

IEC Sunday School

Houston, TX



Diniyat Textbook for

Grade 3



Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Please note that this book contains the name of Allāh, verses from the Holy Qur ān, and names of the M'asumīn. Please be careful not to touch these special names and verses without having wudū'. If you no longer need this book, please return it to the madrasah or recycle it. Do not throw it in the garbage.

A Note to all Students

Salaamun Alaikum,

Welcome to your new class. There are some things we would like to bring to your attention.

1. Please make sure that you know exactly where your class is in our Center. Also make sure that you know where the fire exits are in case you have to leave the Center in the event of a fire.
2. If ever you hurt yourself and need medical attention, please contact the Administration. They are located in the school lobby.
3. Please attend the Sunday School in good time so that you can benefit from the Assembly at 10:00 am. Make sure you have your Diniyat book, your Holy Qur'an, some paper, and a pencil. Boys, remember to wear your long pants and girls should be dressed Islamically.
4. This book should be treated with respect. It contains verses of the Holy Qur'an as well as the names of Allah (SWT). Please do not scribble all over it or throw it about. Its production is the hard work of many volunteers.
5. Do get to know all your teachers and feel free to talk to them outside Sunday School hours as well. The following grid should be filled on the first day of school, for your easy reference.

My Qur'an teacher is _____ . Phone #: _____

My Diniyat teacher is _____ . Phone #: _____

We hope you have a good year at the Sunday School. If you have any suggestions for the School, do let us know.

Thank you.

Administration





Classroom Expectations

1. When the teacher enters the class, please stand and greet him/her with "Salaamun Alaikum".
2. If you are tardy please excuse yourself when you enter your classroom. Then greet your teacher and proceed to a vacant seat.
3. Listen to him/her quietly to understand the lesson. If you are unclear about any information please raise your hand for a turn to question.
4. Try not to interrupt your teacher unless it is very necessary. You meet him/her only once a week. Let that time be spent wisely.
5. When you are asked a question, please raise your hand and answer ONLY when the teacher asks you to. We know it is difficult to refrain but patience is a virtue.
6. You may speak with other students during the break not during instruction time. This disturbs the whole class.
7. If you need to leave the classroom for the restroom or a drink, please do so after Assembly or during Snack Time.
8. Please come to school on time with the following supplies in your bag:

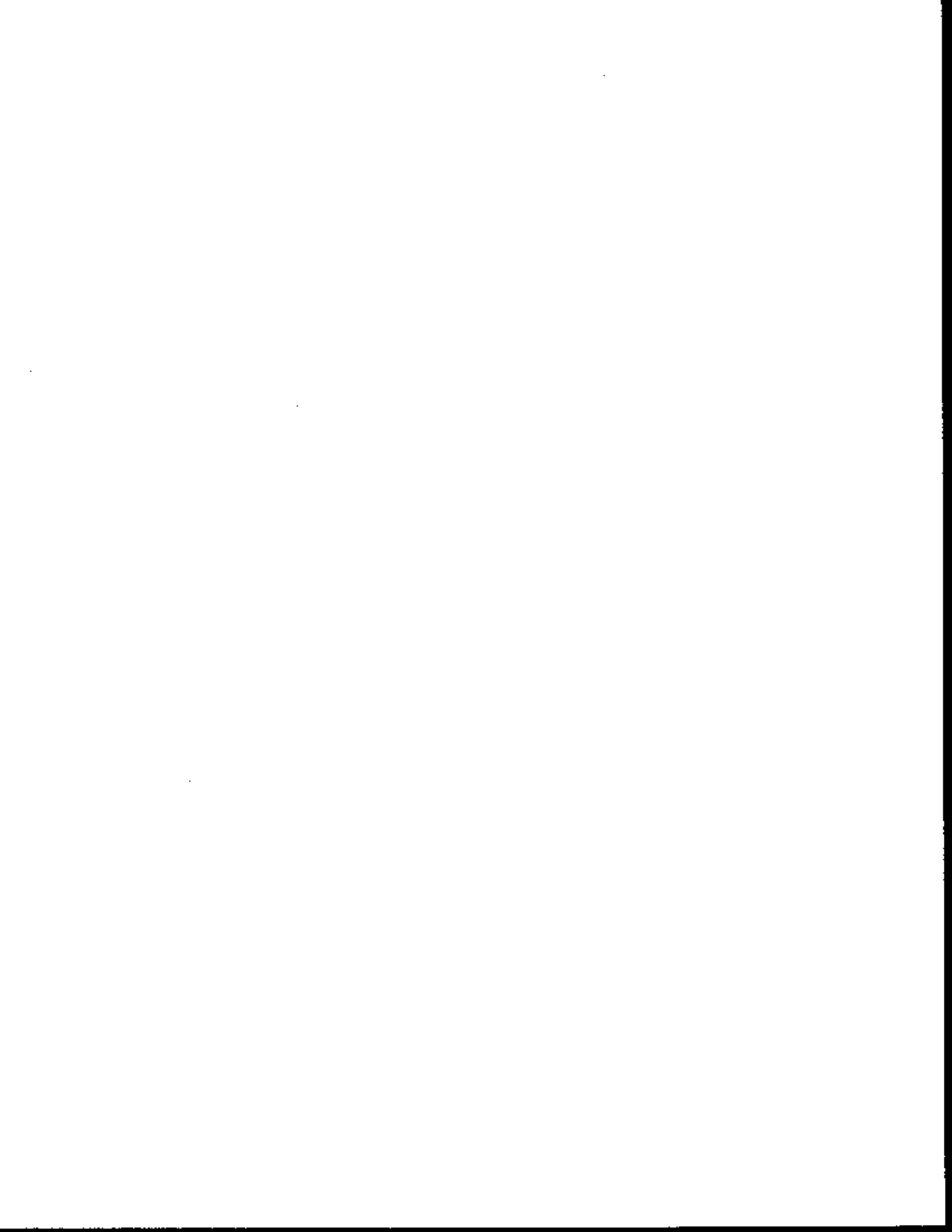


Qur'an textbook
Diniyat textbook
Salaat textbook
Pencil and pen
Class folder with-
Paper or notepad for notes



9. Islamic attire needs to be observed at all times
 - a. Girls
 - i. Hijab properly pinned to cover all your hair
 - ii. Loose clothing. Long sleeves
 - iii. Shirts need to be long. Please wear socks
 - b. Boys
 - i. Long pants
 - ii. Shirts without inappropriate messages

