor mercy to the young. This powerful and cruel enemy has blackened my days. My life is a misery and I am helpless. O son of the Prophet! Heed my call and save me"

Imām Hasan (a.s.) had been listening closely to the man's words. He had become so affected that he was trembling. He leaned forward and said. "Who is your enemy? Whoever he is I will help you against him. I am a Muslim and a Muslim

must defend his oppressed brothers and obtain for them their rights. Tell me who your enemy is.”

“My enemy,” said the man, who was so embarrassed that his face had become red “is poverty” This is my enemy who neither respects the elderly, nor shows mercy to the young. O son of the Prophet, I am not a lazy man, I work hard, but I cannot meet my expenses. Problems have put me in distress. I am empty-handed and in debt. You are from a noble and generous family, will you deliver me from this appalling situation?”

Imām Ḥasan had become very sad listening to the man’s problems. “Whatever money we have in the house,” he said to his servant, “bring it to me”

The servant put all the gold pieces that were in the house into a large purse and brought it to Imām Ḥasan. Imam gave it to the man and, so as to cheer him up, he apologized that he had no more. Then he said, “Pay your debts with this money and solve all your problems. Then you can earn your living with a clear heart and mind. I hope that by working hard you can remain independent. But I swear that if this enemy attacks you again, you must again come and complain about it to me. The poverty of people like you who work hard is because their rights are not properly given to them.”

*** We Muslims are bound to help the poor and destitute and defend their trampled rights. We must strive to establish justice and equity, so that poverty will be eliminated.***

Think and Answer

1. What was the enemy of that man?
2. Why did he call it his enemy?
3. What did he mean when he said that it doesn’t show mercy to children?

4. What was Imām Ḥasan's reply?
5. Why was Imām Ḥasan (a.s.) upset upon hearing the man's condition?
6. What did he tell his servant?
7. Having given the man the money, why did Imām Ḥasan apologize?
8. What did he say after he had given the man the money?
9. What is the root cause of poverty?
10. What must we do in order to establish justice and equality among the people?
11. Do you help those in distress?
12. Do you have a programme worked out for this in the future?



Lesson Twenty

The Third Imam

Imām Ḥusayn(a.s.)

Imām Ḥusayn (a.s.) is the younger brother of Imām Ḥasan. His father is Imam ‘Alī (a.s.) and his mother is Fāṭimah (a.s.), the daughter of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)

He was born on the third of the month of Sha‘bān, in the year 4 AH, in Madīnah.

He was the Imam and leader of the Islamic society after Imām Ḥasan. The Holy Prophet loved Imām Ḥusayn very much. He would kiss Ḥusayn and say:

“Ḥusayn is from me and I am from Ḥusayn, whoever loves Husain is loved by Allah.”

Imām Husayn was very intelligent and virtuous. He used to take care of the poor and orphans. He was noble, strong and brave and did not submit to humiliation. He rose in combat against oppression. He was truthful and honest, and he hated insincerity and flattery.

Imam Ḥusayn once said: “I see nothing in dying in the path of Allah but everlasting happiness, and I see nothing in living in compromise with the oppressors but degradation and humiliation.

Lesson Twenty-one

Seeking Allah's Pleasure by Generosity

One of the former Companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.) was seriously ill. Imām Ḥusayn (a.s.) went to visit him. He saw that the man was in extreme discomfort. He was sighing and groaning.

Imām Ḥusayn (a.s.) became very upset. "Brother" he said, "Why are you so distressed? Tell me, so that I can do something about it."

"I am in debt," said the sick man. "and I have nothing with which to pay my debts. I am afraid that I will die while still in debt."

"My dear brother" Imām Ḥusayn told him, "don't be upset. I will stand security for all your debts."

"O ,," said the sick Muslim. "I don't want to be in debt when I die, and I am afraid that I will die before you can pay my debts."

"Don't be distressed." Imām Ḥusayn told him, "I have faith that I can clear all your debts before you pass away."

Imām Ḥusayn took his leave and immediately went and took his money and went and paid the man's debts. After he had paid them all, he went and informed the man about it

which made the man very happy. Allah, too, was very pleased by this kindness and generosity.

Our Holy Prophet tells us:

“Whoever pleases a believer has pleased me, and whoever pleases me has pleased Allah.”



Think and Answer

1. When one of your friends is sick, do you go and visit him?
2. What did Imām Ḥusayn ask the sick Muslim? What was the man's reply?

3. How did Imām Husayn cure the man's unhappiness?
4. Are you in debt to anyone? Don't you think that you ought to repay it as soon as possible?
5. Have you pleased a Muslim today? How?
6. What has our Holy Prophet told us about pleasing a believer?



Lesson Twenty-two

The Fourth Imam

Imām Sajjād, Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (a.s.)

The name of Imām Sajjād was ‘Alī. He was born on the fifteenth of the month of Jamādī al-Thānī in 38 AH, in Madīnah.

His father is Imām Ḥusayn (a.s.) and his mother is Shahr-Bānū. In accordance with the Divine decree, Imām Ḥusayn appointed Imām Sajjād to be the people’s Imām after him.

When Imām Ḥusayn (a.s.) was martyred at Karbalā’, Imām Sajjād was also present. But since he was sick he was unable to fight against the forces of Yazīd along with the others, and thus he was not martyred.

During his journey from Karbalā’, he delivered speeches in the towns of Kufah and Damascus, and he informed the people of his father’s holy intentions. In this way he disgraced Yazīd.

Imām Sajjād liked orphans, the poor and the handicapped to come to his house and be his guests.

He used to give food and clothing to many families who were poor and needy.

Imām Sajjād was so earnest in worshipping Allah that he was called “Zayn al-‘Ābidīn”, which means “the adornment

of worshippers”, while “al-Sajjād” means “one who prostrates long and often”.

He lived in this world for fifty-seven years, and passed away on the twenty-fifth of the month of Muharram in the year 95 AH, in Madīnah. He was buried in the Baqī graveyard there. Eternal peace be upon him.

Questions

1. What is the name of our fourth Imām? Who was his father? What was his mother’s name?
2. After his father’s martyrdom, how did he inform the people of his father’s aims?
3. What does “Zayn al-‘Ābidīn mean? What does “Al-Sajjād” mean? Why was he given these two names?
4. How many years did he live? When did he pass away?
5. Where is he buried?

*Now you have learnt about the lives of four Imāms. Can you call out their names in the right order?