Thank you.
Administration

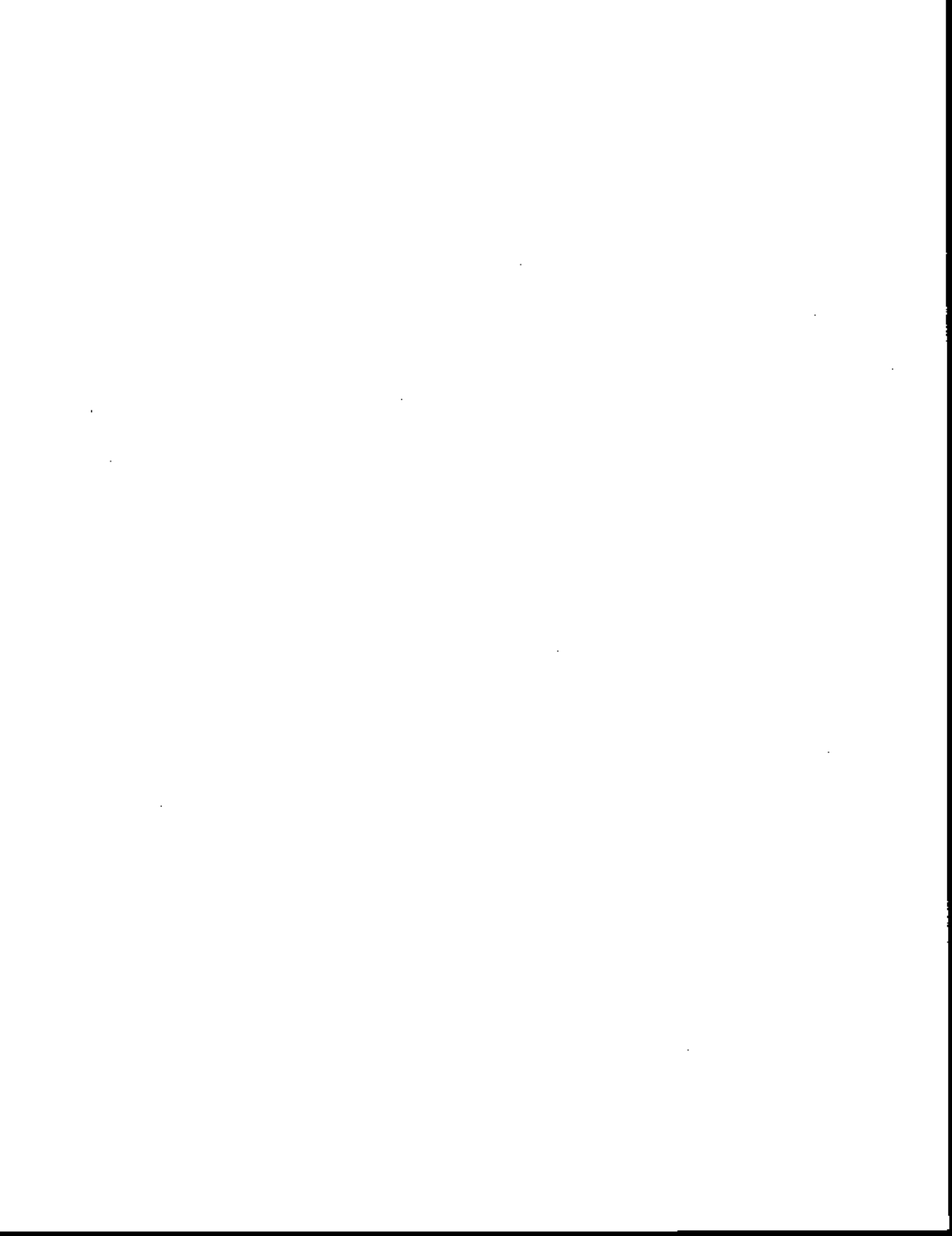


Acknowledgment

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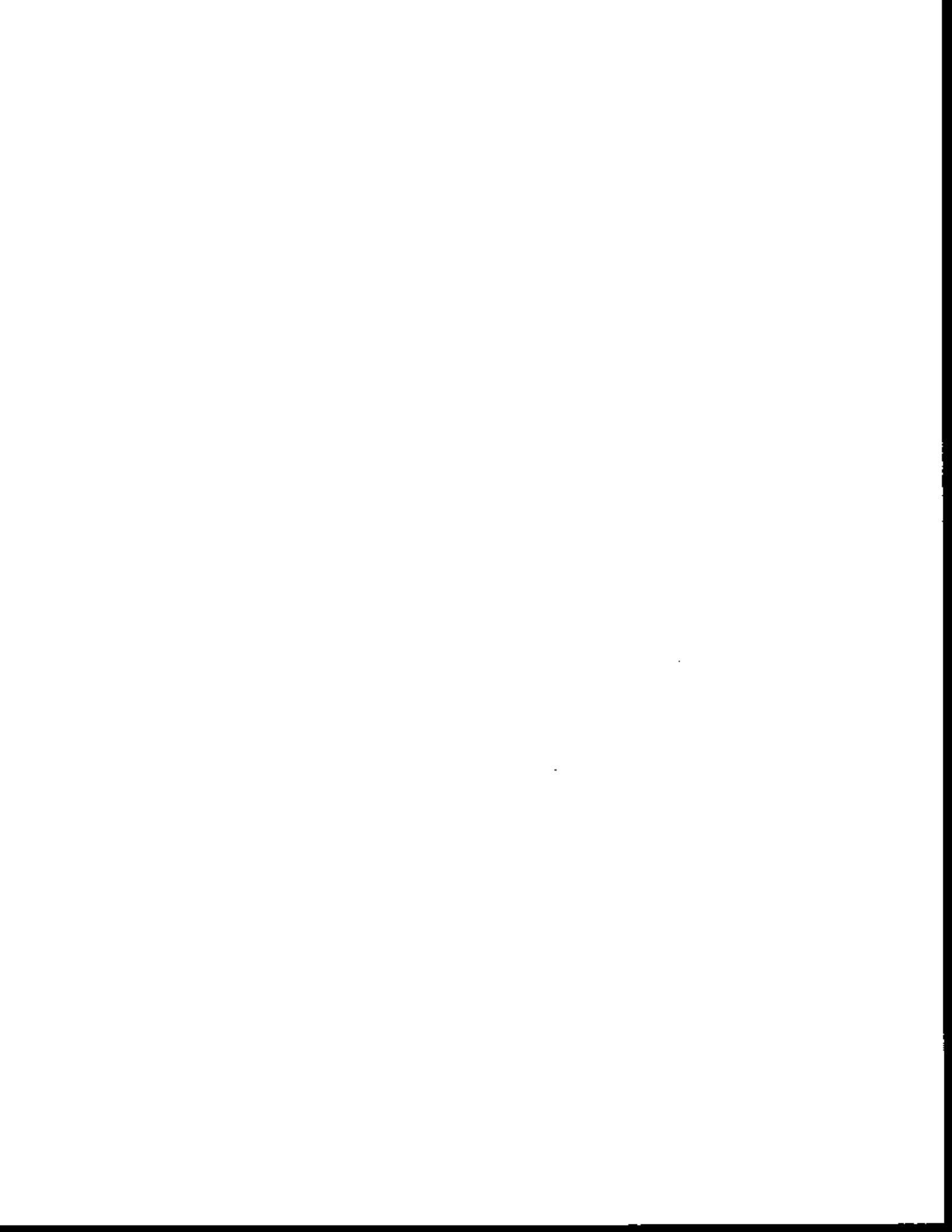
1. *The Shia Ithna'asheri Madressa, Husaini Shia Islamic Center, PO Box 60, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 4JB, United Kingdom*
2. *Islamic Education Board, Dar al Tableegh, Jackets Lane, Harefield, Middlesex UB9 6PZ, United Kingdom*
3. *The Islamic Institute of New York, 55-11 Queens Blvd., Woodside, New York, NY 11377, USA*
4. *Dedicated teachers and volunteers from the communities Houston, Allentown, Minnesota, Toronto, and Dubai*