Lesson Twenty-three

Beseeching Allah

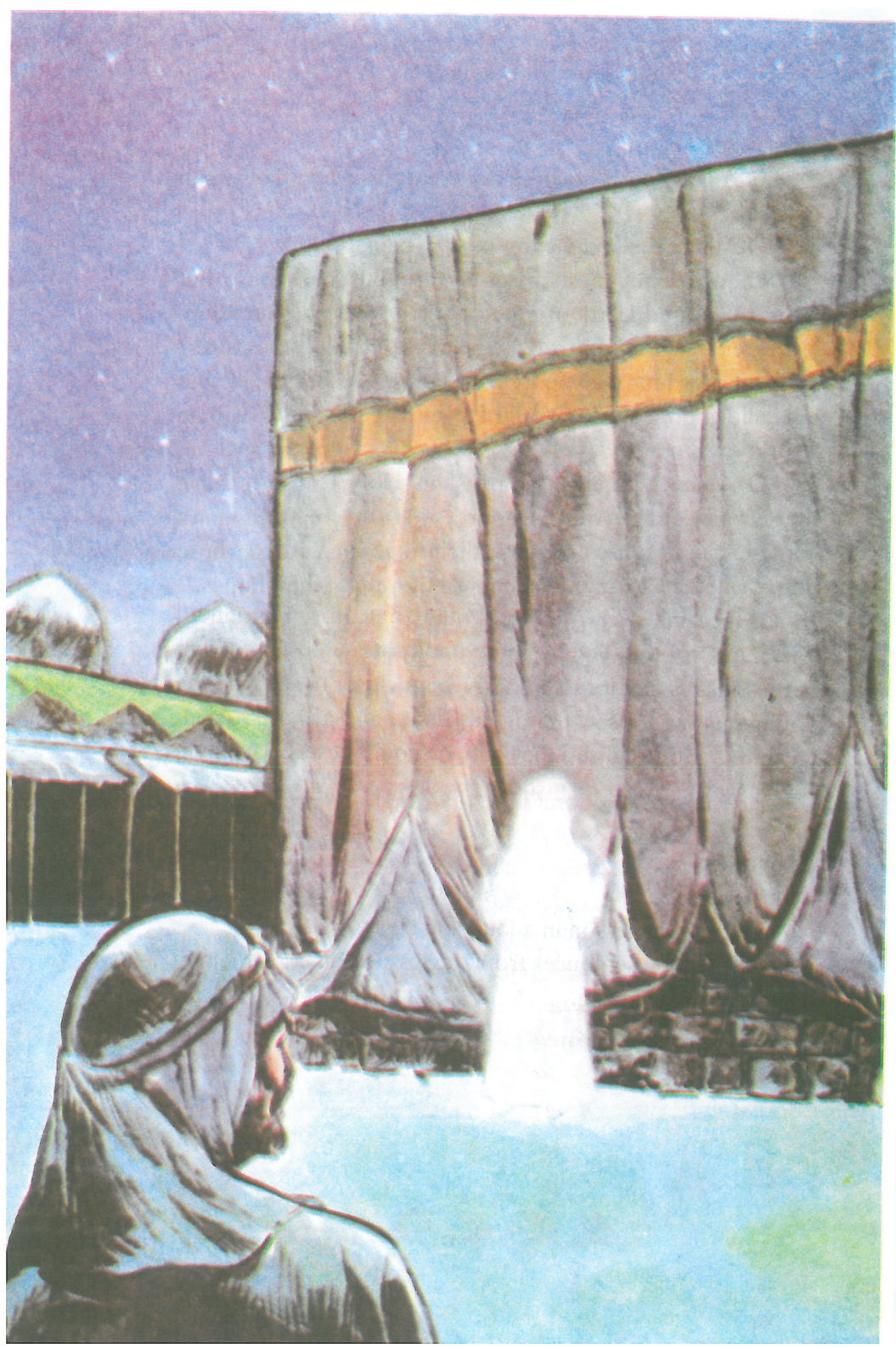
It is recounted by one narrator that: "One night I was performing ṭawāf around the Holy Ka'bah in Meccah. I saw a young man who had caught the cover of the Ka'bah in his hands and was crying. He was beseeching Allah. Saying: "O Lord of the universe, the eyes of all people of the world have closed for sleep, the sun has set and the stars have appeared in the sky. But You, O Master of the universe. You are always awake, alive and are the only permanence, and You are controlling the world and its inhabitants.

"O Lord of all beings, the rulers have shut firm their gates, and have assigned watchmen over them. But the door to Your House, O dear Lord, is always open to all, and You are always ready to relieve the distressed, cure the sick and help the oppressed.

"O Merciful Allah, O creation's Beloved, this helpless creature has come to Your House this dark night, perhaps You will favour him."

O Allah, You Who answer the call of the helpless in the darkness of night.

"O Allah, You Who rescue the distressed from their



difficulties.

“O Allah You Who aid Your creatures when they are in distress.

“O Allah, You Who cure those in pain.

“O Lord, Your guests are asleep around Your House, but You, O Adored Lord, are the only One Who has no sleep. You are He Who is controlling the world and all its creatures.

“O Lord, I have come to Your House this dark night and am calling on You, for You Yourself have told us to call on You’.

“O Allah, I implore You by this Holy House to have mercy on Your servant. O Lord, if Your creatures don’t come to Your House and place their hopes in You, to whose house will they go and in whom will they place their hopes?”

“I became very joyful.” the narrator continued, “listening to the young man imploring God and from witnessing his devotion to Him. I went closer to see who the young man was. I saw that it was Imām al- Sajjād, Zayn al-‘Ābidīn’, and I realised that only he could beseech Allah in such a way.”

Exercises:

- a. Recite the lesson in a loud and clear voice.
- b. Select ten sentences from the lesson and copy them in your best handwriting.



Lesson Twenty-Four

Performing the Prayer

The Best Provision for the Hereafter

The prayer is among the highest acts of worship. The prayer brings us close to Allah and is the best provision for the Hereafter.

If we perform the prayer properly, we will be in bliss and



felicity in the Hereafter.

The Holy Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.) tells us:

“I like to perform the prayer in this world: the pleasure of my heart and the light of my eyes is the prayer.”