Without their tremendous hard work these books would not have been produced. May Allah (SWT) reward them for their silent yet indispensable efforts. Ameen.

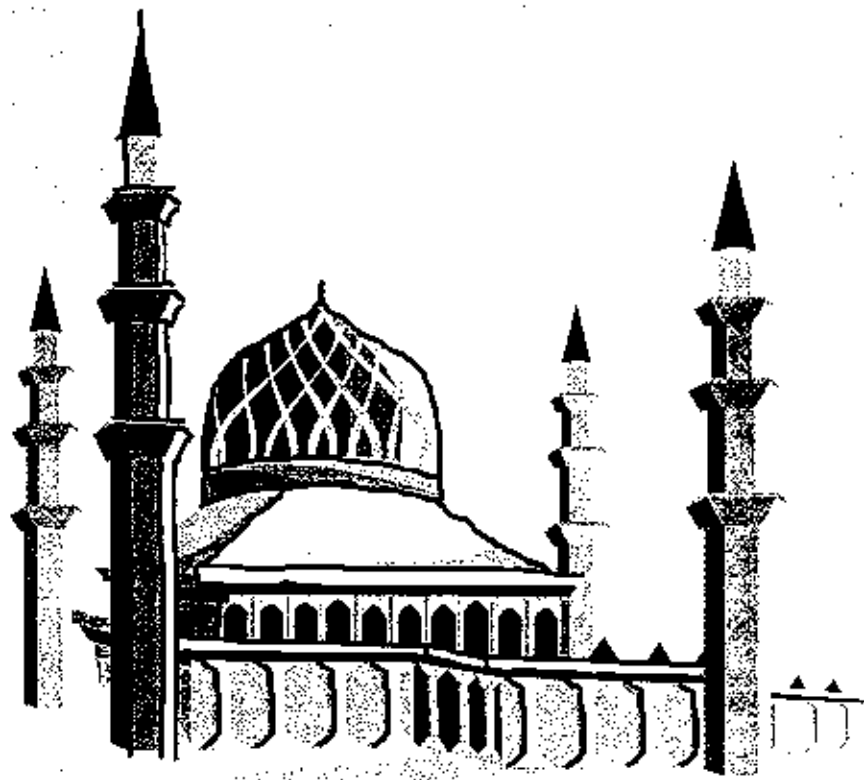


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Islamic Beliefs Unit





WHAT IS ISLAM? WHO IS A MUSLIM?

What is Islam?

The meaning of Islam is to submit oneself completely to the will of Allāh; to follow the path as commanded by Allāh and to act according to the rules set by Him.

Islam also signifies peace and brotherhood, and is a religion that can be followed easily by everyone and everywhere, in the day to day life. Followers of Islām believe in all the Prophets of God from Ādam (AS) to Muhammad (SAW), and also believe in the Holy Books.

Islam is a way of life. It is a simple and uncomplicated religion, giving one maximum freedom without interfering with the freedom of others. It directs people to believe in one God (and so is called a 'monotheistic' religion); to do good; to pray five times a day and pay the poor rate (Zakāt and Khums); to fast in the month of Ramadān; to perform Hajj; and to fight for the sake of Allāh, amongst other things. Also, Islam forbids us to be, and do, evil.

Who is a muslim?

The followers of Islam are known as muslims; this is a person who submits to the will of Allāh completely. A muslim is one who believes in:

1. The oneness of Allāh,
2. Muhammad (SAW) as the messenger of Allāh, and
3. The Day of Judgment, and Heaven and Hell.

One becomes a Muslim when he recites the Kalima and thus expresses his or her faith in the above three things. The Kalima is as follows:

LĀ ILĀHA IL LAL LĀH (There is no god but Allāh)
MUHAMMADUR RASŪLUL LĀH (Muhammad is the messenger of Allāh)

Muslims follow the Holy Book revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The Qur'ān is the direct word of Allāh as revealed to the Prophet. It is in its original form and language, and is unchanged; the orders of the Qur'ān are for all times. The other books had been tampered with but no harm can ever come to this Holy Book, because Allāh Himself protects it.

Along with the above, muslims also believe in Usūl ad-dīn and Furū' ad-dīn. They are the articles of faith and are very important. We will be learning about a few articles of faith in detail in our class.

(Taken from the book "Islam")

ISLAM AND OTHER WORLD RELIGIONS

- Polytheistic religions are those religions that believe in more than one god or believe that god is a human or other things such as fire, the sun, the moon, etc..
- Monotheistic religions believe that there is only One God and that He is the Creator of the universe and all its people.
- Because some people do not believe in something they do not see, they think that there is no god. They do not realize that there has to be a God Who has created the universe and the world. Humans cannot create themselves.