He has also told us.

“The prayer is like a cleansing and refreshing stream in which the performer is thoroughly cleansed five times each day.”

We speak to Allah in the prayer and turn the attention of our minds and hearts towards Him. Allah and His Prophet do not love those who fail to perform their prayers.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has told us “I am disgusted by the person who does not perform the obligatory prayers.”

God loves the people who perform the prayer and gives them a beautiful rewards. He especially loves the children who perform the prayer from their very childhood.

Every Muslim performs five prayers each day:

The morning prayer, called “al-fajr”, of two units or rak’ahs.

The noon prayer, called “al-zuhr”, of four rak’ahs.

The afternoon prayer, called “al-‘asr” of four rak’ahs.

The sunset prayer, called “al-maghrib”, of three rak’ahs.

The evening prayer, called “al-‘ishā” . of four rak’ahs.

Think and Answer

1. What has the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) told us about the prayer?

2. What must we do to enjoy bliss in the Hereafter?

3. How many prayers does a Muslim perform each day?

How many units does each prayer have?

4. What does the Holy Prophet tell us about those who fail to perform their prayers?

5. What kind of children does Allah love very much?

6. Are you among the children whom Allah loves so much?

*** Before performing the prayer we must have the necessary ablution called “wudū”. Perform “wudū” in front of your father and ask him if you have performed it properly.**



Lesson Twenty-five

How Do We Perform the Prayer?

We perform the prayer as follows:

1. We stand facing the direction of the *qiblah* (which is the Ka'bah in Meccah), and we (specify our) intention, or *niyyah*. This means that with awareness and concentration we resolve to perform the prayer for the sake of Allah. For example, we resolve to perform the four-unit noon (z̤uhr) prayer "in nearness to Allah".

2. After having made this intention, we raise our hands to the level of our ears, palms facing forwards, and say the words "Allāhu akbar."

3. After this "*takbir*", we recite sūrat al-Ḥamd, which is as follows:

Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥīm.

Al-ḥamdu lillāhi Rabbil-Ālamīn

Ar-Raḥmānir-Raḥīm

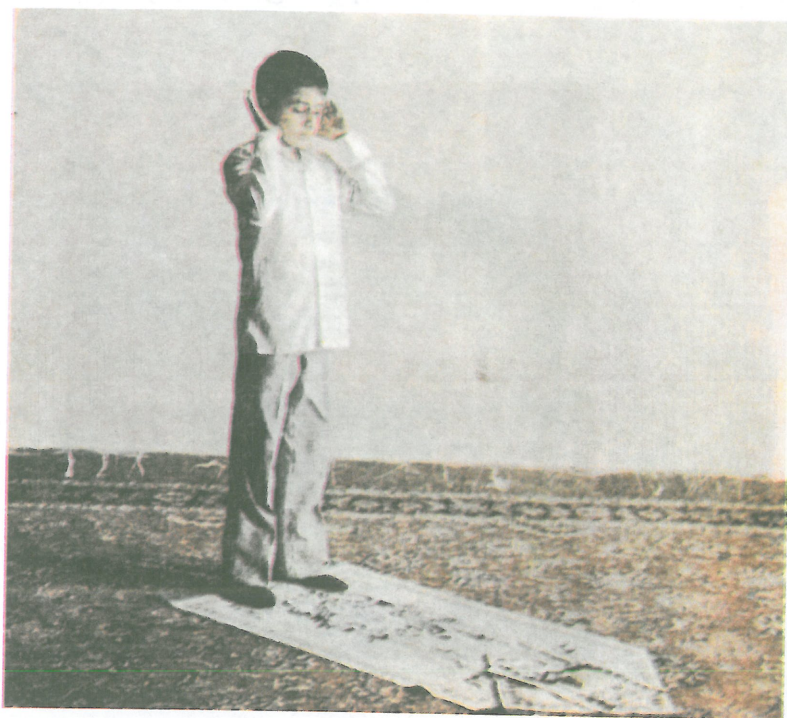
Māliki Yawmid-Dīn

Iyyāka na'budu wa iyyāka nasta'īn

Ihdinaṣ-ṣirāṭal-mustaqīm

Ṣirāṭal-ladhīna an'amta 'alayhim

Ghayril-maghdūbi' alayhim walāḍ-ḍāllīn



And after reciting Sūrat Ḥamd we recite another complete sūrah from the Qur'an, for example:

Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ

Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥīm

Qul Huwa-llāhu Aḥad,

Allāhuṣ-Ṣamad,

Lam yalid wa lam yūlad,

wa lam yakun lahu kufuwan Aḥad.