TAWHĪD WHY DO WE BELIEVE IN GOD?

Let us first think about the following: There is one main teacher in your class. There is one principal of your madrasah and also just one Prime Minister to run your country. Now why is that? Why are there not two teachers in every class and two Prime Ministers of Canada?

Just imagine if there were two teachers trying to teach this class. One day one of the teachers would come in and say that you were going to learn about Tawhīd. However, the other teacher would not like that idea and say that 'Adālat would be a better topic. These two would not agree and thus the class would become confused - chaotic - while both tried to teach their own topic of interest. The students would become confused and not know whom to follow. Similar is the case when we have more than one principal or Prime Minister, as well as Lord.

If there were more than one Lord, one day one would want to try a different method of running the world and the other might not agree. They would argue and we, as the inhabitants of the earth, would suffer. For example, let us say that one day one of the gods would want it to rain while the other would want sunshine. If they did not agree and do things their own way then we would have a day with rain and shine together and what an odd day it would be!

Also, we believe in one God only because Allāh says it in the Qur'ān in Sūrah Al-Ikhlās. There were also all the Prophets and the Imāms who directed us that, "There is no God but Allāh - He is one and there is none like Him".

Finally, as our Lord is All Powerful, there only can be one. If there were more than one then each would have some degree of power over the other and no one would be "All Powerful".

Note: A verse of the Qur'ān that talks about Tawhīd is:

"Had there been in (the Heavens and the Earth) other gods except Allāh, they would both have certainly been in a state of disorder..." (Sūrah Al-Anbiyā'; 21:22)

'ADĀLAT- ALLĀH'S JUSTICE

What is justice? Being just means to be fair, and to give proper treatment to everyone. When we say that Allāh is Just, it means that He is fair, and that He is not mean or wicked. This is one of Allāh's qualities, along with being All-Powerful, and being able to create anything. But why do we believe in His justice? Why does Allāh have to be fair?

Allāh is very kind. He loves us all and that is why He has created Heaven for us. He wants us all to be able to go to Heaven, but He won't just give it to us. It's like school and madrasah - your teacher will give you tests to see who really knows the stuff, and then you are rewarded with praises, gifts, and passing on to the next grade; without these tests your teacher will not just let you go onto the next grade. Your teacher will not give you only one test but lots, to make sure that you have really learned your lesson and that you remember it. In the same way Allāh will keep on testing us to make sure that we stay deserving of His rewards. Through these tests will Allāh be able to know who deserves His rewards, and who does not.

Now, as Allāh is testing us, He has to be just to give us a chance to do good. Allāh is so kind; He really helps us to get to Heaven. Allāh will reward even an ounce of good and will punish every bad deed as well. However, He is fair in that for every good deed, He rewards us many times. Even thinking about doing a good deed is rewarded while if someone does wrong, he is given plenty of time to repent and ask for forgiveness. For every bad, we will be punished, but only once. Also, our good deeds are written down right away while our bad deeds are not written right away because Allāh gives us a chance to say, "I am sorry".

Even after writing down the bad deed, we are given more chances to feel sorry and ask Allāh for forgiveness.

Allāh is also fair in other things. For example, if a person who is insane, or even if a child who does not know the difference between right and wrong, does something wrong, then Allāh forgives them. He only holds them accountable for their actions if they know what they are doing. If a person deliberately does wrong then he will rightfully be punished for it, either in this world or the hereafter. If he does something by mistake and then asks for forgiveness then he won't be punished, because Allāh is kind.

Furthermore, Allāh will judge each person by the religion that they have been taught. Thus if a person lives a good life and lives by the laws of that religion that they have learned (and they do not know about Islam), then they will be judged by their

religion. If on the Day of Judgement this person says that he did not know about Islam then Allāh will judge him by what he was told. Therefore, it is also our duty to teach our friends and others about Islam, and about what Allāh says about right and wrong, about Heaven and Hell, and then if they choose to not believe in Allāh, then they will not be able to say, "nobody taught me". This also means that a person should not just listen and do what he is told. He should try and educate himself and learn and discover the religion that is the best. That is why there are madrasahs to help you as well as the Qur'ān and Prophets and Imāms. The Leaders of Islam were here to educate us and show us the difference between right and wrong. Allāh did not leave us alone. There always has been a Prophet or an Imām (presently there is the Twelfth Imām (AS) who is still alive) to guide and help us.

Finally, all our deeds will be weighed. Depending on what we did during our lifetime, we will be able to enter either Heaven or Hell. We will be rewarded for each and every action, either good or bad.

But why is it important to believe in Allāh's justice? There are wars going on in so many places, even in Muslim lands, and so how does this show us that Allāh is fair? There are rich and poor people and so how does this show that Allāh is just? Allāh is Just in that He has asked us to pay Zakāt and Khums - if we have lots then we should also share a little - but if the man Allāh has created does not follow Him, then that is not Allāh's fault. Allāh made man, but not the wars or injustice that is happening everywhere; people choose to fight each other. Further, the bad things happening to some people may be one of Allāh's tests and so we should always be thankful for what we have, and believe in Allāh's kindness and mercy, and not complain about things. For He knows best what is good for us and what is not.

PROPHETHOOD - NABUWWAT

Allāh created us human beings but did not leave us alone after that. He did not just create us, and ask us to do good and follow the right path without telling us how to do that, or having someone show that to us. He wanted every human being to follow certain principles of behaviour, and therefore sent messengers (prophets) to show mankind these principles and the code of life. Allāh sent 124,000 prophets in all, Hadrat Ādam (AS) being the first. The last of them all is Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Some of the other well-known prophets are Hadrat Nūh, Hadrat Ibrāhīm, Hadrat 'Īsa, Hadrat Mūsa, and Hadrat Yūsuf (AS).

A prophet has to be a man, sane, sinless, divinely selected, and divinely guided. By divine we mean that he had to be selected and guided by God. He does what Allāh directs him to do and his duties are helping and guiding the people of the world. At the time of his death, he also has to name his successor. Therefore, it is essential that the successor must also have had the same qualities of Divine knowledge to be able to preach the religion of Allāh. At the time of Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) death he appointed Imam 'Alī (AS) to be his successor. One very important thing to note here is that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was the last prophet, while the successor he chose was the first Imām, and not a prophet. The line of prophethood ended with Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and this is why he is referred to as Khātam al-Anbiya – the seal of Prophets.