4. Next we move to rukū', which is bowing before Allah.

This means that we bend forward to the extent that we can place our hands on our knees. In this position we say:

Subhāna Rabbiyal-‘Azīmi wabihamdih,
Then we stand up straight and say:



Sami ‘allāhu liman ḥamidah,

5. Now we move to *sujūd*, the prostration: This means that we place our forehead on earth or stone or wood and the palms of our two hands, our knees and the tips of our two big toes on the ground, In this position we say: Subhāna Rabbiyal-‘Ā`lā wa bi hamdih.

Then we raise our head from the prostration and sit still for a moment, and then we move back to the same position to perform a second prostration just like the first.

6. After having performed the second prostration, we stand up again to perform the second unit. While in the act of standing up, we say:

Bihawli-lāhi wa quwwatihi aqūmu wa aq'ud.

Then we recite Sūrat al-Ḥamd and another sūrah just like in the first unit.

After saying the two surahs in the second unit, now we say “*qunūt*”. This means that we raise our hands to the level of our shoulders, palms facing upwards, and say a supplication. For example, we say:

Rabbanā ātinā fid-dunyā hasanah, wa fil-ākhirati ḥasanah, wa qinā 'adhāban-nār. (Our Lord, grant us good in the world and good in the Hereafter, and save us from the chastisement of the fire.)





Then we perform the *rukū'* and *sujūd*, just like in the first unit.

7. After the two prostrations of the second unit, we must sit still and say the "*tashahhud*". This means that we say: Al-hamdulillāh.

Ashhadu an lā ilāhā illā l-lāh waḥdahū lā sharīka lah, wa ashhadu anna Muḥammadan 'abduhu wa rasūluh.

Allāhumma ṣallī 'alā Muḥammadin wa āli Muḥammad.

8. After saying this "*tashahhud*", we stand up to perform the third unit. In the third unit, we don't recite *sūrat al-Hamd* and the other *sūrah*. Instead, we say three times:

Subḥāna-llāhi wal-hamdū-lillāhi wa lā ilāha illa-llāhu wallāhu akbar.

Then we perform the *rukū'* and the *sujūd* just like in the other units. We then stand up again for the fourth unit and perform it like the third.

9. After the two prostrations of the fourth unit, we sit and say “*tashahhud*”, just like in the second unit. Then we say the *salāms*:

As-salāmu ‘alayka ayyuhān-nabiyu wa raḥmatu-llāhi wa barakātuh.

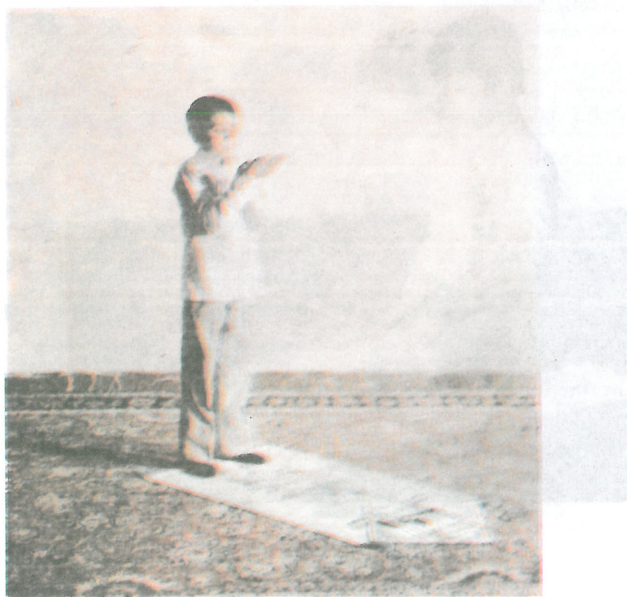
As-salāmu ‘alaynā wa ‘alā ‘ibādi-llāhiṣ -ṣālihīn.

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh.

And we have finished our prayer.

Notes

1. We perform the afternoon (al-‘aṣr) and evening (al-‘ishā’) prayers just like the noon (al-ḏuhr) prayer, but for the niyyahwe must have an intention to pray al-‘aṣr prayer, or al-‘ishā’ prayer, “in nearness to Allah”,



2. The sunset prayer (al-maghr**ib**) has three units. So we make the *niyyah* to perform three units of al-maghr**ib** prayer...and we say the second *tashahhud* and the *salāms* at the end of the third unit and maghr**ib** prayer is finished.

3. The morning prayer al-fajr has two units. So we make the *niyyah*, for two units, and we say the *salāms* of the prayer after the *tashahhud* of the second unit, and the prayer is finished.

4. The time for the morning prayer is from the first light of dawn until sunrise.

5. The time for the noon and afternoon prayers, which



must be performed in the right order, is from noon until sunset.

6. The time for the sunset and evening prayers, which must be performed in the right order, is from the beginning of the sunset until the middle of the night.

Questions and Exercises:

1. Recite sūrat al-Ḥamd and another sūrah from memory.

2. What do we say in the prayer's rukū'?

3. What do we say in the prostrations?

4. What do we say in the "qunūt"?

5. What do we say in the "tashahhud"?

6. Say the salāms of the prayer.

Try to learn how to perform the prayer perfectly without any faults, and perform your prayer with one of the members of your family in a mosque, so that you benefit from the grace of Allah, In shā' Allāh.



Lesson Twenty-six

Being Clean

We all know that particles of dirt are harmful for our health, and that we must be careful of them.

For example, the urine and faeces of human-beings are dirty, and the religion of Islam calls these “*najis*”, meaning impure.

Islam tells us:

*If these pollute our body or clothing, we must wash our body and clothes with water in order to make it clean. It is also important that the body and the clothes of a person wishing to perform the prayer must be perfectly clean.

*To eat food that is impure is forbidden and sinful.

*Whenever we go to the toilet, we must sit in such a way that drops of urine do not get on our clothes, for drops of urine, however small, make clothing and the body impure.

We must also clean the outlet of faeces, too. This we do either with three pieces of paper or with water (pouring the water with our right hand and washing with the left.)

After coming out from the toilet, it is good that we wash our hands with soap and water.

*To pass urine or faeces while facing the *qiblā*, or with

one's back to the *qiblā*, is forbidden and sinful.

*We must squat to pass urine, and not do it standing.

Our Holy Prophet has told us:

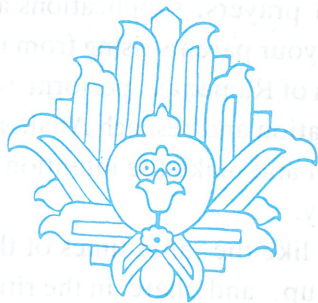
“Don't pass urine while standing.”

*And we mustn't go to answer the call of nature next to rivers and streams, nor under fruit trees, nor streets or lanes.

The religion of Islam is a clean religion, and tells us:

“Cleanliness is a part of religion.”

A young Muslim works hard to keep his body and clothes pure, and he is always clean.



Lesson Twenty-seven

Fasting

A Great Act of Worship

The month of Ramadān is a great month, a month of worship, prayer and fasting. A month of selflessness, compassion and self-sacrifice. The pre-dawn period (sahar) of each day of the month of Ramadān is very special. Muslims rise up for “sahar” during the month of Ramadān and perform prayers, supplications and litanies. Perhaps you have seen your parents rising from their beds at sahar time in the month of Ramadān, perform wudū , pray, recite the sahar supplication and beseech Allah, and then eat their special sahar meal and make the intention to fast until sunset the following day.

Good children also like the sahar times of the month of Ramadān. They wake up, and share in the rituals of sahar with their parents, and then they don't eat anything until noon, or for as long as they are able. In this way they share in the blessings and rewards of fasting with the adults.

Having a guest for *iftār*, the meal that ends the fast after sunset, is one of the best actions of Muslims. Whoever has a fasting guest at the time of *iftār* and provides his guest with food, Allah will give that person many blessings and

bounties.