A prophet never accepts charity either for himself or for his family. He may also perform miracles, teach people by giving practical examples, and must never do wrong. But why must a prophet be careful to never do wrong? We, the Muslim community, follow our prophets and do whatever they have taught us, and so if they did wrong, we would learn that from them, and do the same wrong in return. This would not be good as the whole world would then be doing wrong, and committing sin when in fact, Allāh sent these prophets to lead us to the right path. Therefore, the prophets have to be very careful about all their actions.

Some of the prophets brought a new Sharī'ah (code of life) while others followed and spread the Sharī'ah of those before them. Those prophets who brought new laws (Sharī'ah) are called Rasūls and there were 313 of them. A Nabī is any messenger of Allāh (this means that Rasūls were also Nabīs, but at a higher rank). Those who did not bring in new laws followed the laws of previous Rasūls. Therefore, we can say there were 124,000 Nabīs in all, but only 313 Rasūls.

Ulul-'Azm prophets are the most distinguished of the prophets. They brought new Sharī'ahs (and therefore are also Rasūls) and there are five of them:

Prophet Nūh (AS)
Prophet Ibrāhīm (AS)
Prophet Mūsā (AS)
Prophet 'Īsā (AS)
Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

There were also four Heavenly Books sent to Prophets by Allāh. They are:

Tawrāt - revealed to Prophet Mūsā (AS)
Zabūr - revealed to Prophet Dāwūd (AS)
Injīl - revealed to Prophet 'Īsā (AS)
Qur'ān - revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

All previous books were cancelled by Allāh when the Holy Qur'ān was sent. In fact, each new book cancelled the previous book and was an updated version of the true religion of Allāh. Now the Qur'ān is the only true book that has to be followed by all mankind.

One important thing to remember with the heavenly books is that only some of the Ulul-'Azm prophets had these books revealed to them, and not all. Prophet 'Īsā (AS), Prophet Mūsā (AS), and Prophet Muhammad (SAW) had a book sent to them while Prophet Nūh (AS) and Prophet Ibrāhīm (AS) did not. Another important book was sent to Prophet Dāwūd (AS), but keep in mind that he is NOT an Ulul-'Azm prophet.

Finally, there are four prophets who are still alive. Can you name them all? They are:

Prophet 'Īsā
Prophet Idrīs
Prophet Ilyās
Prophet Khidr (peace be upon all of them)

IMĀMAT – BELIEF IN THE TWELVE IMĀMS

In our class so far we have learned about the importance of the Qur'ān for us Muslims. It is the revelation of God to guide us to become good people on earth.

We human beings learn through examples. Whatever we want to do in our life we look for a model; someone to teach us through practical (real-life) examples. We look at our parents and teachers as our models whom we follow. It is for this reason that Allāh sent not only the Qur'ān, but also the Prophets whom Allāh appointed as a perfect example for the Muslim ummah (community) to follow.

However, Prophets are also human beings and they cannot remain in the world forever. This is when the fourth most important belief of Islam, Imāmat, comes in. This teaches us that after the last Prophet died, Allāh has continued to give us guidance through Imāms. An Imām is the "leader" of the Muslim community who is chosen by Allāh to become the leader and teacher of the Muslim community after the last Prophet (SAW). The Imām, like the Prophet, is a perfect model for us Muslims.

As we learned in our lesson on Nabuwwat, before our Holy Prophet (SAW) died, he appointed Imām 'Alī (AS) as his successor. Imām 'Alī (AS) then became the leader of the Muslims after the Holy Prophet (SAW). Thus Imām 'Alī (AS) is our first Imām and eleven others follow after him. Altogether there are Twelve Imāms that Allāh sent to set examples for us:

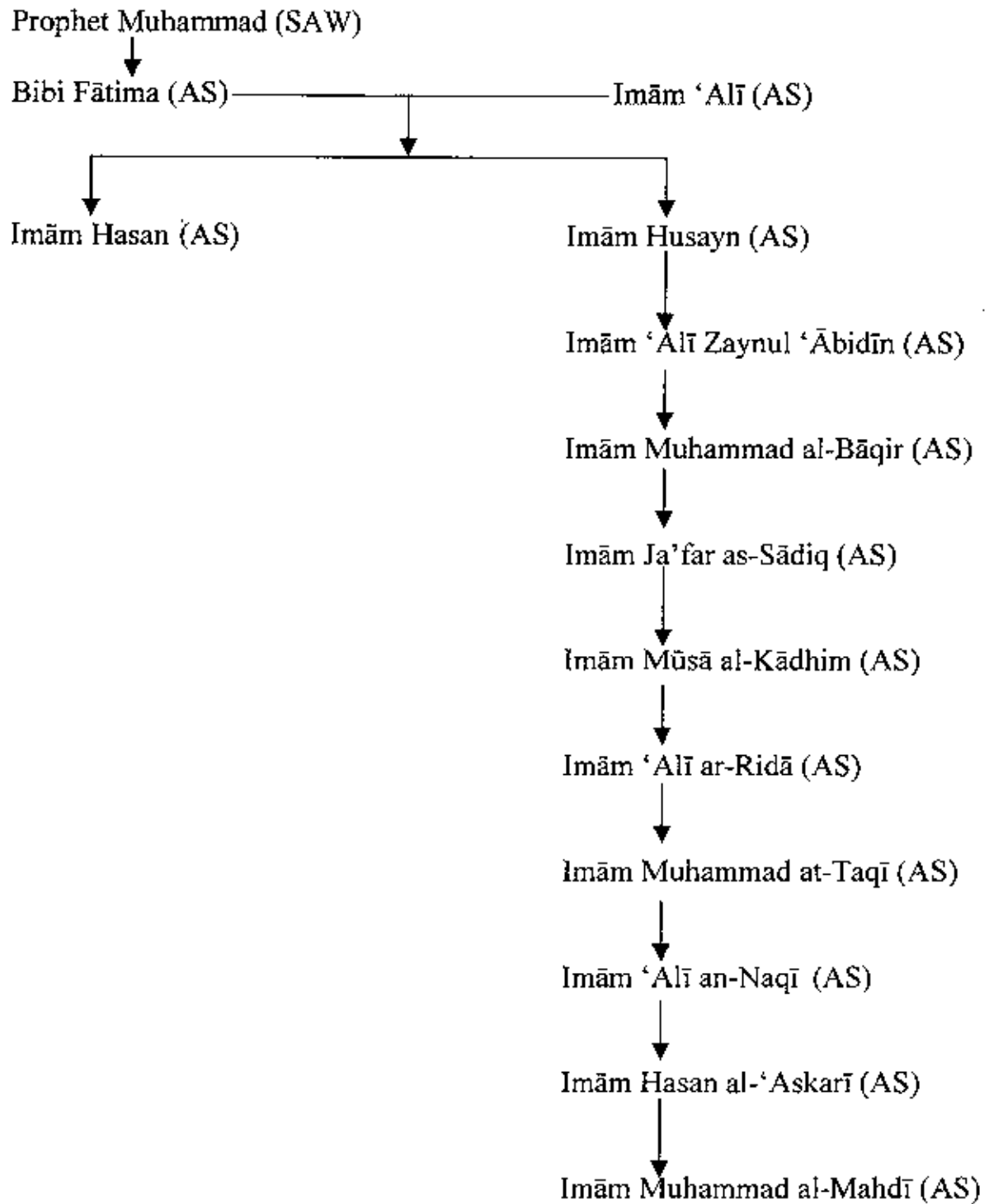
1. Imām 'Alī
 2. Imām Hasan
 3. Imām Husayn
 4. Imām 'Alī Zaynul 'Ābidīn
 5. Imām Muhammad al-Bāqir
 6. Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq
 7. Imām Mūsā al-Kāzim
 8. Imām 'Alī ar-Ridā
 9. Imām Muhammad at-Taqī
 10. Imām 'Alī an-Naqī
 11. Imām Hasan al-'Askarī
 12. Imām Muhammad al-Mahdī
- (peace be upon them all)