Questions

1. What is special about the month of Ramadān? What are the rituals of this month?
2. In the month of Ramadān, what do Muslims do at saḥar time?
3. How do children share in the blessings and rewards of fasting?
4. What is one of the best actions that we do at the time of ifṭār?

Complete the following sentences

- a. The month of Ramadān is a month of worship. A month of selflessness and
- b. The saḥars of the month of Ramadān are very
- c. In the month of Ramadān, Muslims wake up at saḥar time and make the intention to until sunset.
- d. children also like the saḥar time of the month of Ramadān.
- e. They eat at saḥar and don't or drink anything until noon or
- f. Whoever gives food to a fasting guest at ifṭār time will receive from Allah many and



Lesson Twenty-eight

Salām, The Word of Kindness

Our Holy Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.) was sitting one day with his Companions and they were talking together. A person came in without asking permission and didn't even offer his salām.

“Why didn't you say salām?” questioned the Prophet. “Why didn't you ask permission to come in?!”

“Go back. Ask our permission and greet us with your salām before you come in, he instructed.

Regarding *salāms*, the Holy Prophet has told us:

* “O Muslims! you will not enter Paradise unless you are kind to each other, unless you warmly say salām to each other whenever you meet.”

* “Always say *salām* in a loud voice and reply in the same way.”

* “God loves most the person who says *salām* first and gives him better rewards and blessings.”

* “First give your *salām*, then say whatever you have to say.”

Do You Know His Name?

Perhaps he is one of your friends. He works hard to learn Islamic manners and puts them into practice.

He greets others warmly with his *salām*, saying,

“*Salāmun‘alaykum*, and he returns his *salām* smilingly to whoever says *salām* to him, whenever he sees one of his friends he becomes happy and, with a smile, he shakes hands, says his *salām* and asks about his health and wellbeing.

Whenever he is asked about himself he says “*al-hamdu lillāh*, I am well.”

He enters the house, he greets his parents and all the household with his *salām*, and he says goodbye whenever he goes out.

He thanks whoever is kind to him, and if he can, he repays that person’s kindness with kindness.

Whenever he enters a gathering, he says his *salām* in a clear voice and sits wherever is appropriate.

He never puts his finger in his nose in front of anyone, nor spits, nor stretches his legs.

He never interrupts anyone and never speaks too much. He never gets upset without reason, and always speaks nicely and politely.

When he sneezes he puts his hand over his mouth and nose, and afterwards says, “*al-hamdu lillāh*”.

Do you know this boy? Do you know his name?

His name is Nāṣir. His behaviour is very good and Allah loves him for it and will give him a beautiful reward.

Good people also like him and respect him. Do you like

him too? Why?

Think and Answer

1. What did our Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) tell that man? He hadn't even made a mistake, or had he?
2. How must we say *salām* to each other? How do we return our *salām*?
3. Who among your friends tries the hardest to give his *salām* first?
4. When you want to enter someone's room, what do you do?
5. Whom does Allah love the most, the person who says his *salām* first, or the person who returns his *salām* , when greeted?

*** To say the greeting of “*Salāmun ‘alaykum*” to a non-Muslim is forbidden, but we can say “*salām*”, and we can reply “*‘alaykum*”, if they give their *salām* to us.**



Lesson Twenty-nine

Behaviour with Parents

A young man went to see Imam Ja'far al-Şādiq (a.s.).

“O Son of the Prophet, “he said to him. “I have a father who is very old and feeble. He cannot do any work. He cannot walk. He cannot even put food into his mouth. I am obliged to help him in everything he does.”

“Fortune has smiled on you” al-Imām al-Şādiq told him. And blessed are you, that you serve your father so compassionately in this way. Try to do as many of your father’s tasks as you can. Wash his clothes. Wash his face and hands. Carry him to the bath. Feed him by hand, and maintain his respect at all times. When you are free, sit down beside him and cheer him up. Listen to him when he speaks to you, and try to give him peace of mind. God forbid that you should ever treat him with disrespect. God forbid that you should ever speak harshly to him, and God forbid that you should ever do something that makes him uncomfortable or unhappy.

“He took great pains for your sake when you were a child” al-Imām al-Şādiq continued. “Now it is your duty to be his helper and serve him.