As Allāh loves us enough to have somebody to guide us at all times, He has kept our last Imām, Imām Mahdī (AS) still alive to guide us while in "Ghaybat" (hiding).

When Allāh commands him he will come and create a just society on earth. We pray to Allāh for his early return to help us live as good people. Ameen.

Many times we hear people talking about the Fourteen Ma'sumīn. But who are they? The Twelve Imāms (AS) plus Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his daughter, Bibi Fātima (AS), make up the Fourteen Ma'sumīn (AS). And like the other Prophets, they are all perfect and sinless people, and Allāh wants us to love them in the same way as we do the others.

A Basic Family Tree Of The Fourteen Ma'sumīn (AS)



QIYĀMAT – HEAVEN & HELL

The belief in the Day of Qiyāmat is our fifth and last Usūl ad-dīn and, like the other four principles, it is very important.

Human beings cannot live forever. Something that we have always heard about, and have even seen sometimes, is death. But we wonder, what is death? What happens after a person dies? Is there such a thing as life after death?

Everything has to come to an end. Allāh has given us life and can also take it back from us: **Innā Lillāhi Wa Innā Ilayhi Rāji'ūn (To Him do we belong and to Him we shall return)**. After death an individual gets reward or punishment for the deeds performed during his/her lifetime, and this will happen on The Day of Qiyāmat. This day is also referred to as The Day of Judgment (**Yawmul Hisāb**). Islam teaches us that we should prepare ourselves for this day. On this day Allāh will give us life once again and will ask us to give a detailed account of our deeds in the world. The Qur'ān describes this day which will be, "a day the measure of which is 50,000 years".

The Day of Judgment will be like a report day in school where we receive our report cards telling us how well or how poorly we have done during our lifetime. Our life right now is our final exam and our marks will be given to us on that day along with our rewards or punishments. Those who have done well will be happy while the others will wish that they had worked harder to be happy on that day.

The sun, on the Day of Qiyāmat, will come down very low and the earth will be red hot. Those who have done good deeds will be able to find shelter while those who have done evil will burn under the hot sun; they will not be able to shelter themselves from the burning sun no matter how hard they try. Therefore, we have to do our very best and try to be good Muslims in this world, for those who have believed in Allāh and obeyed Him will have no fear.

The reward that we will get on this day for our good deeds is Heaven (**Jannat**) while Hell (**Jahannam**) will be the result of our evil deeds. Hell is the place of burning fires where the evil-doers will rot - they will burn forever in the hell fire. Heaven is the place of peace and tranquility and there people will get whatever they wish for. There will be beautiful flowing rivers and sweet music to fill our days and then we will be glad that we went on the straight path; the path that God has blessed.

THE ANGELS

A Muslim must believe that amongst things that are unseen Allāh has created the Jinns and the Angels. The Qur'ān refers to the angels in many places and they have been assigned various sorts of duties to perform for the Lord.

The Angels were the ones Allāh commanded to bow down (prostrate) when He created Ādam but one of them refused; do we know who that was? It was Iblīs who refused to bow down before Ādam, saying that he was greater than Ādam as he was created from fire while Ādam was only created from clay. In fact, although Iblīs was one of the Jinn, he had previously been such a good worshipper of the Lord that he was put in the same category as the angels. However, because of refusing to bow to Ādam, Iblīs was sent away from Heaven and because of that, he became very angry and is now bothering us all trying to get us away from our Lord. He is also called Shaitān, and he is the one who tries to lead us to the wrong path.