“Give thanks to Allah” al-Imām al-Ṣādiq told him, “that He has given you the strength to serve your father and attain bliss in this way. Allah wanted to forgive your sins like this, save you from the chastisement of the fire, and give you a beautiful reward in Paradise.”

God has told us to worship only Him and always be kind and helpful to our parents.

Questions

1. Why did al-Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (a.s.) tell the young man he was fortunate and blessed?
2. What did al-Imām al-Ṣādiq (a.s.) tell the young man to do?
3. What commands has Allah given us about how to treat our parents?
4. How do you help your parents?

Exercises

Recite this lesson to the members of your family and discuss with them their duties towards your parents and grandparents.



Lesson Thirty

The Child Martyr

After the martyrdom of his father, Imām al-Ḥasan's son 'Abdullāh lived with his holy uncle, Imām al-Ḥusayn(a.s.), and loved him very much. Imām Ḥusayn too had a great affection for his young nephew.

“‘Abdullāh went to Karbalā' with his uncle and saw everything that happened there. He saw his young brothers and cousins putting on their suits of armour and, with the cry of “Allāhu akbar” and their swords whirling, rushing off to the battlefield. He saw them fighting battle with the enemies of religion and of the Qur'an, the disbelievers and hypocrites, and saw them killing them and being killed. He saw them drowned in their holy blood, giving life and strength to Islam with their martyrdom.

When their bodies were brought to the special tent for the martyrs, 'Abdullāh would go and weep over their bodies. He wanted to go to the battlefield and fight with the oppressors and defend Islam and its holy leader, al-Imām al-Ḥusayn (a.s.), but he was very young and they wouldn't give him permission.

It was the day of 'Ashūrā' and all his friends, brothers and

all of al-Imām al-Ḥusayn's valiant troops had been martyred, and 'Abdullāh had witnessed the martyrdom of them all. Before they rushed off to the battlefield, he had heard everyone of the martyrs conveying their final goodbyes, and promising never to desert their leader and Imam or leave him on his own.

The last of al-Imām al-Ḥusayn's men had bravely given his life. He had been martyred. Now al-Imām al-Ḥusayn himself left for the battlefield. 'Abdullāh was standing near the martyrs' tent, watching his uncle from a distance. An hour later, he couldn't see his uncle any more. Without thinking he instinctively ran towards the battlefield. His aunt, Zaynab, wanted to stop him, but couldn't. 'Abdullāh wanted to find his uncle and defend him. Finally, he found him soaked in his own blood. Confused and dumbfounded, he stood staring at the bleeding face of his dear uncle. Al-Imām al-Ḥusayn opened his eyes and both of them saw each other.

Suddenly a sword was raised to deliver the final blow to al-Imām al-Ḥusayn (a.s.). 'Abdullāh saw the flash of the sword and raised his head.

"Do you want to kill my uncle you filthy traitor! he cried!" And immediately shielded his uncle's bleeding body with his arm.

The sword fell. It cut off 'Abdullāh's arm, and the body of that brave and selfless youth fell on the chest of al-Imām al-Ḥusayn (a.s.). He attained martyrdom then and there giving the message of *jihad* and freedom to the youth of all times.

With his last breaths, al-Imām al-Ḥusayn said to him, "My dear child, martyrdom is our honour. Your father al-Imām al-Ḥasan and your grandfather, the Holy Prophet, are waiting for you in Paradise, and we are going to them together."

Questions

1. Who was 'Abdullāh? Who was his father?
2. What did he see on the day of 'Āshūrā'?
3. Why did they refuse him permission to go to the battlefield?
4. What was the message of the martyrs as they said their final farewell?
5. How was 'Abdullāh martyred? What did he say to that enemy soldier before his martyrdom?
6. What did al-Imām al-Ḥusayn(a.s.) tell him with his last breath?

Exercises?

a. Can you write this lesson from the point of view of the young martyr? Start like this: My name is 'Abdullah, and I am the son of al- Imām al-Ḥasan (a.s.).

b. Can you write the story of another famous martyr?

Read it to your classmates.



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P.O.Box 187

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Islamic Republic Of Iran

Tel: 00 98 251 7741744 Fax: 7742647

Email: ansarian@noornet.net

www.ansariyan.org & www.ansariyan.net