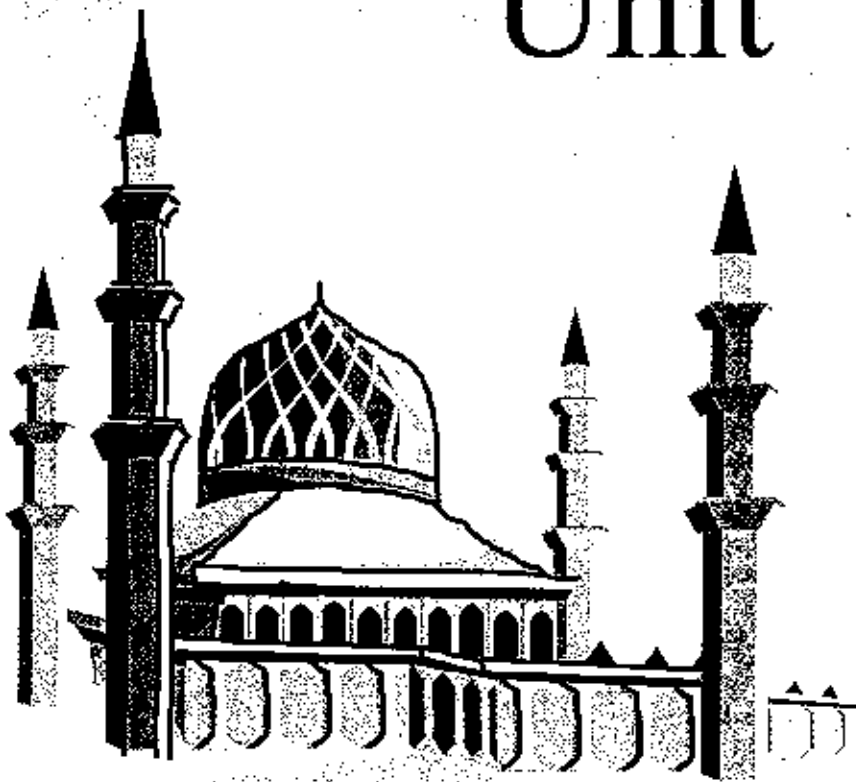
The angels also helped the Holy Prophet (SAW) in the Battle of Badr, and there are two angels who sit on our right and left shoulders recording all that we say and do. There will also be the angels Al Munkar and Al Nakīr who will visit us in our graves and question us about our beliefs.

The angels offer prayers to Allāh and comply with His Commands. Today we will learn about four of the best-known angels (Archangels). They are:

- Jibra'īl This is the angel who delivers the commands of Allāh to His Prophets. He delivered Qur'ānic revelations to Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Do you remember the very first revelation the Prophet received?
- Mikā'īl This angel distributes sustenance (food, nourishment, and livelihood) to mankind.
- Izrā'īl This angel's main duty is to take the soul from the person who is dying. He takes out the soul of human beings, and is also known as The Angel of Death (Malik al-Mawt).
- Isrāfīl This angel will blow the trumpet when The Day of Judgement will come. With his trumpet there will be a tremendous change which will cause every living thing to die. Again he will blow the trumpet, and all the dead will be resurrected, by the power of Allāh, before judgement. All our good and bad deeds will then be questioned on that day.



Islamic Laws and Ethics Unit





THE SHARĪ'AH

We begin today's lesson with two important Arabic words: *dīn* and *sharī'ah*. "Dīn" means religion. "Sharī'ah" means the laws of Islam or the Islamic laws. (Sharī'ah is sometimes written as "sharī'at".)

* * *

"Islam is a *dīn*." Or, we may say, "Islam is a religion." But what is the meaning of religion when we use it to describe Islam? This question can have three possible answers:

1. Religion means just "believing" in certain things, e.g. God, the Prophet, the Imāms, the Qur'ān and the Qiyāmat.
2. Religion means just "living" according to the *sharī'ah* without "believing" in God.
3. Religion means "believing" in God, the Prophet, the Imāms, the Qur'ān and the Qiyāmat PLUS "living" according to the *sharī'ah*.

Which one of these answers do you think defines the religion of Islam properly? Obviously, the first two answers are not correct. Islam does not just mean believing without living according to its *sharī'ah*. Nor does Islam mean living according to the *sharī'ah* without believing in God.

This leaves us with the third answer which is, indeed, the right one. When we say, "Islam is a religion," we mean: Islam is a combination of "believing" in certain things AND "living" according to the *sharī'ah*. The words "*usūl-e dīn*" and "*furū'-e dīn*" also convey the same idea—that Islam has roots ("beliefs") and branches ("deeds"), and both are important. A tree that just has roots without branches is incomplete, and so is the tree with branches but without roots. In short, we can say that Islam is a complete way of life.

<p>ISLAM IS NOT JUST BELIEFS, NOR IS IT JUST DEEDS. IT IS BELIEFS + DEEDS.</p>

WHY SHOULD A MUSLIM FOLLOW THE SHARĪ'AH?

When you buy a machine (e.g., a computer or an electronic typewriter), you also get an "Instruction Manual". The instruction manual is prepared by the manufacturer of the machine; and its purpose is to guide you on how to use the machine.

The human body is also a machine. A human being did not make his own body, nor did he make the world in which he lives. Human beings and this world were created by God. Therefore, God knows better how the human being should use his body on this earth — just as the manufacturer of a machine knows how to use the machine better than anyone else. And just as the manufacturer includes the "Instruction Manual" with the machine, in the same way God has sent instructions for us on how to live in this world.

The "Instruction Manual" that Allāh sent for us is known as the Qur'ān. But Allāh knew that the human being is not just any ordinary machine; rather he is more complicated than the most advanced computer of the 20th century. So Allāh did not just sent the instruction manual (i.e. the Qur'ān) — He also sent an instructor known as Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Moreover, He said that after Prophet Muhammad (SAW), the Imāms (AS) will be the instructors of the Qur'ān.

Therefore, we can say that the Qur'ān and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the Imāms form the "Instruction Manual" for human life on this earth. Collectively, these instructions are known as the sharī'ah or the laws of Islam.

**TO RUN A MACHINE PROPERLY
YOU NEED THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTION MANUAL.**

**TO LIVE ON THIS EARTH PEACEFULLY,
YOU NEED ALLĀH'S GUIDE – THE SHARĪ'AH.**

LIVING BY THE SHARĪ'AH

After the lesson on "The Sharī'ah," it should be clear to you that to be a true Muslim, you must live according to the sharī'ah—the Islamic laws. To follow the sharī'ah, you must know the laws of Islam. But to know the laws of Islam is not so easy — you will have to study hundreds of verses of the Qur'ān and thousands of sayings of the Ma'sumīn (AS). And, mind you, all these are in Arabic! It is not easy for every person to spend many years in studying the Islamic laws.

So what should you do to live according to the sharī'ah?

A simple way is to do taqlīd. "Taqlīd" means to follow a mujtahid. "Mujtahid" means a religious scholar who is an expert in Islamic laws. Mujtahids are persons who spend their whole life in studying and teaching the laws of Islam. They use the Qur'ān and the sayings of the ma'sumīn (AS) to understand the sharī'ah.

IS IT RIGHT TO TRUST AND BLINDLY FOLLOW THE MUJTAHIDS?

It is very normal and logical for people to blindly follow others about the things that they do not know. For example, if you are not feeling well, you go to the doctor. The doctor checks you and then writes a prescription for you. You go to the pharmacist, get the medicine and use it. Do you ask your doctor why did he prescribe that particular medicine? Do you ask the pharmacist which medicine he has prepared for you? No! Why? Because you have faith in them and you know that they are qualified to prescribe and prepare medicine for sick people. You know that they have studied for many years to become a doctor or a pharmacist.

Another common example where we blindly accept the decision of others: Suppose your car breaks down. You take it to a mechanic who inspects your car. After inspection, he says to you that the transmission has failed and you will have to get it replaced. Do you then go to inspect it for yourself or do you just trust the decision of the mechanic and give your approval to replace the transmission? Obviously, you trust the mechanic and give your approval for replacing the transmission. Why? Because you yourself are not a mechanic, and therefore you trust the decision of another person just because he has been trained to be a mechanic.

In the same way, if you need to know the laws of Islam, you have two alternatives:-

1. Either study Islamic laws by yourself and become a mujtahid.
2. Or trust and follow the decisions of the most learned mujtahid.

Obviously, becoming a mujtahid takes a very long time. Therefore, at the moment the only way for you of knowing the laws of Islam is by doing taqlid of a mujtahid. You should follow him because he has studied for many years to become a mujtahid; he is an expert in the matters of the sharī'ah.

In conclusion, we can see that it is not always illogical or wrong to follow others blindly, especially in the matters about which we do not have much knowledge.

TO CURE YOUR ILLNESS, YOU OBEY THE DOCTOR.

FOR SHARĪ'AH LAWS, YOU OBEY THE MUJTAHID.

TAQLĪD & IJTIHĀD

Introduction:

Islam is a way of life. Islam does not only talk about prayers, fasting and pilgrimage; it also guides us in our personal life, family relationships, and social behaviour.

The laws and teachings of Islam are known as the sharī'ah. The sharī'ah laws have come to us through the Qur'ān and the sunnah of the Ma'sūmīn (AS). The Qur'ān is the holy book or scripture which Allāh has sent for the guidance of human beings. It consists of 6,236 verses. The sunnah means the sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the Twelve Imāms (AS). The sayings of the Prophet and the Imāms are thousands in number.

This means that to know the sharī'ah from the Qur'ān and the sunnah, you will have to study for many years - and that also in Arabic. Not every Shī'ah can spend many years to study the Islamic laws. Those who study the sharī'ah laws and become expert in that subject are known as mujtahids. A mujtahid does ijtihād, which means that he is studying the sharī'ah laws and becoming an expert.

All bāligh and bāligha Shī'ahs who are not mujtahids have to follow the guidance of the mujtahid. This "following a mujtahid" is known as taqlīd.

Following a mujtahid in sharī'ah laws or doing taqlīd is just like going to a doctor. Every one needs to know what medicine he should take if he has an illness; but not every person can become a doctor. And when they become sick, they go to the doctor and follow his advice. Similarly, all Shī'ahs need to follow the sharī'ah, but not every Shī'ah can become a mujtahid. Therefore, those who are not mujtahids have to refer to the mujtahid and follow his guidance in sharī'ah laws.

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Conditions of a Mujtahid:

Not anyone can become a mujtahid. A "mujtahid" is a person who has the following 8 conditions.

The mujtahid must be:

1. Alive. You cannot start taqlīd of a dead mujtahid.
2. Of sound mind.

3. Male.
4. Bāligh.
5. Born in wedlock.
6. Shī'ah Ithnā 'Asharī.
7. A'lam, that is, the most learned among all the mujtahids.
8. 'Ādil (just). You cannot do taqlīd of a person who is not just, even if he meets all the other conditions.

How can I know the views of my mujtahid?

The mujtahids of our time normally live in Qum, Iran or in Najaf, Iraq. These two cities have the biggest centers for studying the sharī'ah laws; the centers in Qum and Najaf are like universities.

If you want to know what your mujtahid says about a particular issue, you can do the following:

1. Ask your madrasah teacher;
2. Ask an '*Ālim* (a religious scholar) in your city;
3. Ask the elders of your community who know about religion;
4. Read the books (usually known as *Tawzihul Masā'il* or *Risālah*) of your mujtahid;
5. Write to your mujtahid directly; (Their address is very simple: just write their name, the name of the city and the country.)
6. Travel to Iran or Iraq and talk with your mujtahid in person.

* * *

Allāh says:

**“If you do not know (something),
then ask those who know.”**

**If you do not know the sharī'ah laws, then
become a mujtahid (*ijtihād*)
or
follow a mujtahid (*taqlīd*).**

NAJĀSAT (1) (Urine & Stool)

Introduction:

The Islamic sharī‘ah does not only deal with acts of worship and how to behave with others; it also deals with our personal behaviour. Allāh likes the Muslims to stay neat and clean. Islam has very specific rules about personal hygiene.

In Islamic hygienic rules, uncleanness is known as "*najāsah*". The *najāsah* is of two types: inherent and acquired. To explain the difference between "inherent" and "acquired", let us use the example of sweetness. Suppose there is a cup of tea and a bowl of sugar. The tea is sweet and the sugar is also sweet. Although both the tea and sugar are sweet, there is a difference between their sweetness: the tea is sweet because of the sugar whereas the sugar is sweet by itself. In other words, the sweetness of tea is "acquired" from the sugar whereas the sweetness of sugar is "inherent" in it. Another word for inherent is "intrinsic".

In Islamic laws, there are nine things which are inherently unclean or unclean by themselves. These nine things are known as "*‘ayn najis*—inherently najis." All other things are *tāhir*, clean. However, just as the tea became sweet by the sugar, in the same way, a *tāhir* thing can become najis by coming into contact with an *‘ayn najis*. For example, blood is considered an *‘ayn najis*, whereas milk is considered pure. Now, if a drop of blood falls into a glass of milk, the milk will become najis because of the blood which is an *‘ayn najis*.

Urine & Stool:

You already know some of the *‘ayn najis* things. In today's lesson, you will learn about two of the *najāsah*: urine and stool.

IN HUMAN BEINGS:

The urine and stool of all human beings are najis. Most people of the world consider urine and stool as unclean, but Islam has gone one step further in declaring them ritually unclean. For example, a Muslim who has passed urine or emptied his bowels cannot pray even after cleaning his body from urine and stool — he must also do wudū’.

Islam has some specific rules on how to cleanse yourself of urine and stool: