

*“You are the best of the nations raised up for (benefit of) men: you enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong and believe in Allah” 3:110*



# AL-SADIQ

## ISLAMIC ACADEMY

# Tareekh & Akhlaq Syllabus

## Grade 8

**This book belongs to**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TAREEKH SYLLABUS - CLASS 10 (13 YEARS OLD)**

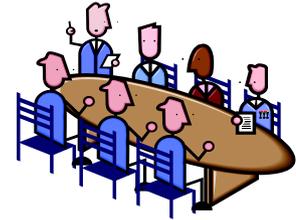
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**My Tareekh Teacher is \_\_\_\_\_**

**Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_**

## TOPIC 1: THE EVENTS OF SAQIFA

While Imam Ali (A) was busy attending to the burial of the Holy Prophet (S), the Muhajireen of Makka and the Ansar of Madina had lost no time in contesting the matter of the Caliphate. They had gathered at a place called Saqifa bani Sa'da and each group was putting forward its merits and claiming the Caliphate.



One can only wonder at their actions, because only two months ago the Holy Prophet (S) had openly declared that Imam Ali (A) would be his successor. In their greed, these so-called Muslims even forgot that their beloved Holy Prophet (S) lay as yet unburied.

The Muhajireen claimed that they had a greater right to the Caliphate because they had been Muslims for longer and had supported the Holy Prophet (S) in Makka when he had very few friends. They also claimed to be his kin and said that they had migrated from their homes in Makka in very difficult circumstances, leaving behind all their wealth and property.

The Ansar insisted that they had a greater right to the Caliphate because they had given the Holy Prophet (S) shelter in Madina when he could live in Makka no longer. They had also protected him in his time of need and had fought at his side in battles against powerful enemies. They recalled how for 13 years he had preached amongst the Makkans and only a handful had become Muslims. They argued that it was the Ansar who had given Islam strength and consolidation.

When Umar bin Khattab and Abu Bakr bin Qahafa reached Saqifa, the arguments had almost been settled in favour of the Ansar, who had chosen Sa'd bin Ubadah to lead the Muslims. Umar did not find this acceptable at all as he had already planned to bring in a man from the Muhajireen. He urged Abu Bakr to make a speech and turn the situation. Abu Bakr rose and said that the Arabs would not accept any Caliph who was not from the tribe of Quraish, which was the tribe of the Holy Prophet (S). He also praised the merits of the Ansar to keep them quiet. The Ansar were not fooled by the clever words of Abu Bakr and while there was some silence, Abu Bakr received help from an unexpected quarter.



The two main tribes of the Ansar were the Aws and Khazraj. The old enmity between them had been settled long ago by the Holy Prophet (S), but now it came out into the open.

To stop the selection of Sa'd bin Ubadah who was the chief of the Khazraj, Bashir bin Sa'd from the tribe of Aws suddenly went forward and gave his allegiance to Abu Bakr. He was followed by three other men from Aws. Suddenly, the tables had turned and now the Muhajireen had the upper hand.

Despite protests from the tribe of Khazraj and a few followers of Imam Ali (A), Abu Bakr was elected as the first Caliph. How strange was their behaviour! While Abu Bakr and Umar sold their religion for their greed, the people of Aws sold their religion for fear that the Khazraj might come to power. The rest of the people followed like sheep, too weak or uncaring to protest. The few who did raise their voices to defend the unrecognised rights of Imam Ali (A) were ignored and outnumbered.

The members of Bani Hashim and some loyal Muslims were too occupied with the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S) to give any thought to worldly affairs. By the time they learnt of the happenings at Saqifa, it was too late to do anything.

When Imam Ali came to exercise his right to the Caliphate as per the orders of the Holy Prophet (S) at Ghadeer Khum, his claim was rejected and he was forced to return to his house. Later, Abu Bakr sent Umar to Bibi Fatimah's (A) house, where Imam Ali (A) and some friends had gathered. Umar had instructions to bring Imam Ali (A) to Abu Bakr to pay the oath of allegiance to him. When Imam Ali (A) refused to do this, Umar threatened to burn down the house. Imam Ali (A) then came out with Abbas and Zubayr. From the open door was heard the sound of Bibi Fatimah (A) weeping.

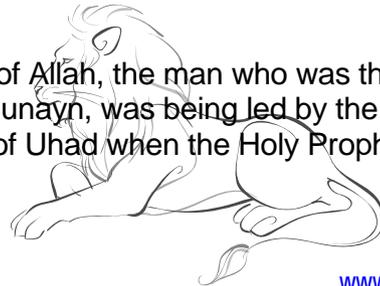


She was saying,

***"O Father, how soon after your death are troubles pouring on our head at the hands of the son of Khattab and the son of Abu Qahafa. How soon they have ignored your words of Ghadeer Khum and your saying that Ali was to you as Haroon was to Musa."***

Hearing these heartrending words, the companions of Umar could not keep themselves from weeping and turned back. However Umar was bent on humiliating Imam Ali (A). He insisted that Imam Ali (A) be led to the mosque tied with a rope so that he could not escape.

The Muslims now saw an amazing sight. The Lion of Allah, the man who was the champion of Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, Khayber and Hunayn, was being led by the cowardly Umar, who had run away from the battle of Uhud when the Holy Prophet (S) was injured.



It was a measure of the patience of Imam Ali (A) that he did not use force in the interests of Islam. He knew that nothing could be gained by fighting, and a civil war would destroy the Muslims.

When Imam Ali (A) was brought in front of Abu Bakr, Umar insisted that if he did not give the oath of allegiance, he should be killed. Imam Ali (A) replied:

***"Will you kill a man who is a servant of the Lord  
and a brother of the Apostle of the Lord?"***

Umar then turned to Abu Bakr who had remained silent till then, asking him to decide Imam Ali's (A) fate. However, Abu Bakr said that so long as Bibi Fatimah (A) was alive, he would not force her husband to give allegiance to him.

After that Imam Ali (A) was released and he went directly to the grave of the Holy Prophet (S) where he stood, reflecting on how the attitude of the people had changed now that his brother had left this world.

#### **MORAL BOX**

- ❖ Like the people at Saqifa, will we turn our back to our Imam (A) when he reappears, or are we his sincere followers?
- ❖ We need to be able to practice patience even at the most difficult of times.

- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_  
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### ***Now you know...***

- ◆ The Muhajireen of Makka and the Ansar of Madina were putting forward their claims to the Caliphate, while Imam Ali (A) was busy with the burial of the Holy Prophet (S).
- ◆ The Muhajireen claimed that they had a greater right to the Caliphate as they had been Muslims for longer and had supported the Holy Prophet (S) in Makka. They had also migrated from their homes in Makka in very difficult circumstances, leaving behind all their wealth and property.
- ◆ The Ansar said they had a greater right to the Caliphate as they had given the Holy Prophet (S) shelter in Madina and had protected him in his time of need. They had also fought at his side in battles against powerful enemies.
- ◆ The arguments had almost been settled in favour of the Ansar, but Umar did not find this acceptable as he had already planned to bring in a man from the Muhajireen. He urged Abu Bakr to make a speech and turn the situation. Abu Bakr said that the Arabs would not accept a Caliph who was not from the tribe of Quraish, which was the tribe of the Holy Prophet (S).
- ◆ The old enmity between the Aws and Khazraj, again came out into the open. To stop the selection of the chief of the Khazraj, Bashir bin Sa'd from the tribe of Aws went and gave his allegiance to Abu Bakr. He was followed by three other men from Aws. Suddenly, the tables had turned and now the Muhajireen had the upper hand.
- ◆ Members of Bani Hashim and the loyal Muslims were busy with the death of the Holy Prophet (S) so by the time they learnt of Saqifa, it was too late to do anything. When Imam Ali claimed his right to the Caliphate, as per the orders of the Holy Prophet (S) at Ghadeer Khum, he was rejected and forced to return home.
- ◆ Abu Bakr sent Umar to Bibi Fatimah's (A) house, with instructions to bring Imam Ali (A) to pay the oath of allegiance to him. Umar threatened to burn down the house when Imam Ali (A) refused, forcing him out of the house. From the open door was heard the sound of Bibi Fatimah (A) weeping.

## TOPIC 2: ABU BAKR - THE FIRST CALIPH

On the day after the people had given him their allegiance at Saqifa, Abu Bakr came to the mosque of the Holy Prophet (S) and sat on the pulpit. A large gathering was present to swear the general allegiance. Umar stood nearby, ready to prevent any trouble from the friends and followers of Imam Ali (A).

Abu Bakr then made his first address to the people, during which he said,

***"I have been placed in this authority, although I do not like it. By Allah, I would have been pleased if any of you had taken it in my place. If you expect me to act like the Apostle of God, then I can not do it. He was honoured and preserved from error by the Lord, while I am an ordinary man, no better than any of you. When you see me steadfast then obey me, and when you see that I turn aside from the right path then set me aright. I have a devil that seizes me sometimes, and when you see me enraged then avoid me because at that time I will not listen to anything."***

What an incredible speech by the new leader of the Muslims! In one go he admitted that he was not the right man for the task and warned that he would probably make mistakes. He knew fully well that his knowledge in religious matters was only average, so he covered any future problems by mentioning his "devil". It was not a speech to inspire any confidence and it is a wonder that he got away with such miserable and apologetic words.



Umar and Abu Bakr were so busy in securing the Caliphate that neither was present at the funeral of the Holy Prophet (S). Although Abu Bakr was now the Caliph, it was not a universally popular choice. The members of Bani Hashim and certain pious Muslims like Zubayr, Miqdaad, Salman, Abu Zar, Ammar, Barra bin Azhab, Khalid bin Sa'id, Abu Ayyub Ansari, Khazima bin Thabit and others refused to acknowledge him, believing that the position belonged to Imam Ali (A).

### QUESTION BOX

- ❓ **How would we react if an injustice was being carried out against us? Would we be patient for the sake of Islam and the greater good?**



Imam Ali (A) was naturally grieved at the course of events, but he patiently endured this injustice for the sake of Islam. He turned his attention to collecting the Holy Qur'an and compiling it in order of its revelation.

At the time of his election Abu Bakr was 60 years of age. He was the son of Abu Qahafa. His original names were Abd al-Ka`ba and Atiq. He was one of the earliest converts to Islam, and when he became a Muslim at the age of 38, he was renamed Abdallah. After the marriage of his daughter Ayesha to the Holy Prophet (S), he was called Abu Bakr in reference to his daughter.

Abu Bakr used to trade in cloth and was also a genealogist i.e. he knew the family trees of the Arabs, especially the Quraish. After his election, Umar saw him going to the market to open his shop and said,

***"Are you going to trade although you have been given the rule over the Muslims?"***

Abu Bakr asked,

***"How shall I feed my family?"***

Umar then took him to Abu Ubaida, the treasurer of the Bait al-Maal (public treasury), who gave him a yearly allowance of 6000 dirhams, which was more than enough for his household expenses.

One of the first things Abu Bakr did as a Caliph was to contest Bibi Fatimah's (A) ownership to the land of Fadak, an action that she never forgave him for. According to her will, he and Umar were not allowed to attend her funeral.

As Abu Bakr was not recognised as a legitimate heir to the Holy Prophet (S), the various tribes around Arabia stopped paying their taxes to the Muslim state. Abu Bakr decided to stop the voices of dissatisfaction with a show of strength, so he mobilised the Muslim army under various commanders and sent them to reclaim the distant provinces.

On reaching their destination the commanders were instructed to give the Adhaan to test the faith of the local people. If they responded, they were to be asked to repent and submit to the Caliph, if they resisted they were to be attacked and their women and children made prisoners. With these instructions, the various commanders left Madina.

The man who commanded the largest division was a brilliant general named Khalid bin Walid. He was the same man who had caused the defeat of the Muslims at Uhad.

Despite his later conversion to Islam, he was a cruel soldier and had no faith at all. He had been sent against Tulaiha, a man claiming to be a new prophet, in the north east. After Tulaiha ran away and the tribes of Bani Hawaazan surrendered, his task was over and his men advised him to return to Madina.

However, Khalid wanted to continue fighting and he led his men southwards to the tribe of Bani Yarb. The chief of this tribe was Malik bin Nuwaira, a noble man who was famous for his generosity, horsemanship and poetry. He also had for his wife a beautiful woman named Laila. When Malik heard that Khalid was approaching at the head of 4,500 men, he realised that it was useless to fight. When the Adhaan was given, he responded to the call with all his men.

Khalid however, would not have any of it and brutally killed Malik and married his widow the same night, despite the time limit fixed by the Holy Prophet (S) for marrying a widow. Although Khalid was later charged by the evidence of his own men, who were shocked by his inhuman conduct, Abu Bakr pardoned him.

The Caliphate of Abu Bakr is filled with incidents where he proved himself to be weak, a poor judge and inadequate in matters of religion. He finally died in 13 A.H. after ruling for 2 years and 3 months.

### TOPIC 3: UMAR - THE SECOND CALIPH

Umar al-Khattab was selected by Abu Bakr to succeed him and he took over the Caliphate on the day of the death of Abu Bakr. In his first address to the people he said,

***"O God! Verily I am rough in temper, therefore soften me; and verily I am weak, therefore strengthen me; and verily I am miserly, therefore make me generous".***

With these poorly chosen words, Umar began his rule which was to last for 10 years and six months.

**Only one year after he came to power Umar made new religious laws.**

- He introduced a special prayer called Tarawih, during the month of Ramadhan. This prayer, which requires recitations of large portions of the Holy Qur'an, is still recited by Sunni Muslims today.
- He also stated that the minor Haj (Umrae Tamattu) and the temporary marriage (Mut'a) were Haraam from that time onwards.
- He reduced the number of Takbirs in Namaaze Mayyit from five to four.

Umar had no authority to make these changes because the Holy Prophet (S) has said that the things which he himself had taught to be Halaal and Haraam shall remain unchanged till the Day of Judgement.

Umar was once preaching from the pulpit when Imam Husain (A), who was then only a young boy, stood up and told him,

***"Come down from the pulpit of my father".***

Umar admitted,

***"It is the pulpit of your father, not the pulpit of my father, but who told you to say this?"***

Imam Ali (A) who was present, rose and said

***"By Allah! No one told him what to say".***

During the reign of Umar, the boundaries of the Muslim territories were expanded greatly and many foreign lands were conquered. These included Syria, Jordan, Jerusalem, Egypt and Persia.

Umar placed ill-chosen governors in many of these new lands. In particular, he was responsible for the growth of power of Muawiya bin Abu Sufyan in Syria.

By initially placing Muawiya's brother Yazid in power, Umar was the originator of the massacre in Kerbala which took place at the orders of Muawiya's evil son Yazid.

Umar's knowledge of the Holy Qur'an was weak. He used to make rounds in the streets of Madina at night with a whip in his hand. Once he passed a house where he heard someone singing. He jumped over the back wall and found a man and woman drinking wine. He shouted in anger,

***"O enemies of God, did you think your sin would pass unnoticed?"***

The man replied,

***"O Umar, if I am guilty of one sin, then you are guilty of three wrong acts according to the Holy Qur'an".***

Umar could not believe his ears and challenged the man to prove his words. The man quoted three verses of the Holy Qur'an:

1. ***O you who believe, avoid much suspicion ... and do not spy.  
Hujuraat, 49 : 12 (Part)***
2. ***...It is not good that you should enter your houses from behind but the righteous one is he who guards himself against evil and enters the houses by the doors... Baqarah, 2 : 189 (Part)***
3. ***O you who believe, do not enter houses other than your own houses until you have asked for permission and greeted those within... Nur 24 : 27 (Part)***

On hearing this Umar was ashamed of his ignorance of the Holy Qur'an and asked for forgiveness for the intrusion. After the man promised not to touch wine again, Umar left. Many such incidents occurred and Umar was embarrassed time and time again by his poor command of the verses of the Holy Qur'an. It is a wonder that he still thought himself fit to rule the Muslims!

Numerous incidents have been noted in history where Umar made hasty and incorrect decisions which were changed by the presence and intervention of Imam Ali (A).

Once Umar ordered that a mad woman who had been found guilty of adultery should be whipped as per the prescribed punishment. As the poor woman was being dragged along on the way to be flogged, Imam Ali (A) passed by and asked what was going on. When he was informed of the situation he said,

***"Do you not know that the Holy Prophet (S) has said that the order of punishment should be withheld from a mad person till they recover, because they are not in control of their actions".***

Umar then ordered the woman to be released. Such incidents happened so many times that Umar used to say,

***"If it was not for Ali, Umar would have been destroyed".***

Umar had a rule that non-Arabs were not allowed to enter Madina. However, he relaxed the rule for one man only at the request of his friend Mughira bin Sho'iba, the governor of Kufa. The man in question was called Abu Lulu. He was not an Arab, but he was a good carpenter, blacksmith and engraver.

Abu Lulu was heavily taxed for the privilege of residing in Madina and asked Umar to increase his allowance. Umar refused and instead commissioned him to build a windmill for grinding grain.

Abu Lulu promised him that he would build him such a windmill that people would always talk about it. The way he said it made Umar wonder whether he was being threatened and his fears proved correct.

A few days later Abu Lulu ambushed Umar in the early hours of the morning and stabbed him in the stomach three times with a double-bladed dagger. One of these wounds was fatal and Umar died three days later on 26th Zilhaj at the age of 63 years.

The death of the man who was responsible for hurting the feelings of Bibi Fatima (A), when he tore her deed of ownership of Fadak, is celebrated as 'Eide Zahra. May the curse of Allah be on Umar al-Khattab for all time.

#### TOPIC 4: UTHMAN - THE THIRD CALIPH

Just before he died, Umar nominated six companions of the Holy Prophet (S), to choose from amongst themselves his successor. The six were Abdur Rahman bin Awf, Uthman bin Affan, Ali bin Abu Talib (A), Sa'd bin Abi Waqqaas, Zubayr bin Awam and Talha bin Ubaidullah.

This was a very clever move by Umar because he had chosen people who would not readily favour Imam Ali (A). Furthermore, he had instructed that if any of these six challenged the appointment of the person who was finally declared Caliph, he should be killed.

After his death the nominees met but could not reach any conclusion. At last, Abdur Rahman said that he would forego his claim for the Caliphate if they allowed him to elect the Caliph. Uthman agreed to this but Imam Ali (A) said that he would only agree if Abdur Rahman promised not to give consideration to family but judge only on merit. He said this because Uthman was the brother-in-law of Abdur Rahman and the two were friends. Abdur Rahman accepted the condition and then talked to each of the candidates privately.

Zubayr was in favour of Imam Ali (A), Talha was not present in Madina and how Sa'd voted is uncertain. Both Imam Ali (A) and Uthman pressed their own claim. Therefore the selection narrowed down to these two men.

The next day the mosque was crowded because everyone wanted to know who their new Caliph would be. Abdur Rahman had discussed the situation with Amr al-Aas, who was a shrewd politician with no religious morals.

Acting on Amr's advice, Abdur Rahman asked Imam Ali (A) to become Caliph as long as he would agree to rule by the Holy Qur'an, the teachings of the Holy Prophet (S) and the practices of Abu Bakr and Umar.

As expected, Imam Ali (A) agreed to the first two conditions but flatly refused to follow the practices of Abu Bakr and Umar. When Uthman was given the same conditions, he agreed at once and was thus declared the third Caliph.

Imam Ali (A) told Abdur Rahman,

***"It is not the first time I have been deprived of my rights, but you have not been free of self interest in your decision."***

On hearing these words Abdur Rahman warned Imam Ali (A) that Umar had said that the one who defies the selection should be killed, whereupon Imam Ali (A) left the gathering in disgust.

The choice of Uthman was a bad mistake and in later years the man almost destroyed the faith and dignity of the Muslims. His first speech to the public was a very poor effort and he lamely finished by saying,

***"We were never preachers but the Lord will teach us."***

From the first day of his rule, Uthman began systematically replacing the governors of the major provinces with his own relatives from the Bani Umayyah.

Thus, in Kufa he appointed his drunkard brother Waleed to replace Sa'd bin Waqqaas. In Egypt he replaced Amr al-Aas with his foster brother Abdallah bin Abi Sarh, who has been cursed in the Holy Qur'an (**Surae An'am, verse 93**) for inventing lies and saying that he had revelations from Allah.

He recalled back to Madina Hakam bin al-Aas, who had been exiled for life by the Holy Prophet (S). Hakam was Uthman's uncle and Uthman made Hakam's evil son Marwan his secretary and gave him huge gifts from the property of the Muslims. He also gave Marwan the property of Fadak and made him his son-in-law.

As Uthman began to squander the public money on his relatives openly, resentment against him grew from all quarters. Ammar Yasir, an old and respected companion of the Holy Prophet (S) challenged Uthman's conduct and was severely beaten for his words. This action against a man like Ammar outraged the people.

In Syria, another great companion of the Holy Prophet (S), Abu Zar Ghifari, was going around warning the governor Muawiya and the people against their evil ways.

Muawiya sent Abu Zar to Madina where Uthman had the bad manners to insult him. He then cruelly banished the old man to Rabazha, in the desert of Najd, where he died of neglect two years later.

Uthman's high-handed behaviour and the cruelties and excesses of his worthless governors caused unrest throughout the empire. Riots broke out everywhere. In Madina itself there were calls to remove Uthman.

The Caliph was beset from all sides and turned to Imam Ali (A) to appeal on his behalf. Imam Ali (A) agreed, provided Uthman publicly apologised for his mistakes.

In despair, Uthman mounted the pulpit and with a voice broken by sobs and tears he begged the forgiveness of Allah and assured the public that he was repentant. Because of his apologetic state and the intervention of Imam Ali (A) the people were quietened.

However, the Egyptians insisted that their cruel governor Abdallah bin Sarh be replaced by Muhammad the son of Abu Bakr. He was a pious man who had been raised from his infancy by Imam Ali (A), who had married Abu Bakr's widow.

Uthman agreed to this demand, but secretly sent a letter to his brother in Egypt warning him of the situation and advising him to kill Muhammad bin Abu Bakr on his arrival.

Unfortunately for Uthman, this messenger was intercepted on the way to Egypt by Muhammad himself. The Egyptians were outraged by the Caliph's treachery and returned to Madina in a furious mood. The news of his actions spread and finally Uthman had to take refuge in his palace which was then surrounded by people calling for his blood.

After a siege of 40 days the palace was broken into and Uthman was killed by repeated stab wounds. His body was buried in the graveyard of the Jews. He was 82 years old and had ruled for 11 years.

## TOPIC 5: THE CALIPHATE OF IMAM ALI (A)

After the murder of Uthman, there was great unrest in the city of Madina due to the absence of any government. The main citizens of the city called for the immediate election of a Caliph to end the danger of a civil war. Two men had ambitions to become Caliph. They were Talha and Zubayr, both brothers-in-law of Ayesha, the widow of the Holy Prophet (S). However, to the great disadvantage of these two candidates, she was in Makka for pilgrimage at the time.

The people of Madina, however, wanted Imam Ali (A) to be their Caliph. He was a man admired by his friends and enemies alike for his courage, piety, eloquence, wisdom and kinship to the Holy Prophet (S). After having been ruled by weak men the people now turned to the man who had been nominated to lead them in the first place. However, Imam Ali (A) refused their offer and said that he would rather remain as an advisor to any Caliph they elected.

The people of Madina insisted that they would follow none but him and at last he reluctantly agreed. He said,

***"I must say frankly at the outset that I shall deal with you according to the Holy Qur'an and to the best of my knowledge and judgement."***

This condition was accepted, but Imam Ali (A) asked that his nomination be made in public so that if anyone had anything to say, they would have an opportunity to do so.

Next day in the mosque of Madina most of the Muslims were present to pay allegiance to Imam Ali (A), including Talha and Zubayr. Imam Ali (A) thus took over as the fourth Caliph of the Muslims.

After a few days Talha and Zubayr and a few others came to Imam Ali (A) asking that the murder of Uthman be avenged. Imam Ali (A) knew fully well that some of these same people had been responsible for the riots that led to Uthman's death, and now they just wanted to stir up trouble. However, he told them that he had called Uthman's wife Naila and his secretary Marwan and asked them if they could identify the culprits since they had been with Uthman at the time of his death. Marwan did not come and Naila said that Uthman was killed by two men who she did not recognise. Under the circumstances Imam Ali (A) could do nothing more unless further evidence came to light.

Meanwhile, the members of Bani Umayyah, most of whom had not paid allegiance to Imam Ali (A), began to leave Madina. Imam Ali (A) knew that they were up to no good and in anticipation of future trouble, he began to secure the good will of the Quraish and Ansar in Madina.

The first matter that Imam Ali (A) attended to was replacing the worthless governors of Uthman. Most of the governors took over their new posts but the governor to Kufa was stopped from entering that city while the governor to Syria was stopped by Muawiya's men and both had to return to Madina.

The Bani Umayyah, with the help of their leader Muawiya, began to stir up trouble for Imam Ali (A) and his government. In the mosque of Damascus, Muawiya displayed the blood-stained shirt of Uthman and the chopped-off fingers of his wife Naila, to incite the anger of the people. They swore that they would take revenge for Uthman's death and Muawiya began to blame Imam Ali (A) for doing nothing to bring the murderers to justice.

When his governors returned from Kufa and Syria, Imam Ali (A) wrote letters to Abu Musa Ash'ari in Kufa and Muawiya in Syria demanding that they give way to the new governors.

Abu Musa wrote back from Kufa, stating that the Kufans were at the service of the new Caliph, but Muawiya did not send a reply for three months. Finally, his messenger arrived with a letter. When Imam Ali (A) opened the letter it contained no words at all and was a gesture of outright defiance. In addition the messenger informed him that Muawiya had gathered 60,000 men ready to avenge the murder of Uthman on Imam Ali (A). This news astonished Imam Ali (A) and he said, ***"I call God to witness that I am not guilty and that it is a false charge."***

The cunning Muawiya had managed to rouse the hatred of the people of Syria against Imam Ali (A) by using Uthman's murder as an excuse. However, Imam Ali (A) declared that only the sword would decide matters between Muawiya and himself and he gave orders for an army to be gathered to march to Syria.

Meanwhile, Talha and Zubayr had plans of their own and proceeded to Makka on the excuse of performing Umrah. On the way they joined Ayesha the widow of the Holy Prophet (S) who was also using the death of Uthman to create trouble for Imam Ali (A), whom she had always hated.

Thus, Imam Ali (A) was faced with a double threat to the security of his government - from Ayesha in Makka and from Muawiya in Syria.

## TOPIC 6: THE BATTLE OF JAMAL

Ayesha, the widow of the Holy Prophet (S), was in Makka for the pilgrimage when Uthman was killed. She had always expected either Talha or Zubayr to succeed him and when she heard of Imam Ali's (A) appointment as Caliph, she was very upset.

Ayesha was a jealous and cunning woman, one who had caused the Holy Prophet (S) a lot of annoyance. Now she declared herself as the avenger of the murder of Uthman and prepared to wage war against Imam Ali (A), whom she had always hated.

She managed to recruit the support of the powerful clan of Bani Umayyah, to whom Uthman had belonged. The ex-governors of Uthman, who had been replaced by Imam Ali (A), also joined her and the ex-governor of Yemen provided her with the means of financing her war by giving her the treasure he had stolen from Yemen when he was deposed. Talha and Zubayr also joined her, in spite of their oath of allegiance to Imam Ali (A). A large number of aimless drifters were also paid to enlist in the army.

The preparations of war having been completed, Ayesha's army proceeded to Basra. Before leaving, she had asked Umme Salma, a faithful widow of the Holy Prophet (S), to accompany her. Umme Salma had indignantly refused, reminding Ayesha that the Holy Prophet (S) had said that Imam Ali (A) was his successor and whoever disobeyed him, disobeyed the Holy Prophet (S) himself. She also reminded her of the time when he had addressed all his wives saying that the dogs of Hawab would bark at one of his wives, who would be part of a rebellious mob. She then warned Ayesha not to be fooled by the words of Talha and Zubayr who would only entangle her in wrong deeds. This advice had a sobering effect on Ayesha, who almost gave up her plan. However, her adopted son, Abdallah bin Zubayr, convinced her to go ahead.

Ayesha mounted on a litter on the camel al-Askar, and marched from Makka at the head of 1,000 men. On her right was Talha and on her left, Zubayr. On their way many more joined them, swelling their numbers to 3,000.

On the way to Basra, the rebel army received news that Imam Ali (A) had come out of Madina in their pursuit. They decided to leave the main road and proceed to Basra through a different route.

When they passed through the valley of Hawab the dogs of the village surrounded Ayesha's camel, barking loudly. She was immediately worried and asked for the name of the place.

When she was told it was Hawab, she was shocked and she despairingly cried,

***"Alas! Alas! I am the wretched woman of Hawab. The Prophet of Allah had already warned me against this."***

She got off her camel and refused to go any further. Talha and Zubayr tried to convince her that the place was not Hawab and even brought 50 witnesses to testify to this lie, but in vain.

Finally, they raised a cry that Imam Ali (A) was approaching, and Ayesha, struck with terror, quickly remounted and the march was resumed.

The army reached Basra and camped in the suburbs. Ayesha, Talha and Zubayr began talks with the leading citizens of Basra, trying to get their support for their cause. In this they failed and were subjected to ridicule.

Finally, some of them entered the city and during the congregational prayers, they treacherously captured Imam Ali's (A) governor, Uthman bin Huneif, after killing 40 of his guards.

Fighting broke out in the city and many of Imam Ali's (A) supporters were killed before Ayesha gained control of Basra.

The governor, Uthman, suffered the indignity of having his eyebrows, moustache and beard plucked out, hair by hair, before being turned out of the city.

Meanwhile, Imam Ali (A) had received information about Ayesha's plans from Umme Salma, and news of the disturbances in Makka and Basra also came through.

Imam Ali (A) made immediate plans to march towards Basra but could only raise 900 men with difficulty. This was because the people were reluctant to fight Ayesha, who was considered to be the Mother of the Faithful by virtue of being the widow of the Holy Prophet (S).

Also, Muawiya had succeeded in making people think that Imam Ali (A) was somehow involved in the murder of Uthman.

In Kufa, Imam Hasan (A) raised 9,000 men, and other units arrived as well, all joining Imam Ali (A) at his camp at Zhi-Q'ar. Meanwhile, Uthman bin Huneif arrived with fresh news from Basra.

Imam Ali (A) smiled and said to him that he had left them as an old man but had returned as a beardless youth.

Imam Ali (A) wrote letters to Ayesha, Talha and Zubayr, warning them against unwise steps they had taken, but his words were ignored. Finally he marched to Basra at the head of 20,000 men.

Ayesha's forces numbered 30,000 but they were mostly raw recruits, while Imam Ali's army was full of battle veterans.

In Basra, the sight of Imam Ali's (A) men in battle formation filled Ayesha and her comrades with terror. Imam Ali (A) talked at length with Talha and Zubayr, negotiating for peace.

He reminded them of the words of the Holy Prophet (S) regarding his authority, which they both admitted they had heard. Zubayr was ashamed of his deeds and left the scene but Talha remained doubtful. Ayesha was furious at the conduct of the two and ordered a raid at night time to end the chance of peace.

The next morning Ayesha mounted her camel al-Askar and urged her troops to prepare for battle. Thus began the unfortunate Battle of Jamal (Camel), where Muslims fought each other for the first time.

Although outnumbered, Imam Ali (A) and his soldiers were too skilled to be defeated. Soon victory began to incline towards Imam Ali (A). Talha was wounded and later died.

Ayesha's camel was brought down and Imam Ali (A) ordered his adopted son Muhammad bin Abu Bakr to take care of Ayesha who was his half-sister.

After that, the battle was soon over, and Imam Ali (A) declared a general amnesty for all the rebels.

Ayesha's plans had come to nothing and 10,000 men lay dead as a result of her jealousy. In this battle Imam Ali (A) restrained his men from taking any war booty and all property found on the battle ground was gathered in the mosque of Basra, from where the owners could claim their possessions.

## TOPIC 7: THE BATTLE OF SIFFIN

After the battle of Jamal was over, Imam Ali (A) returned from Basra to Kufa in Rajab of 36 A.H. He decided to set up the capital of his government in Kufa because it was more centrally placed in the Muslim Empire, and he could halt Muawiya's progress into Iraq.

Before marching towards Muawiya, Imam Ali (A) tried to settle matters peacefully by sending Jarir, the governor of Hamdan, to Syria as an envoy. However, Jarir became so engrossed in the entertainment that Muawiya put his way, that he wasted his time in Syria. He finally returned three months later with the useless message that peace could only be negotiated if the murderers of Uthman were brought to justice.

Imam Ali (A) decided that matters could be only decided by war, so he marched without delay through the Mesopotamian desert to Riqqa at the banks of the Euphrates.

After crossing the river by constructing a bridge they came across the Syrian outposts at Sur al-Rum. There were a few skirmishes between the armies but the Syrians gave way and in the month of Zilhaj of 36 A.H., the army of Imam Ali (A) came into sight of Muawiya's main forces, which had already camped at Siffin.

At Siffin, Muawiya had stationed his general, Abul Awr, with 10,000 men on the river to stop the access to water for Imam Ali's (A) army. Imam Ali (A) sent a message to Muawiya that this action was not necessary because, after all, the people whom he was refusing water were also Muslims.

He further assured Muawiya that if the situation had been reversed, the river would have been open to both armies. However, Muawiya sent back a message that the murderers of Uthman had not allowed him any water when they had laid siege to his palace, and Muawiya was avenging that action.

Imam Ali (A) knew that this situation would be intolerable and he launched an attack under Malike Ashtar. The brave commander secured the river after heavy fighting and Abul Awr was dislodged from its banks. Having control of the river, Imam Ali (A) kept to his word and allowed unlimited access to Muawiya's side.

Imam Ali (A) divided his army of 90,000 men into seven units each commanded by brave warriors. Muawiya similarly divided his army of 120,000 men into seven columns. Everyday one column from each army would engage one another in combat.

The battles were mostly restricted to single combats or small groups fighting because Imam Ali (A) was trying to avoid the serious loss of Muslim lives that would have resulted from a full scale battle.

The month of Zilhaj ended in this manner and the month of Muharram, in which fighting is forbidden, set in. During this month, Imam Ali (A) tried hard to resolve the crisis by negotiation, but to no avail. He pointed out that he was ready to punish the murderers of Uthman if Muawiya would point them out. However, Muawiya did not wish the matter to end so easily, because it was the issue of Uthman's unavenged death that had enabled him to gather such a large army.

In the month of Safar fighting was resumed. For a week, fierce battles raged all day. Everyday the conflict got more severe and bitter. In the second week Imam Ali (A) came to the battlefield for the first time. After a series of single combats, in which he overcame every opponent with his awesome skill, no body would come to fight him.

He was forced to disguise himself to get anybody to challenge him. On one such occasion, an unsuspecting warrior from Muawiya's side attacked Imam Ali (A). The man was struck with a single sweep of Zulfiqar with such force by Imam Ali (A) that the upper half of his body was severed from the lower half.

Those who watched thought that the blow had missed, and it was only when the horse moved and the two halves fell to the ground, that people realised what had happened.

Day after day the loss of lives increased, especially in the ranks of Muawiya. However, Imam Ali (A) also lost several distinguished Companions of the Holy Prophet (S) from his side. Amongst them were Hashim bin Utba and Ammar Yasir.

Ammar, who was 93 years old, had been informed by the Holy Prophet (S) that he would die fighting rebels and enemies of Islam. This was well known by all, and when he died there was some commotion in Muawiya's army.

He managed to quieten them down by saying that, since Ammar had been brought to fight by Imam Ali (A), it was he who was the cause of his death. He said that Imam Ali (A) therefore was the rebel that the prophecy talked about, and not Muawiya.

This incredible argument was accepted by his men and war continued until the 13th night.

On that day the commander-in-chief of Imam Ali's (A) army, Malike Ashtar, attacked the enemy ferociously. His shout of Allahu Akbar, every time he killed a man, was heard no less than 400 times.

The hero of the battle began to bring on victory when Amr al-Aas on Muawiya's side said,

***"Call the enemy to the Word of God."***

Muawiya eagerly accepted these words and his men raised 500 copies of the Holy Qur'an on their spears, saying that the Holy Book would decide their differences.

This trick had a strange effect on some people in the army of Imam Ali (A), who dropped their weapons and agreed that the Holy Qur'an should decide the matter.

Imam Ali (A) stepped into the battlefield urging his men to continue fighting and ignore the tricks of Muawiya, but they disobeyed.

The war thus came to an unsatisfactory end, and it was decided that one representative from each side should meet to reach a final decision.

Imam Ali (A) wanted Abdullah bin Abbas or Malike Ashtar to represent him, but his men insisted that Abu Musa Ash'ari be chosen instead. Muawiya appointed Amr al-Aas to represent him.

Abu Musa had neither wit nor tact and was no match for the cunning Amr al-Aas.

In the meeting that took place some months later, Abu Musa was badly tricked by Amr into giving up the rights of Imam Ali (A).

Muawiya thus managed to escape certain defeat at Siffin. The damage done at the battle was great. Muawiya lost 45,000 men and 25,000 men were killed on the side of Imam Ali (A).

## TOPIC 8: THE BATTLE OF NAHRAWAN

After the unsatisfactory conclusion to the Battle of Siffin, Imam Ali (A) returned with his army back to Kufa on the 13th of Safar 37 A.H. During the march, a group of 12,000 men kept themselves at a distance from the main part of the army.

The group was furious at the way things had ended at Siffin. These were the Kharjites (Kharjite means one who rebels against religion). They were the same people who had put down their weapons on the battlefield. Now they said that Imam Ali (A) had betrayed Islam by agreeing to the truce and should have referred judgement to the Holy Qur'an alone or continued to fight. They demanded that he repent for this great sin.

When the army neared Kufa, the Kharjites camped at a village named Harura. They started saying that all Muslims were equal and nobody could rule over the other. In this way, they denounced both Imam Ali (A) and Muawiya and said that their belief was in

***"La Hukma Illa Lillah", meaning, "No Rulership except by Allah alone."***

Imam Ali (A) went to their camp and tried to explain to them that they were misunderstanding the words "***La Hukma Illa Lillah***", and that in accepting the arbitration (peace talks) at Siffin, he had not gone against the teachings of the Holy Qur'an.

He pointed out that they themselves were at fault, because they should never have laid down their arms and forced him to call back Malike Ashtar, who was at the point of securing victory. He reminded them that they had pressed for the arbitration and had forced him to appoint Abu Musa Ash'ari as their representative. He told them that he found their present behaviour very strange, considering their involvement in Siffin. To this they admitted that they had sinned but now they had repented for it and he should do the same.

Imam Ali (A) replied that he was a true believer and did not have to repent because he had not committed any sin.

The Kharjites refused to accept the words of Imam Ali (A) and awaited the decision of Amr al-Aas and Abu Musa Ash'ari. When they learnt of the decision they decided to revolt, and they set up their headquarters at Nahrawan, a few miles from Baghdad. Some people came from Basra to join the rebels.

Meanwhile, Imam Ali (A) received news that trouble was brewing in Nahrawan. He was involved in raising another army to march against Muawiya and wrote to the Kharjites that it was high time they joined his army. However, the Kharjites insultingly wrote back that they would think about it when he repented for his mistake at Siffin.

Imam Ali (A) had already started towards Muawiya when he received the news that the Kharjites had raided the town of Mada'in but had been repelled back to their camp. They were now committing horrible crimes around Nahrawan and killing all those who did not accept their viewpoint.

There was a danger that the Kharjites might attack Kufa while Imam Ali (A) and his men were marching towards Muawiya, so Imam Ali (A) decided to stop them. He changed his course eastward, crossed the river Tigris and approached Nahrawan.

Imam Ali (A) sent a messenger to the Kharjites demanding that those people who had murdered innocent Muslims around their camp should be surrendered. The Kharjites replied that they were all equally responsible for killing these sinners.

There was some reluctance in the army of Imam Ali (A) to fight the Kharjites, because they had been their companions against Muawiya at Siffin. Imam Ali (A) himself did not desire the bloodshed of these misguided fanatics, so he placed his battle standard outside their camp and announced that all those who gathered around it or returned to their homes would be safe.

This announcement had the desired effect and most of the Kharjites began to leave. In the end, only a core of 1,800 die-hards were left under the command of Abdallah bin Wahab. These Kharjites swore that they would fight Imam Ali (A) at any cost.

The Kharjites attacked Imam Ali's (A) army with desperate courage. However, they did not stand a chance against the superior army that faced them and they were all killed except nine men. These nine managed to flee to Basra and elsewhere, where they spread the fire of their hatred and recruited more followers.

Three years later, in 40 A.H., it was the Kharjites who sent out three assassins to kill Imam Ali (A), Muawiya and Amr al-Aas. The latter two survived but Imam Ali (A) was martyred following Ibne Muljam's cowardly attack in the mosque of Kufa. Having disposed of the Kharjites at Nahrawan, Imam Ali (A) resumed his march to Syria.

However, the chiefs of his followers urged him to stop at Kufa to let the men rest before the long journey and to enable the army to repair their weapons and armours. Imam Ali (A) agreed to this request and camped at Nukhayla outside Kufa. The soldiers were allowed to leave the camp for a day.

On the next day, hardly any men returned and at length, Imam Ali (A) entered Kufa and gave a stern sermon to the people. However, nobody came forward and finally, Imam Ali (A) turned away from them in disappointment. The Syrian expedition was abandoned, never to be resumed.

## TOPIC 9: KERBALA - PART 1

### Yazid's Demand for Allegiance

In 50 A.H. when Imam Hassan (A) was poisoned, the duty of Imamate became the responsibility of his younger brother Imam Husain (A). At the time, Muawiya bin Abu Sufyan, the arch-enemy of the family of the Holy Prophet (S), was virtually the ruler of the whole Muslim Empire. Muawiya, who had caused the poisoning of Imam Hassan (A), continued to disregard the human rights of the people and employed gangs of criminals to terrorise them. Imam Husain (A) was not frightened by the power of Muawiya, and openly condemned him and criticised his actions.

In 60 A.H., news was conveyed to Walid, the governor of Madina, about the death of Muawiya. Yazid the evil son of Muawiya who was the next caliph, sent orders to Walid to demand the oath of allegiance (Bay'at) from Imam Husain (A). The orders stated that if Imam (A) refused, his head should be cut off and sent to Yazid in Damascus.

On receipt of the letter of Yazid, Walid sent his servant to Imam (A), requesting a meeting. Imam Husain (A) went to with some Hashimite youth to the Government House. He asked the youth to remain at the door whilst he entered alone, and only to come in if they heard his voice become unusually loud.

Walid was well aware of the position of Imam (A) and greeted him with respect and offered him a seat beside him. He then read out the letter he had received from Yazid.

Imam (A) smiled and said:

**"O Walid, invite the Muslims of Madina tomorrow and ask them if they say I should pay allegiance to Yazid, and then let us decide."**

Walid accepted this reply, but Marwan, the old enemy of Islam who the Holy Prophet (S) had expelled from Madina, said,

**"Do not let Husain out of your grip now. Cut off his head here and now and do not let this opportunity pass or you will not get it again."**

When Imam (A) heard these insulting words of Marwan, he put his hand on his sword and said aloud, **"O enemy of Allah, will you or Walid touch my head?"** On hearing the raised voice of Imam (A), the young men of Bani Hashim burst into the court room. Imam (A) managed to calm the boiling blood of his companions and averted a situation which would have certainly resulted in a blood bath.

Imam (A) flatly refused to pay allegiance to Yazid, well knowing that such an action would leave Islam and the Muslims in ruins. His famous answer to the governor of Yazid was,

**"A man like me can never give allegiance to a man like him."**

After this confrontation the life of Imam (A) was in danger, and with a heavy heart he began to plan to leave Madina, the city of his beloved grandfather.

## **Imam Husain's (A) Departure from Madina**

When Imam (A) announced that he was leaving Madina, the people of the city were struck with grief. They could not bear the loss of their dear Imam (A) who reminded them so much of the Holy Prophet (S) in his appearance, manner and speech. Groups of people approached him asking him why he was leaving, and begging him not to go.

Imam (A) explained that Yazid had demanded his allegiance and that because of his refusal, the tyrant would not hesitate to make Madina a battlefield. Imam (A) did not want bloodshed of innocent Muslims in the city of his grandfather. Therefore, he was going to Makka for pilgrimage and then he would decide what to do.

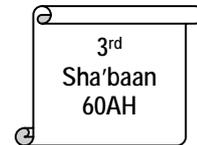
Imam (A) then visited the graves of his grandfather, his mother Bibi Fatimah (A) and his brother Imam Hasan (A). After this, he went home to make preparations for the journey.

Imam Husain's (A) sister Bibi Umme Kulthum (A) was a widow and lived with him so she joined the caravan. His other sister Bibi Zainab (A) was married to Abdullah bin Ja'far, with the permission of her husband also joined Imam Husain (A).

The caravan began moving and Imam Husain (A) bid farewell to the people of Madina. The people were weeping openly, wondering whether they would ever see him again.



## TOPIC 10: KERBALA - PART 2



### Imam Husain (A) in Makka

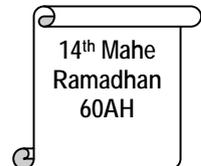
Imam (A) arrived in Makka on 3rd Sha'baan 60 A.H. While he waited for the Haj season, he pondered about his future action. If he had stayed in Madina it would have resulted in the massacre of innocent people and destruction of the city of his beloved grandfather, the Holy Prophet (S). Besides the world would always ask why he had not sought shelter elsewhere.

Yazid's grip on the people was absolute and anyone who dared to say anything against him was harshly dealt with. Yazid favoured those worthless people who flattered him, and he installed them as governors and leaders in the mosques. Human rights were deliberately denied and the laws of religion were openly defied by Yazid, who remained in a constant state of intoxication. There was no protection for life or property and looting and persecution was freely practised in the political interests of the state.

People could bear it no longer and messengers began to come to Imam (A), with letters saying that if he did not do something to defend the religion of Allah from getting lost and the people from going astray, they would complain about him to Allah and the Prophet (S) on the Day of Judgement.

Many of these desperate messages came from Kufa, begging Imam (A) to come to their urgent aid. When Imam (A) received these calls for help in Makka, he had to respond. However, he could not blindly accept the call from Kufa, because the people of that city were well known for their fickle and unstable character and conduct. Therefore, he decided to send a deputy to Kufa who would write to him after having studied the sincerity of the invitation.

Imam (A) sent his cousin Muslim bin Aqeel to Kufa and asked him to report from there. Muslim left for Kufa on the 14th of Mahe Ramadhan, along with his two sons and two guides.



Meanwhile, Yazid received news in Damascus that Imam (A) was in Makka for Haj. He therefore hired 30 men to disguise themselves as pilgrims and murder Imam (A). These men entered Makka with daggers under their Ehram with a view to kill Imam (A) even if he was within the boundaries of the Holy Ka'ba.

At the same time, Imam (A) received a letter from Muslim that it was safe for him to come to Kufa. He decided to leave for Kufa once the Haj was over. However, he was then made aware of the presence of Yazid's assassins in Makka.

On the eve of Haj, Imam (A) decided to change his intention to Umrah instead of Haj, and leave Makka immediately. The reason for this was that he did not want bloodshed on the sacred ground of Makka. In response to the call of the people of Kufa, Imam (A) made his way towards that city

## TOPIC 11: KERBALA - PART 3

### Muslim bin Aqeel in Kufa

In Kufa, Muslim was given a very warm reception and thousands of people swore the oath of allegiance to Imam Husain (A) at Muslim's hands. He was impressed, and, guided by the enthusiasm and assurances of the people, he immediately wrote a letter to Imam (A) advising him to come to Kufa.

When Yazid learnt of Muslim's arrival in Kufa and the reaction of the people, he despatched Ubaidullah ibne Ziyad as his governor to Kufa with instructions to force the people to withdraw their support of Muslim. Soon after his arrival, the new governor had managed to bribe all the leading figures of Kufa to change their allegiance. To the rest of the population a strong threat was issued. At the time of evening prayers, the following message was announced:

**"The Caliph Yazid will consider anyone who is found associating with Muslim bin Aqeel, the Deputy of Husain bin Ali, to be a rebel. By way of punishment, such people will be hanged, their families put to sword and their property confiscated. If anyone has extended any help to him upto now, no harm will come to him as long as the support is withdrawn immediately".**

The time for prayers came and Muslim rose to lead the congregation as he had done since his arrival. When he completed his prayers, he turned back to find the whole mosque deserted, except for Hani bin Urwah, at whose house Muslim was a guest. The people of Kufa had all succumbed to the warning of the governor, too cowardly to make a stand against this injustice and knowing that they had effectively passed the death sentence on Muslim. These were the same people who had deserted Imam Ali (A) and Imam Hasan (A) in their times of need.

Both men realised that their first priority was to get a message to Imam Husain (A) and warn him to turn away from Kufa. Hani knew the town better so they decided that he should get away with the message.

With a quick farewell, Hani ran out. He knew that before he left Kufa he had to do something to secure the safety of Muslim's two little boys. He rushed home and told his wife to get the children out of the back door with instructions to leave the city.

As Hani prepared to leave, his house was surrounded by armed soldiers. Hani drew out his sword, determined not to give in easily. However, he was hopelessly outnumbered and was overpowered, chained and taken to the governor.

Meanwhile, Muslim left the mosque not knowing where to go. At last he rested against a doorway, tired and thirsty. The door opened and an old lady stood there.

On learning his identity she quickly pushed him in, warning him that soldiers everywhere were hunting for him.

This pious lady, who's name was Tau'a, told Muslim to hide in her attic till it was safe to leave. Before retiring into the attic, Muslim told the old lady that he had to get an urgent message to Imam Husain (A). She assured him that her son would soon return and he was a noble young man who would do his best to help.

When Tau'a's son returned she explained the situation to him. The evil man immediately thought of the reward being offered for Muslim's capture. He cunningly assured his mother that he would make arrangements for Muslim's escape the next day. In the morning the traitor went and informed the governor of Muslim's whereabouts.

When Muslim heard the approach of soldiers, he knew that he had been betrayed and had to leave. He snatched a sword from the room and rushed out. The soldiers, who were expecting a meek surrender, were surprised to see Muslim emerge from the house like an enraged lion.

The lane outside was too narrow for the soldiers to attack him in a group and Muslim could thus fight in single combat. Muslim was no ordinary soldier. He had extensive experience and skill in combat and the enemies began to fall back under his attack, dying and being trampled by the hooves of the horses of their own men.

The leader of the soldiers sent word to the governor that they needed more men, a request that astounded Ubaidullah. He tauntingly asked how many warriors they needed to capture a single man. When it was suggested that perhaps he would like to go and capture Muslim himself, the coward backed away. Instead, he suggested that it would be better to trap Muslim by foul means.

**Accordingly, a trench was dug and then disguised with straw and sticks.**

As Muslim surged forwards attacking the enemy, they broke away and he unsuspectingly fell into the trench. Immediately, the cowards who had been running from him, returned to pelt him with stones.

His head pouring with blood, Muslim fell unconscious. He was dragged up, chained and brought to Ubaidullah. When Muslim was presented to Ubaidullah, he stood erect with dignity. He was asked for his last wish before he joined Hani, who had already been killed. Muslim asked for a messenger to be sent to Imam Husain (A). This request surprised the governor, who expected a plea for mercy for Muslim's sons, who had also been found and captured. In any case, he refused the request. Muslim then asked for his armour to be sold and his debts in Kufa be paid with the proceeds. Agreeing to this, Ubaidullah then ordered that Muslim be beheaded.

As the sword of the executioner fell on his neck, Muslim spoke his last prayer:

**"O Holy Imam, pardon me for I was misled. O Allah!, let him know what has happened here and not come to Kufa."**

## TOPIC 12: KARBALA - PART 4

### The Arrival in Karbala

When Imam Husain (A) left Makka for Kufa, a large group of people accompanied him. Many of these people thought that if the grandson of the Holy Prophet (S) was making a stand against Yazid, the whole Muslim world would support him and Yazid would surely be toppled. They thought that they would be able to share in the glory and war booty that would follow. Although Imam Husain (A) repeatedly warned them that they were mistaken in their thinking, the crowd persisted in travelling with him.

Imam Husain (A) continued on his journey towards Iraq until he neared Kufa. From there he wrote a letter to the people of Kufa and sent it through Qays bin Mashar Saidaawi.

In the letter he informed the people of Kufa that he had received Muslim's letter and that he was on his way to Kufa and would arrive soon. Qays took the letter to Kufa but was arrested outside the city and taken to the governor, Ubaidullah ibne Ziyad.

As he was led to the governor, Qays managed to tell some people where Imam Husain (A) was, and the word spread secretly amongst the loyal Kufans, many of whom managed to reach Imam (A) in Karbala.

The governor told Qays that the only hope he had to save himself was to mount the pulpit and publicly abuse Imam Husain (A). Qays addressed the people by first praising Alláh and then said,

**"O People, Husain (A) is the best of men living at present and is the son of Fatima (A) the daughter of your Prophet (S). I have been sent by him. All of you should rise and assist him."**

He then cursed Ubaidullah and his father and praised Imam Ali (A). By this time, the governor had heard enough and ordered that Qays be thrown down from a high roof.

Qays did not survive this brutal treatment and was martyred. His broken body was left on the ground where it fell.

Meanwhile, Imam Husain (A) continued his journey towards Kufa until he reached a place called Zurud. There, he learnt about the martyrdom of Muslim and Hani and said: "We are from Allah and to Him we all will return." He prayed to Allah to bless them.

At the stopping place of Uzaybul Hajanaat, Imam Husain (A) received news about Qays. When the caravan stopped at Zabala, he informed his companions of the deaths of Muslim, Hani and Qays and the state of affairs in Kufa. Thereafter, he said,

**"Our supporters have withdrawn their support from us. Whoever wishes to leave us and go his own way should do so."**

At this time most of his companions left and very few remained. These few were his sincere followers and had not come with him for material gains.

In response to the news of Imam Husain's (A) approach, several military parties had been sent out to search the desert and stop his advance. One such party, led by a famous commander,

Hur ibne Yazid ar-Riyahi, met the caravan of Imam Husain (A) on the 1st of Muharram 61 A.H.

When they met, Hur's army was exhausted and desperately thirsty. Imam Husain (A) instructed that water from their stores be provided to Hur's men and horses.

It was time for noon prayers. Imam Husain (A) led the Jamaat prayers and Hur's army also prayed behind him. After the prayers were over, Imam Husain (A) addressed Hur and his companions.

He reminded them that he was only there in response to their written invitations. He also explained that he was the rightful Imam and that he was one of the people mentioned in the Holy Qur'an in the verses relating to Mubahila (3:61) and Purification (33:33). He warned them of the consequences of obeying a man like Yazid, and urged them to refrain from staining their hands with the innocent blood of the family of the Holy Prophet (S).

Hur did not accept these words of advice, and although there was no fighting, he diverted the path of Imam Husain (A) away from Kufa and led him into the desert.

On Thursday, 2nd of Muharram 61 A.H., they reached a place where the horse of Imam Husain (A) stopped. Although he changed horses several times, the animals would not carry him further.



Gathering the people who lived there, Imam Husain (A) asked the name of the place. Some said that it was called Naynava, others said it was also called Mariya. Imam Husain (A) asked if there was any other name. Someone said it was also known as Shattul Furaat. Then one old man came forward and said that he had heard his ancestors say that one name for this area was Karbala.



When Imam Husain (A) heard this, he smiled and thanked Allah and then said, "Surely this is the plain where my Holy Grandfather has prophesied that I, with my faithful companions shall lay slain after suffering three days of hunger and thirst. We will not move from here - we have reached our destination."

Imam Husain (A) then ordered for his caravan to stop and tents were pitched next to the banks of the river Euphrates.

## TOPIC 13: KARBALA - PART 5

### Events of the First Days in Karbala

The caravan of Imam Husain (A) had arrived in Karbala and their tents were pitched next to the river Euphrates. As his companions settled down, Imam Husain (A) took his brother Abbas (A) around the barren desert and pointed out the various places where each of his comrades would fall and be slain on the Day of Ashura.

The people living in the area were from the tribe of Bani Asad. Imam Husain (A) purchased the land of Karbala from them and then gifted it back to them. He then addressed the men of Bani Asad saying,

**"On the tenth of this month you will see our dead bodies lying on this plain with our heads severed and taken away. Please bury us, and when our devotees come to visit our graves, treat them with honour and point out to them the places of our burial."**

He then turned to the women of the tribe and said,

**"O virtuous ladies! If your husbands, fearing Yazid, do not bury us, then please encourage them to do so or do it yourselves."**

Finally, he turned to the children of Bani Asad and said, "O innocent ones! If your parents, out of fear of the ruler, do not bury us then, by way of playing, bring some earth and throw it on our bodies to hide them." This heartrending appeal of Imam Husain (A) made all the listeners weep.

When Ubaidullah ibne Ziyad, Yazid's governor in Kufa, learnt that Hur had brought Imam Husain (A) and his companions to Karbala, he sent his troops to surround them. The first man to arrive in Karbala on behalf of Yazid was Amr ibne Sa'ad, who was the commander-in-chief of all the forces. He brought with him 6,000 men. After that, regiment after regiment began to pour in onto the plains of Karbala. Historians all agree that at least 33,000 of Yazid's men gathered to fight Imam Husain (A), while some state that the figure was closer to 80,000 men. This large army was bent on the massacre of Imam Husain (A) and his companions for the sake of the rewards that Yazid had promised them. Many amongst them were the same people of Kufa who had invited Imam Husain (A) to come there in the first place.

The first act of the enemy was to order Imam Husain (A) to remove his tents from near the river. Abbas (A) objected to this demand, claiming priority of occupation and the right of the grandson of the Holy Prophet (S) to stay where he had first camped.

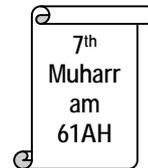
When the enemy threatened to march towards their tents, the lion-hearted Abbas (A) stood firm and drew out his sword shouting, **"If anyone dares to advance one more step forward, he shall lay headless on the ground."** His bravery was well known and none dared to step closer. However, Imam Husain (A) called to his brother saying,

**"Brother Abbas, do not let the bloodshed be started by our side. When Allah is with us, it does not matter how far the river is."**

Imam Husain (A) then ordered for their camp to be moved further into the interior of the desert.

In the days that followed there were several meetings between Imam Husain (A) and Amr ibne Sa'ad. Amr kept on insisting that the only way to stop war was for Imam Husain (A) to give the oath of allegiance to Yazid. He said that once the allegiance was given, all worldly comforts would be at the disposal of Imam (A). However, Imam (A) remained firm on his stand and replied:

**"I shall never yield to the one who does not believe in Allah and one who defies Him, both by words and actions. I am willing to meet any calamity but will never surrender Truth to falsehood."**



On the 7th of Muharram, Amr ibne Sa'ad received orders to block all sources of supply of water to Imam Husain (A). From that day onwards, not a single drop of water was allowed to reach the camp of Imam (A). The scorching desert sent heat waves everywhere and the little children began to cry with intense thirst. Even little babies could not receive milk, because their poor mothers were themselves suffering from thirst.

The brave group of Imam Husain (A) suffered these tortures with patience as they watched the enormous army that faced them prepare for war.



## TOPIC 14: KARBALA - PART 6

### The Night of Ashura

On the 9th of Muharram, Shimr arrived in Karbala with orders from Ubaidullah ibne Ziyad for Amr ibne Sa'ad. The orders stated that if Imam Husain (A) did not surrender and give the oath of allegiance at once, he must be fought and killed immediately.

On receipt of these orders, Amr rallied a part of his army and marched towards the camp of Imam Husain (A).

Abbas (A) advanced towards the enemy with 20 horsemen and enquired from them the reason for their sudden approach. When he was told of the ultimatum, he said that he would inform Imam Husain (A) of the position and bring back the reply.

When Abbas (A) briefed Imam Husain (A) of the situation, Imam (A) said to his brother,

**"Go back to them, and if possible, ask for an extension of time till tomorrow morning, so that tonight we may offer prayers to Allah, make Du'as and ask for His forgiveness".**

Amr granted them respite till the next morning with great reluctance. Now that they knew that death was inevitable the next morning, the whole camp of Imam Husain (A) readied themselves for martyrdom.

Imam Husain (A) gave a speech on the night of Ashura saying in part,

**"O Lord! I thank You, because You have honoured us by means of Prophethood and taught us the Qur'an, made us understand the religion and its commandments, granted us eyes, ears and hearts, kept us free from the evils of idol-worship and then enabled us to thank You for Your blessings.**

**I am not aware of any companions more faithful and honest than my companions, and any relatives more righteous and kind than my relatives. May Allah grant you all a good reward. I think the day of our fighting with this army has arrived.**

**I permit you all to go away, because the enemies are after me only. You are free to depart without any restriction and can take advantage of the darkness of night".**

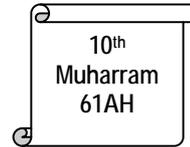
The people who had come with the wrong intentions had already left before, and the ones who remained were perfect in their faith and loyalty. The listeners all rejected the option of abandoning Imam (A). One said,

**"Should we go away to live after you? We pray to Allah that the time may not come when you may be killed while we remain alive".**

Thereafter the whole camp busied itself in preparation for the events of the next day. The sound of prayers and supplications filled the air like the buzz of hundreds of bees. Some soldiers checked their weapons, while others discussed tactics of warfare. Mothers prepared their sons to lay down their lives with Imam Husain (A) in the cause of Islam.

Imam Husain (A) went around the camp talking to his men as well as his family and giving encouragement and last minute instructions. He consoled his sister Bibi Zainab (A) and urged her to remain patient in the face of the hardship that was to follow his martyrdom.

## TOPIC 15: KARBALA - PART 7



### The Day of Ashura

The 10<sup>th</sup> of Muharram 61 A.H. is known as the day of Ashura. In the morning Ali Akbar gave the Adhan. He resembled the Holy Prophet (S) greatly and his recital reminded the people of the early days of Islam.

After the morning prayer, Imam's (A) followers took it in turns to come forward to address Yazid's army. Many had relatives and friends in the enemy camp and they tried to convince them of the terrible crime they were about to commit.

Finally, Imam Husain (A) came forward himself and addressed the enemy. He introduced himself and informed them that he was a peaceful man, living quietly in Madina and not harming anyone. He asked them why they were so bent on killing the grandson of the Holy Prophet (S), in whom they all believed.



Seeing the result of the words of Imam Husain, Amr ibne Sa'ad, the commander of Yazid's army, was concerned that the morale of his troops would be affected. He therefore declared that all should witness that he was casting the first arrow in battle and he shot an arrow towards Imam (A).

This was the beginning of the battle. Imam (A) had only 32 horsemen and about 110 soldiers in all. He had fortified his camp by locating it so that it was enclosed by a chain of hills on three sides. This area is known as "Haa-yeer" and can be seen even today.

He pitched his tents close together and dug a ditch at the exposed rear. The ditch was filled with firewood which was set alight when the enemy attacked the camp.

After a few single combats, there was a general attack in the mid-morning. Although the enemy was repulsed. Most of the army of Imam (A) was killed. By now it was time for the Dhohr prayer. Imam (A) prayed Salatul Khawf (prayers under attack) while the battle continued.

In the afternoon, it was the turn of the family of the Holy Prophet (S), the Banu Hashim, to sacrifice themselves. Ali Akbar was the first to go and within an hour, no adult male remained alive in Imam's (A) camp except his ill son Ali Zainul Abideen (A) and himself.

It was Asr time when Imam Husain (A) bid the ladies and children farewell and entered the battle-field.

He gave his last speech, once more urging the enemy to consider their actions. When he did not receive any reply, he attacked them bravely, scattering them wherever he turned. The enemy could not stop him.

Finally, Imam (A) paused. He was dizzy with the loss of blood. He slid off his horse in a little hollow. Here the enemy found him with his head in Sajdah. The accursed Shimr committed the most terrible of crimes when he beheaded Imam (A).

## TOPIC 16: KARBALA - PART 8

### The Aftermath of Karbala

After the supreme sacrifice had been accepted and our Holy Imam Husain (A) had been martyred, a gloomy silence hung over the battlefield of Karbala.

Every now and then the silence would be broken by the sound of drum-beating to celebrate victory. Not content with spilling the innocent blood of Imam Husain (A) and his companions, Amr ibne Sa'ad, the commander of Yazid's army, ordered the horses to be shod afresh and then run over the bodies of the dead Muslims. Having trampled over the bodies of the martyrs, the enemy next turned their attention to the defenceless camp of Imam Husain (A).

Yazid's soldiers marched into the camp where they subjected the grief-stricken ladies to further torment and indignity. They had expected to find luxurious articles in the tents of the family of the Holy Prophet (S), but all they found were simple items and clothes, some of which had been stitched by Bibi Fatima (A) with her own hands. The ruthless soldiers snatched away these few possessions of sentimental value. They were angry at the lack of booty, and they took the veils off the struggling ladies forcing them to expose their hair and faces.

Not satisfied with this, the enemy set fire to the tents. The terrified ladies gathered their children and rushed from tent to tent, trying to escape the burning flames. One young child was seen rushing out of a tent with her clothes on fire. One of the enemy soldiers, seeing her pitiable condition came forward and put out the flames. The child looked at him, surprised at the unexpected kindness. Tearfully, the little child asked him,

**"O Shaikh, do me one more kindness and tell me the way to Najaf."**

The soldier was very surprised at this unusual request, and replied,

**"Najaf is far away from here. Why do you want to know the way there?"**

The child said with heartbreaking innocence,

**"I want to go to the grave of my grandfather Imam Ali (A) and complain about what your people have done to us - how our men were butchered and how our ladies have been whipped. I want to tell him how the earrings were snatched from my cousin Sakina's ears, leaving her earlobes torn and bleeding."**

Bibi Zainab (A), who had been left in charge of the camp by Imam Husain (A), was at a loss as to what to do. She went to the seriously ill Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A). He lay unconscious on the ground after the enemy had even robbed the mattress on which he lay.

She shook him urgently to ask his advice. He was burning with fever but with a great effort he replied that it was compulsory on them to save their lives and he asked her to get everyone out from the burning tents into the open.

Soon the raging fires subsided leaving only one tent standing, although it was also damaged by fire. The ladies and children salvaged whatever they could of their few belongings and huddled together in that little shelter waiting for nightfall.

The night following the day of Ashura is known as Shame Ghariba. It was the night when the exhausted, hungry and tired families of Imam Husain (A) and his companions sat in loneliness, each thinking about the loved ones they had lost in the unjust battle on that day.

Due to the illness of Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A), Bibi Zainab (A) realised that she would have to take care of the small group of women and children herself.

She called her sister Bibi Umme Kulthum (A) to help her and they decided to count all the children to see that none had gone missing in the confusion of the fire. To her horror and dismay Bibi Zainab (A) found that Bibi Sakina (A), the beloved daughter of Imam Husain (A), was not there.

The two ladies searched everywhere for the young girl but in vain. Finally, in desperation, Bibi Zainab (A) went to the place where the body of her brother Husain (A) lay and cried,

**"O my brother, Sakina, who you left in my care, is nowhere to be found. Where shall I look for her in this wilderness?"**

Just then, the moon came out from behind a cloud and Bibi Zainab (A) saw that little Sakina (A) lay on her father, sleeping on his chest like she always used to. She shook the child awake and said,

**"My child, how did you find your father's beheaded body in this darkness?"**

The little girl replied innocently,

**"I wanted to tell my father about what the people had done to me. I wanted to tell him how Shimr had robbed the earrings that my father had so lovingly given me.**

**I wanted to tell him how he had ripped them from my ears leaving my earlobes torn and bleeding. I wanted to tell him how the beast had mercilessly slapped me when I cried in pain.**

**I told him everything and then I felt like sleeping on his chest the way I always did, for the last time. So I kept my head on his chest and slept till you came."**

Bibi Zainab (A) took the little child back to her mother Bibi Rubab. Just then she noticed that a group of people were advancing towards the camp carrying flame torches.

She thought that some soldiers had returned to loot them and she hurried to stop them from disturbing the children who had finally gone to sleep despite their hunger and thirst.

However, it turned out that the arrivals were a group of ladies, the wives of some of the enemy soldiers. They were led by the widow of Hur, who had joined Imam Husain's (A) army from the enemy camp.

**Hur's widow said, "Dear lady, we have been asked to bring food and water for the children and bereaved ladies of your camp." She continued sadly, "I am the widow of Hur who died fighting for your brother.**

**When the soldiers of Amr ibne Sa'ad realised that all of you would perish of hunger and thirst, and that they would not be able to take you back to Yazid according to his command, they sent me to bring food and water to you."**

Bibi Zainab (A) offered her condolences at the death of Hur and apologised that they had not been able to offer him much hospitality.

This remark prompted Hur's widow to say, "My lady, I do not know how to offer you condolences, because you lost not one, but 18 members of your family."

## TOPIC 17: KARBALA - PART 9

### The Journey to Damascus

On the morning of 11th Muharram, the army commander, Amr ibne Sa'ad called his officers to decide what steps they should take next. It was decided that the captives should be led through Kufa to Damascus to the court of Yazid. Amr ibne Sa'ad marched directly on to Damascus to inform Yazid about the events of Karbala, and to obtain his promised reward. He left Shimr and Khooli in charge of the captives.

With these arrangements completed, some soldiers were appointed to bind the ladies and children. They tied ropes and chains round their hands and feet. The ladies were put on camels with no saddles. The hands of some of the ladies were tied behind them and linked to the necks of the young children. Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) was heavily chained and made to walk on foot, despite his weakened condition. The heartless officers made the captives pass by the place where the bodies of their loved ones lay, headless and without even shrouds over them. Many of the ladies and children threw themselves down from the camels to the bodies of their dead relatives, only to be whipped by the soldiers.

The heads of all the martyrs were mounted on spears. Every soldier who was given a severed head was made in charge of it and marched at the front of the army. The head of Imam Husain (A) was given to Khooli, who was a hard-hearted tyrant.

Finally the caravan got underway for Kufa. The pitiful condition of the little children was such that they could not hold on to the camels due to their inexperience and the rapid pace of the march.

Many children fell to the ground as a result. Despite the pleading of the mothers, the heartless soldiers would not halt the march to remount a fallen child. Today, the road from Karbala to Kufa has many graves of such children who were left to die in the hot desert.

Within a few hours, the caravan reached the outskirts of Kufa. the people of Kufa lined the streets and looked from the balconies of their houses as the captives were paraded in front of them. The announcer was saying,

**"O people of Kufa, we are bringing you the grand-daughters of the Prophet and other women and children of the family of Husain son of Ali. Husain, who had risen in rebellion against our Caliph Yazid, has been defeated and killed with his companions on the battlefield of Karbala.**

**The members of his family are now being taken to the court of Yazid, to face whatever punishment he wishes to inflict upon them. People of Kufa, this is the fate that awaits all those who question the authority of Yazid, and no person who tries to rise against Yazid will be spared."**

The people heard all this in astonishment. Not long ago Kufa was the capital of Imam Ali (A), and they all remembered the kindness shown to them by him and his sons and daughters.

On seeing the pitiful condition of the captives, many were crying, but none dared to raise their voice against the oppressors, in case a similar fate befell them.

Finally the caravan reached the court of the governor. When he saw the condition of the captives, he mockingly said that it seemed that some slave girls had been brought before him, and not the grand-daughters of the Holy Prophet (S).

This remark made Bibi Zainab (A) lose her temper and she addressed Ubaidullah ibne Ziyad with a fiery and eloquent speech.

Bibi Zainab (A) related the status of the Holy Prophet (S) and his Holy Ahlul Bayt (A). She reminded him of the teachings of Islam about the considerations to be given to prisoners, especially women and children.

She warned him about the temporary nature of his victory and the doom that he and his evil master Yazid would soon face. She began to tell the assembled people about the inhuman crimes committed against Imam Husain (A) and his companions.

As she spoke, the people were reminded of the eloquence of her father Imam Ali (A). Ubaidullah became worried at the effect the speech of Bibi Zainab (A) was having on the people.

He tried to shout her down by threatening the worst possible torture if she did not stop. Undaunted by his threats, the brave lady continued and her words moved many to tears.

One of the aged companions of the Holy Prophet (S), Zaid bin Arkan, who was blind, rose up and protested at the cruel treatment of the members of the family of the Holy Prophet (S).

Ubaidullah realised at once that the situation could get out of hand. The speech of Bibi Zainab (A) could cause an uprising against him if he did not act quickly.

He ordered his men to get rid of the companion of the Holy Prophet (S) and told Shimr and Khooli to get the captives out of Kufa immediately.

Arrangements were made for departure straight away, and Shimr chose the quietest route to Damascus so that he would not face any surprise attacks from anyone wishing to avenge the martyrs of Karbala.

The caravan of the captive families of Imam Husain (A) and his companions was led by Shimr through the deserts of Iraq and Syria, from Kufa to Damascus (Sham).

Throughout the journey people noted with wonder that the lips of the cut head of Imam Husain (A) kept on moving, reciting verses from the Holy Qur'an. Clearly heard was the following verse:

***Do you think that the people of the Cave and of the Inscription were of Our wonderful miracles?  
Kahf, 18 : 9***

By reciting this verse, the Holy Imam (A) was calling the attention of the people to the next verses of this chapter of the Holy Qur'an (18 : 9-14), where Allah relates how He increased the guidance and strengthened the hearts of the Companions of the Cave, when they stood up against the evil- doers.

Even in death, our Holy Imam (A) was pointing out the similarity of the message of his stand in Karbala to the other event from ancient history.

The captives finally reached Damascus. On reaching the city gates, the caravan was halted and Yazid was informed of their arrival and his permission was sought to bring the captives into his court.

## TOPIC 18: KARBALA - PART 10

### The Court of Yazid

By the time the captive ladies and children of the caravan of Imam Husain (A) reached Damascus, they were in a terrible state. Their bodies were covered in dust, their clothes were in rags and blood oozed from the wounds and cuts inflicted by the tight ropes and whips.

As the caravan was paraded through the streets, the people of Damascus saw the captives and were moved by their pitiable condition. The children were crying with hunger and thirst, so many onlookers threw them dried dates as alms. Bibi Zainab (A) and Bibi Umme Kulthum (A) asked the hungry children not to eat these dates as it was Haraam for them. They requested the people not to throw them food as Sadqah, because the Holy Prophet (S) had forbidden his family to eat such sacrificial offerings. The people of Damascus could not believe that these ladies, who were covering their faces with their hair, were actually from the family of the Holy Prophet (S). They wondered how Yazid had dared to humiliate these holy people in such a manner.

Finally, the prisoners arrived at the court of Yazid. After a wait of one full hour under the scorching sun, the orders came from Yazid to admit the captives into the court. As they entered they saw that the Yazid sat on an elevated gold throne while his courtiers and foreign envoys sat on gilded chairs around him. Yazid was already quite drunk. What a terrible spectacle the poor prisoners had to witness. They saw that the accursed oppressor had the head of Imam Husain (A) on a tray at his feet and he was rattling a cane against the teeth and lips of the Holy Imam (A). He was boasting, "Ah, aren't these the same lips that received the kisses of Muhammad? How delighted will be my ancestors when they see how I have taken revenge for their defeats in the battles of Badr and Hunayn."

In his drunk state, Yazid could not believe that the people he saw before him were members of the family of the Holy Prophet (S). In a quivering rage he accused Amr ibne Sa'ad of substituting slaves instead of the relatives of Imam Husain (A).

Amr ibne Sa'ad knew that Yazid was more dangerous than normal when he was drunk so he quickly reassured him and began to point out the ladies. He said,

**"O Commander of the Faithful, your slave has done exactly what you asked. Those are the sisters of Husain, Zainab and Umme Kulthum. The young girls are Sakina and Rukayya, the daughters of Husain. That lady is Rubab, the widow of Husain, while the others are orphans and widows of Husain's friends and relatives. The man before you is Husain's son Ali."**

Yazid turned his attention to the people that Amr ibne Sa'ad had identified. He noticed that an old lady was standing in front of one of the lady prisoners, as if shielding her from the gaze of Yazid. He pointed towards the direction of the lady and shouted, "Who is that one sheltering behind the old woman, and why?" Amr ibne Sa'ad replied,

**"Your Majesty, she is Zainab, daughter of Ali and Fatima and the old woman standing in front of her is Fizza, and Abyssinian princess, who calls herself the slave of Fatima and Zainab."**

Yazid ordered Shimr, who was guarding the prisoners, to throw Fizza aside so he could have a full view of Bibi Zainab (A). Seeing Shimr advance towards her, Fizza turned to the Abyssinian slaves who stood armed behind Yazid as his bodyguards, and said,

**"O brothers from my native country, will you watch silently while an aged lady from your land is molested in this manner?"**

Hearing the words of Fizza, some of the slaves stepped forward and warned Yazid, saying, **"Your Majesty, ask Shimr to step back from our lady Fizza. If he does anything to her, blood will flow like water in your court."**

Yazid was stunned at this threat and immediately stopped Shimr and assured his bodyguards that he would not harm Fizza. However, he was furious at the fact that he had been humiliated in this manner in front of everyone and he soon wound up the court session, deciding to imprison the captives in the dark dungeons of the fort of Damascus.

## TOPIC 19 : PROPHET LUT (A)

Prophet Lut (A) was the cousin of Prophet Ibrahim (A). Their mothers were sisters and Prophet Lut's (A) own sister, Sarah, was Prophet Ibrahim's (A) first wife. The two Prophets (A) migrated together to Palestine, but later Prophet Lut (A) settled in the district of Sodom in Jordan.

The people of Sodom were unsociable and treated strangers disgracefully. Anybody who passed through their area would be robbed of all his possessions. Their life was full of singing, merry-making and gambling. But by far the worst vice in their community was homosexuality, which was openly practised. The word sodomy is in fact a reference to the people of Sodom, who were the first to commit this act. To guide these people, Allah sent Prophet Lut (A) to them. Prophet Lut (A) did his utmost to teach the people about the evil of their ways. He preached to them the message of Allah and begged them to give up their evil customs.

However, after 30 years of guidance, only a handful of people had accepted his teaching while the rest remained engrossed in their sinful habits. The Holy Qur'an says:

***And (We sent) Lut, when he said to his people, "Why do you commit such indecent acts that have never been committed before by anyone in any of the worlds? Verily, you come to men in lust instead of women. Indeed you are a people who are guilty of excess." And they had no answer except that they said, "Turn him out of our town, he and his people seek to purify (themselves)."***      ***Surah al-A'raaf, 7:80-82***

While Prophet Lut (A) increased his efforts to try and guide the people, they wanted to expel him and his followers from the town. When he warned the people to fear the Wrath of Allah for their indecent behaviour, they laughed and said that they did not care about it.

Prophet Lut (A) despaired of ever guiding the people. He was deeply ashamed when they forced travellers passing through the town to indulge in their vile acts, and prayed to Allah to deliver him and his family from the people of Sodom.

Finally, the punishment of Allah descended on these wretched people. Allah sent down a group of His angels, including Jibrael (A), to teach the people of Sodom a terrible lesson.

The angels came down in human form and first visited Prophet Ibrahim (A). He thought they were travellers who were passing by his house, so he welcomed them and prepared a roasted calf for them.

However, they did not touch their meals and their strange behaviour frightened Prophet Ibrahim (A). At this point, the angels introduced themselves and said that they were on their way to punish the people of Lut. However, they also informed

him of the good news that he would soon be blessed them with a son, (Prophet) Ishaq (A), and a grandson, (Prophet) Ya'qub (A).

Prophet Ibrahim (A) had not been able to have a child with his wife Sarah and the news delighted them. Then, he remembered their other purpose. The Holy Qur'an says:

***And when Ibrahim recovered from his awe and had received the good news, he began pleading with Us for Lut's people. Verily, Ibrahim was indeed forbearing, compassionate and often turned to Allah. (Allah said), "O Ibrahim, Forsake this (argument)! Indeed the decree of your Lord has already come to pass, and verily, they are about to receive a torment (which is) irreversible." Hud,11:74-76***

The angels then changed themselves into young men and left for Sodom. When they reached the town, they knocked at the door of Prophet Lut's (A) house. Prophet Lut (A) was very worried when he saw that he had guests who were handsome youths, because he knew very well what the habits of his people were. However, he could not turn them away and so he welcomed them to his house. The Holy Qur'an says:

***And when Our Messengers came to Lut, he was grieved for them and felt himself powerless (to protect them) and they said, "Do not fear or grieve, we will deliver you and your people, except your wife. She shall be of those who stay behind. Verily, we are bringing upon the people of this town a punishment for their sins." And indeed We have left a clear sign of it for a people who understand. Ankabut, 29:33-35***

No sooner had the guests arrived than Prophet Lut's (A) immoral wife signalled to the people that there were young men in her house.

The Holy Qur'an says:

***And his people came rushing to him, those who had done evil deeds in the past. He (Lut) said, "O my people, here are my daughters (to marry) - they are purer for you, so guard against (the punishment of) Allah, and do not disgrace me about my guests. Is there not amongst you a single right minded man?" They said, "Indeed you know that that we do not need your daughters and you very well know what we intend." Hud, 11:78,79***

As the people surged towards the house, determined to satisfy their evil desires, Jibraeel (A) waved his arm at them and turned them blind. He then asked Prophet Lut (A) to leave in the night with his family and the few virtuous people, but to leave his wife behind. As soon as they were safe, the angels brought the punishment of Allah on the town. The Holy Qur'an says:

***So the (violent) Blast seized them (while) entering upon dawn. Thus did We turn it (the town) upside down and rained down on them stones of baked clay. Verily, in this are signs for those who are heedful. Hijr,15:73-75***

## TOPIC 20: THE PEOPLE OF RAS

The people of Ras lived between Azarbaijan and Armenia on the bank of the river Ras during the time just after Prophet Sulayman (A). They lived in twelve towns situated along the river. The largest of these towns was Isfandar where the king, Tarqooz, lived. Tarqooz was a descendant of the cruel king Namrud who had ruled at the time of Prophet Ibrahim (A).

The people of Ras worshipped the "Sanobar". This was a huge pine tree that had been originally planted at Isfandar by Yafas, son of Prophet Nuh (A), after the great flood. There was a spring at the foot of the pine tree and nobody was allowed to drink from it because it was considered to be the lifeblood of the god.

The people of Ras cultivated the lands around the river and Allah blessed them with a pleasant climate and a life of comfort. In spite of this, they were unmindful of His favours and thoughtlessly turned to the pine tree for their needs. Twigs from the great tree would be taken to homes and also worshipped. During the days of festival, animal flesh would be burnt and offered to the tree as sacrifices.

To educate and guide these ignorant people, Allah sent to them His Prophet. Although the name of the Prophet is not mentioned in history, we do know that he was from the descendants of Yahuda, son of Prophet Ya'qub (A).

The Prophet tried to bring the people to their senses by pointing out the error of their ways. He taught them about the blessings and bounties of Allah and warned them not to worship anything besides Him. However, in spite of his continuous efforts, the people turned a deaf ear to the Prophet's words and carried on worshipping their pine tree.

On the day of their festival the Prophet sadly watched the people prepare for the ceremonies. As he observed the dedication and enthusiasm with which they were preparing to glorify their tree, he invoked Allah to dry up the tree so that the people may realise the absurdity of their worship.

The prayer was granted by Allah and the shocked people watched their pine tree wither and begin to die before their eyes. However, instead of learning a lesson, they decided that their god was annoyed at the interference of the Prophet and resolved to sacrifice him to appease their god.

The people of Ras seized the Prophet and threw him into a large pit. Thereafter, they covered the pit and thus buried him alive. For some time the cries of the Prophet were heard but then there was quiet as his soul departed this world. The people turned to their tree to see if it had recovered. Instead, they noticed the signs of Divine Punishment.

Suddenly, the Wrath of Allah broke over the whole tribe. A red blast of wind swept through them and destroyed the entire population.

All that was left at the end was a black cloud which hung over the entire region, plunging it into darkness. Thus, the people of Ras faded into obscurity, providing posterity with a valuable lesson.

The Holy Qur'an mentions them in the following verses:

***And the (tribes of) Aad and Thamud and the inhabitants of Ras, and generations between them in a great number. And to each of them We gave examples (lessons, warnings) and We destroyed every one (of them) with an utter extermination.*** ***Furqan, 25 : 38,39***

***...The people of Nuh and the dwellers of Ras, Thamud, Aad, Fir'aun and the brethren of Lut and the dwellers of the Forest and the people of Thubba' had all rejected the Prophets. Thus My promise (of their doom) was proved true.*** ***Qaaf, 50 : 12 - 14***

## TOPIC 21: THE PEOPLE OF SABT

Prophet Musa (A) had taught the Bani Israa'il (Jews) to designate one particular day for the worship of Allah . On that day they were to abandon all their business or leisure activities. Originally, the day of Friday was specified, but at the request of the Bani Israa'il, it was changed to Saturday. This day, the Sabbath, became a holiday for the Jews and on Saturdays Prophet Musa (A) used to address a special congregation and preach to the people. For many years after Prophet Musa (A), the Sabbath was faithfully observed as a religious day. However, in the time of Prophet Dawood (A), one group of the Bani Israa'il, who lived at the seaport of Ela, broke the Divine rule. The people of Ela were mainly fishermen and fished the seas everyday except Saturday. Allah tested their faith by making the fish become very easy to catch on Saturdays. The Holy Qur'an says:

***And (O Muhammad) ask them about the (people of the) town which was beside the sea; when they exceeded (the limits) in the Sabbath when their fish came to them on the day of their Sabbath, appearing on the surface of the water; and on the day they did not observe the Sabbath, they (the fish) did not come unto them. Thus did We try them, for they were transgressing. And when a part of them said, "Why do you preach to those whom Allah would destroy or punish by a severe torment?" They replied, "To be free from blame before your Lord, so that perhaps they may become pious."*** A'raf, 7 : 163,164

The fishermen were tempted by the easy catches to be made on Saturday and they thought of a plan to get around the Divine restriction. They decided to dig trenches and canals to divert the fish. On Saturdays, the canals were opened and the fish would swim into them in large numbers. At night, before the fish could return back to the sea, the canals were dammed. Then on Sundays the fishermen would easily catch all the trapped fish.

The wise and pious people of the tribe advised these greedy fishermen not to violate the command of Allah. They considered it their duty to guide those who were in error, because otherwise they would also be to blame for the consequences. However, the fishermen continued disobeying the Divine commandment and even boasted about their cleverness. Finally, the punishment of Allah came down and their faces were transformed into those of animals. After three days and nights all the sinners were destroyed. The Holy Qur'an says:

***And indeed you know of those amongst you who transgressed on the Sabbath, so We said unto them, "Become apes, despised and spurned!" And We made it a lesson for (those of) their own times and those (of their posterity) who came after them and a guidance for those who guard against evil.*** Baqarah, 2 : 65,66



## **AKHLAQ SYLLABUS – CLASS 10 (13 YEARS OLD)**

- TOPIC 1: MEANING AND OVERVIEW OF THE SUBJECT OF AKHLAQ**
- TOPIC 2: GUNAH E KABIRA (THE MAJOR SINS)**
- TOPIC 3: HAPPY FAMILY LIFE**
- TOPIC 4: ISLAMIC MANNERS**
- TOPIC 5: BATHROOM MANNERS**
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- TOPIC 7: CONCEPT OF THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT**
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- TOPIC 12: LIES vs HONESTY**
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- TOPIC 14: EARNING A HALAL LIVELIHOOD**
- TOPIC 15: TAKABBUR & VANITY**
- TOPIC 16: PERMISSIVENESS**
- TOPIC 17: CHASTITY**

**My Akhlaq Teacher is \_\_\_\_\_**

**Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_**

## TOPIC 1: MEANING AND OVERVIEW OF THE SUBJECT OF AKHLAQ

**21:16** *Not for (idle) sport did We create the heavens and the earth and all that is between!*

**30:8** *Do they not reflect in their own minds? Not but for just ends and for term appointed, did God create the heavens and the earth, and all them: yet are there truly many among men who deny the meeting with their Lord (at the Resurrection)!*

**38:27** *Not without purpose did We create heaven and earth and all between! That were the thought of Unbelievers! But woe to the Unbelievers because of the Fire (of Hell)!*

***"I have been sent to complete the nobility of character."***

*[Prophet Muhammad (S)]*

A child is born. What does it have to look forward to in life? Anything, anything at all?

If life is just to live, to use and then we are no more, then what is the point of living? What is the point of studying for 25 years of life, what is the point of working for a further 30 years of life, of being in debt, of paying a mortgage, of marrying, of bringing up children? All this effort is pointless if there is no higher purpose to life.

### **Conscience Will / Desire**

If you look at animals, they can communicate, they can eat and drink. They are created for this world only. The only thing they lack is a conscience will, a desire to do something.

An animal eats when it is hungry, and sleeps when it is tired. A human being has been given an extra facet of intelligence. When we eat, we eat the food that we enjoy, we taste the food. Sometimes, we eat when we are not hungry, we laugh, we joke, we have friends, we study we learn, we have hobbies, we create. These are all characteristics that make us different from other animals.

### **Emotions**

We also have emotions which animals do not share. On the positive side, we have emotions such as compassion, sympathy, consideration, loyalty, and friendship. On the negative side, we have jealousy, greed, hatred, enmity, and deceitfulness.

This shows us that man cannot be judged or compared to other creatures on the planet. If he uses his emotions of compassion and friendship than he can be the best of all the creatures, if he lets himself become mean and greedy, selfish and jealous, than he becomes the worst creature on the planet, because even the animals do not have these emotions.

## **Intelligence / Humour**

Mankind has the ability to extrapolate and synthesize thought. This means to start off with a piece of information, and make conclusions, based on other pieces of information. Mankind has the ability to communicate in a social way, to interact and to laugh. Laughing is a very human characteristic, and according to many philosophers, is a fundamental difference between Man and Animal.

The result is that man is unlike the rest of creation. He has something extra that cannot be explained by science, can not be explained by evolution, can not be explained by any theory at all EXCEPT by religion and belief.

**15:28** *Behold! your Lord said to the angels: "I am about to create man, from clay, from mud molded into shape;*

**15:29** *"When I have fashioned him (in due proportion) and breathed into him My spirit, fall down in obeisance unto him."*

**15:30** *So the angels prostrated themselves all of them together:*

Now that we have understood man is unique, the next point to ask is that why is he different?

Allah explains us that man was made for a purpose. It is that purpose which we have to try and discover.

Allah is our creator, He made us from nothing. After having created us, he placed in us a portion of His spirit, His will, the electricity that keeps us ticking. Allah had created the world and the stars, all the fabulous things that you see in space, but He had a plan, His plan was to create the BEST CREATURE, something that would not just obey His command because He who commanded, something that would obey His command with free will. Something that would search for Him until it found Him. This creature was MAN.

**3:59** *This similitude of Jesus before God is as that of Adam: He created him dust, then said to him: "Be", and he was.*

Man was created and taught all the names of the heavens and the earth. Then he was placed on earth to live his life. He was given the tools to find Allah and then it was left to wander, to find the path.

When we are lost in the forest, we use a compass to find something that we cannot see. The compass follows a magnetic field which cannot be sensed with our eyes, ears, touch, taste or smell. Even then we know the field exists, because the compass points to it. Well there is another force, a light which flows through every object, every stone, tree, leaf. That is the Light of Allah, the light that keeps everything existing. Allah wants us to discover this light and to realise how great it is.

The tools we have been given for this search is our soul, our heart. Our soul is receptive to this light of Allah, the same way a compass can guide towards a magnetic field. We have to open our hearts to the world around us, and then follow the path which it takes us through.

Whenever we do something, we get a feeling which is deep down inside us, which tells us whether that action is taking us towards Allah or away.

This feeling is provided by our conscience. If you do something Haraam, then stop for a second and think, you will feel a small tugging feeling that will try and pull you back toward the right path, the more you listen to this the stronger this sensation will become until your thoughts themselves become pure. In the same way, the less you listen to this conscience, the weaker it will get, until a stage comes when you will not even hear it when it is trying to tell you something. That is the day Shaitan will jump up and down with glee, because he will have gained a new follower.

So Allah has set this task, this test, for every human being and to make it easier for us, He gave each of us the ability to pass this test, to reach the end of the journey.

One point about this Universe is that everything has been created in pairs, each has its opposite. There is black and white, strong and weak, good and bad, heaven and hell. Inside of man there are also these pairs. For every good emotion that takes man towards Allah, there is an evil emotion which will take him away. Allah has given man the ability to judge between right and wrong. To make matters easier, to every single group of people Allah sent a Warner, to show the way towards him, so that on the Day of Judgment people could not say, "We did not know, we were unaware". All we have to do is choose which way we want to follow.

**10:47** *To every people (was sent) an Apostle: when their Apostle comes before them), the matter will be judged between them with justice, they will not be wronged.*

### **If the choice is so easy to see, why is this world so unjust?**

There is one main reason why this simple choice between good and evil is made difficult.

Man forgets easily. Man always thinks of the present and leaves the future to sort itself out. If you want to do something Haraam, the pleasure is immediate.

If you want to steal then you receive the goods immediately. If you obtain power, then you can control others at once. If you want to eat Haraam, then the pleasure of eating is there as soon as you swallow the food. If you have a sexual desire, then you can satisfy it as soon as you commit the act. However, when you want to do something good then the rewards are not immediate, they come later.

The same way when you study, the rewards come after you have finished your exams and you are shown the results. When you plant a seed, it will be many years before the tree matures, and you taste the fruit. Well, the reward for the good deeds you perform are not only physical such as the pleasure of the bad deeds. You do not get money for helping someone, nor do you feed your hunger by fasting.

So when a human being has a choice, if he is ignorant and cares nothing for the next life, then he will make the choice that will benefit him immediately.

This is where the whole concept of Akhlaq comes in. Akhlaq is not just good and bad deeds, but learning to understand that good deeds actually help you in the long run, and learning to enjoy helping others, and most importantly knowing that good Akhlaq is a torch that will guide you towards Allah amidst the darkness.

**24:35** *God is the Light of the heavens and the earth.*

**2:257** *God is the Protector of those who have faith: from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into light. Of those who reject faith the patrons are the Evil Ones: from light they will lead them forth into the depths of darkness. They will be companions of the fire, to dwell therein (for ever).*

So we have understood that man is different from other creation, that he has a purpose to his life, and we now know what the purpose is and how to fulfill it.

The next point to understand is: **Why should he follow that purpose?**

When we accept that Man can be the greatest of creation, and can reflect the light of Allah, then we should realise that those who reach such a stage, where their purpose has been fulfilled, will be elevated to such a high level that they will be brought as close to Allah as it is possible to be.

The reward for man, for his effort to find his Creator, to find the one who made him is the closeness of Allah's mercy for eternity.

This reward is paradise or heaven, lasting forever and ever. This is not governed by time, because time is a creation just like the earth, and when this creation ceases, and a new one occurs, then time will also cease to exist, and man will be in a dimension without time, without age.

So if man obeys Allah's commands then he will receive the promised reward, but if he fails, then he has also been promised punishment.

People argue that punishment is unfair and unjust, and that only an uncaring god punishes his creatures. Such people should try to understand the following.

- if a person harms others then it is fair that he is punished
- if there are two people, one who puts in effort to do good, and one who does not, is it fair that both people are rewarded equally, or that both are punished equally?
- if you are warned of a danger, and you do not heed the warning, fully aware of the consequences than it is your own fault that you have to bear the consequences.
- Allah has given the chance for us to repent, if we do so sincerely, but a person who disbelieves and commits acts which hurt others until his dying breath can not expect to be forgiven, especially when he did not even request forgiveness.

So punishment will occur for those who deserve it, but those who try and perfect their Akhlaq will find it a shield from the fire of hell.

**2:24** *But if you cannot, and of a surety you cannot, then fear the fire whose fuel is Men and Stones, which is prepared for those who reject Faith.*

## TOPIC 2: GUNAH E KABIRA (THE MAJOR SINS)

- 4:111** *And if anyone earns sin, he earns it against his own soul: for God is full of knowledge and wisdom.*
- 4:112** *But if anyone earns a fault or a sin and throws it on to one that is innocent, He carries (on himself) (both) a falsehood and a flagrant sin.*
- 6:120** *Shun all sin, open or secret: those who earn sin, will get due recompense for their "earnings."*
- 11:116** *Why were there not, among the generations before you, persons possessed of balanced good sense, prohibiting (men) from mischief in the earth--except a few among them whom We saved (from harm)? But the wrongdoers pursued the enjoyment of the good things of life which were given them, and persisted in sin.*
- 34:28** *We have not sent you but as a universal (Messenger) to men, giving them glad tidings, and warning them (against sin), but most men understand not.*
- 83:29** *Those in sin used to laugh at those who believed,*
- 83:30** *And whenever they passed by them, used to wink at each other (in mockery);*
- 83:31** *And when they returned to their own people, they would return jesting;*
- 83:32** *And whenever they saw them, they would say, "Behold! these are the people truly astray!"*
- 83:33** *But they had not been sent as Keepers over them!*
- 83:34** *But on this Day the Believers will laugh at the Unbelievers.*
- 83:35** *On Thrones (of Dignity) They will command (a sight) (of all things).*
- 83:36** *Will not the Unbelievers have been paid back for what they did?*

Allah has given us Islam as a way of life. This way of life has rules which are to be obeyed. To live effectively, there are always rules which are to be followed so that no-one breaks or infringes the rights of others.

The question then arises, why can't we make our own rules. Why do we have to follow what someone else (i.e. Allah) says ?

This question can be answered with the aid of the following examples, firstly, if you were organising a party, or an occasion for a group of youngsters, would you tell them to organise, or would you prepare beforehand so that things occur smoothly. The answer to that is quite obvious.

Secondly, if you had a small child who was by the beach, he wants to go into the water, but you can see the red flag is up indicating that the water is unsafe. Would you allow him to enter the water?

Lastly, if you were an architect or an engineer, and designed a suspension bridge, crossing a river. If the wind starts to blow, and you feel the bridge is not safe for normal traffic flow, and you decided to shut the bridge, who should the officials listen to, you as the creator of the bridge, or the users, who just want to get across?

From this, we can understand, that for a society to function effectively, the rules it should follow should be from "someone" who is aware of how the individuals of that society behave. Who else knows the weakness and behaviour of a human being more than its Creator, He Who says that "*I am closer to you than your Jugular vein*"

**50:16:** *It was We who created man and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein.*

Also, we should realise that Islamic Laws are there to protect oneself from dangerous or harmful effects, since every rule in Islam is to help you overcome the causes of such harm. The harm doesn't have to be to you only, it could also be to those around you.

If we deliberately reject the rules of Islam, we commit a sin, and we actually are harming ourselves in one way or another.

We should avoid committing forbidden acts, and worship Allah.

This can be done for a number of reasons explained by the following words of the Prophet (S)

*"There are people who worship Allah for the sake of (fulfilling their) desires and that is the worship of business people. And verily there are those who worship Allah out of fear of Him, this is the worship of slaves. But there are those who worship out of thanks giving to Him, this being the worship of free minded people and is the best of worship"*

**Below is a list of the prohibited acts (Gunahe Kabira) in Islam:**

1. Polytheistic belief
2. To lose hope of receiving any mercy from Allah
3. To completely disregard God's punishment
4. To disrespect one's parents
5. To commit murder, adultery and fornication
6. To accuse a chaste woman of unchastity (fornication or adultery)
7. To take the property of orphans by force
8. To run away from the armed forces
9. To take illegal interest in trade
10. To have sexual relations beyond the limit of marriage, sexual enjoyment through homo-sexuality, masturbation or lesbianism
11. To use magic
12. To swear falsely by the names of Allah (God) or to use his names in vain
13. To ignore the payment of religious dues (Zakat, Khums)
14. To testify falsely against others
15. To drink intoxicating liquors
16. To give up daily prayers or any other religious obligations
17. To break one's promise

18. To disregard one's family (rejecting them , avoiding them, not showing enough love and affection towards them or not doing them the favours that one is supposed to do)
19. To become a resident of a place where one may lose his religion
20. To Steal
21. To ascribe false statement to Allah or to any of his apostles
22. To Lie
23. To deny or hide Allah's revelations or miracles
24. To eat the flesh of dead animals, blood, pork or an animal that is slaughtered without being consecrated with the name of Allah, or is not slaughtered according to the prescribed rules.
25. To Gamble
26. To make ones living from filthy and un-Islamic ways such as money obtained from the selling of wines or any other intoxicating liquors, the money from illegal interest in trade, accepting or giving money in bribery, receiving salary for witchcraft or magic, receiving money from an unjust government, the wages for singing, the sale of prohibited things as a means to earn one's living such as the instruments of games as chess, backgammon or other instruments used for gambling, making statues of animals or human beings.
27. To give less than due measure in business transactions
28. Not to pay one's debts when one has the means and the payment is due
29. To display haughtiness and pride.
30. To be a spend-thrift (Extravagant, spend lavishly)
31. To act proudly and boastfully.
32. To ignore a pilgrimage or abandoning it when it is due.
33. To fight a divine leader
34. To get involved in an un-Islamic business such as singing for fun, playing guitar, dancing just for enjoyment and other useless acts.
35. To persist in minor sins
36. To back-bite ( to talk bad behind other's back about things which they dislike)
37. To accuse someone of fault or a defect
38. To abuse or hurt a believer
39. To be a slanderer, causing discord, schism among people
40. To become a pimp
41. To defraud the believers
42. To belittle one's sins
43. To be a hypocrite
44. To use picture, statues to represent Allah

### TOPIC 3: HAPPY FAMILY LIFE

Charity begins at home. The most important part of charity is that time of yours which you give in aid of others. So before you rush off to make the world a better place, stop, think, and spend a bit more time at home.

The family is the unit, the building block of any society. If you have a pile of bricks on top of each other, and you damage the bottom one, the whole wall will come tumbling down.

Similarly, if you start damaging the families in a society, it will not be long before the society begins to disintegrate around you. This is what we are witnessing in the modern era of the 21st century.

This topic can be discussed from so many angles, but I think what is necessary in today's society is simply understanding the natural feelings that should be present to make the family strong and secure so that those within it will be safe from the destructive influences outside. Friends have often said, that the west is too corrupt, our children have no chance being brought up in such a permissive, devalued, uncaring world. The argument against is that if a family can teach values and morals to its children, and show them how to recognise virtues and how to shun evil, then no evil however great can overcome them. That is why Islam has emphasised family unity and careful upbringing of the children.

Before we discuss the way to a happy family life, let us just mention some of the benefits of a family.

- It is a stable environment for the upbringing of a child.
- It teaches a child how to behave how to recognise the difference between right and wrong in the first years of its life.
- It provides companionship for husband and wife, so that they can rely on each other and trust in each other.
- All members of the family can trust each other and share the same goals.

These are just some of the benefits of being in a family.

A sensible and well-balanced family system is the very foundation of a happy life.

#### **The question is how do we make a family happy?**

It all comes down to **CONSIDERATION**. This word is so easy to say, but means so much. With consideration and respect, then almost all those things which could cause unhappiness are avoided.

Think for a moment. In your family, the last time you were unhappy was it not because you felt that no one is trying to understand your feelings, or that you wished people would look at things from your point of view. There you are then!

If you think of the needs of others, brothers, sisters and parents, then the chances are that you will never be in their "bad books".

Of course in any relationship there must be a two-way flow. Things will not work if one party does all the giving, and the other does all the taking.

It is also important to be able to talk. A large percentage of family problems occur because people feel bad, and they hold it within. Then it builds up and then one day "**B A N G ! !**". It all comes out, and there goes the family. Anger and frustration all spilled out breaks a bond that took years to build. Therefore you must be able to talk with your parents and your brothers and sisters about any problems.

Only by identifying these problems and removing them can you move forward.

It is not wealth which makes a family happy. Nor is it fame or fortune, or clothes or cars..... It is love.

The love that the family shares should be the glue that holds it together.

The happy family is one where each brother/sister knows that the rest of the family is behind them and is there to help whenever the need arises.

### **WARNING !**

Do not abuse the help. One of the best ways to turn any relationship sour, is to abuse the privileges. There is nothing worst then making a mess, and expecting others to pick up the pieces. Your family is there to be used by you, not **ABUSED**.

The final words in this topic, on which books after books have been written, are the words of Prophet Isa (A):

If you want to GUARANTEE a happy family life as well as a healthy friendship,

***"Treat others the way you yourself would like to be treated"***

## TOPIC 4: ISLAMIC MANNERS

There are certain Islamic manners which are taught, which are often found trivial. These manners might be something that people think should be taught to children only, but it is important that they are reinforced at a more mature age so they can become part of the character.

Manners are not something that are worn on the surface, and then taken off when not required, like a hat or shoes. Manners are something that should be part of your nature, to be present at all times. It is this attitude which is becoming rarer, especially in today's society. The person who has manners and decency is a species on the verge of extinction.

### **Greeting (Salaam) and Shaking the hand (musafeha)**

When one Muslim meets another, then to offer greeting is emphasised, and to return a greeting is wajib. An Islamic greeting is not "Hi" or "All right Mate". Salamun Alaykum is sincere and is meant as a wish that only the Peace of Allah should be on the other. The one who offers salaam is rewarded by Allah much more than the one who answers. Salaam makes us all equal, it is recommended that one who is higher gives salaam to one below, i.e. a man on a horse (or the modern day equivalent) should offer salaam to one who is walking, to combat his own pride.

*The Muslim is the brother of another Muslim, when he meets him (Muslim) he greets him with peace and he returns him (greeting) that which is better and he does not refuse to give the necessities of life.*

### **Eating**

This habit is like a mirror. You can see a person's manners reflected in the way that they eat. How many people look polite and knowledgeable, pious and respectable, but give them a plate of food, and you have created a frankenstein. They eat as if there was no tomorrow.

There are two ways to defeat or make a man your slave. One through exploiting his desires, and the other through his appetite.

Begin your meal by remembering Allah. Eat when you are hungry, and not just for the sake of it. Do not overeat. When a guest comes to the house, you should begin eating first so that he may feel at home. You should eat in such a way as to respect food, not chewing with your mouth open, spilling it all over the table or floor. Just remember, there are people who do not know when their next meal will be, let alone what it will be; no one is asking you to go hungry, but don't waste or abuse food.

### **Drinking**

Water is the nectar of life. Every living creature depends on it. When you drink water, do not gulp, but sip it. It is recommended to say "Oh Allah, send your blessings on Imam Husain (A), his family and his companions, and curse on those who refused him water." when drinking water.

## **Sleeping**

When you sleep, you should do so on your right side preferably, or your back, or your left side. You should never sleep on your stomach. This is bad for your health.

It is sunnat to perform wudhu before going to sleep, as each breath you take will be counted as prayer. Recite Qur'an and du'a for a few minutes, who knows this may be our last chance to thank Allah.

## **Dressing**

We all know that to dress indecently is Haraam. This has been explained in previous notes. However very few people realise the importance of dressing in their own home, and with their own family. One should not walk around scantily clothed at any time, even if you live by yourself.

Your body is precious and private. It has been lent to you from Allah is yours to look after. You should not abuse it, and you should not use it as a show for others.

You see, if something is expensive and important, it will be guarded and kept away so that people don't use it and damage it, but if something is cheap, it will be left there for everybody to see and use, and no one will care about it. What is more precious than your body, to keep it well guard its respect you should make sure that you dress it well so that it is not expose more than necessary.

When you dress, you should make sure that the clothes you wear are not too tight so that the shape of your body is seen. Also you should be careful not to wear certain clothes to certain places. You would not wear jeans if you were invited to see the Queen, so why wear jeans when you go to the mosque, to be closer to Allah? You can wear jeans at home or when you go out, but you should try and avoid them in places like the mosque.

Even at home, you should make sure that you are dressed properly. It is bad Akhlaq to walk around the home without a shirt, or to walk around wearing only your underwear or boxer shorts. It may sound funny, but many people do this. There is nothing Haraam in wearing boxer shorts by themselves or walking around in underwear in the house, but it is very poor Akhlaq, and not the character befitting to a Muslim.

If you start to treat your own body as cheap, then don't complain when others also treat you as if you were cheap and worthless.

## **Talking / Conduct in Public**

When you talk, you should not shout or speak so much that others cannot get a word in edgeways. More importantly, even if you talk with a soft voice and polite smile, you guard against backbiting or lying. Your actions in public are what people will judge you by. If you do not want any respect, and want people to think that you are still a child, that carry on shouting, but for those who want to maintain dignity and want people to respect them, then speak less and listen more.

*"Guard your words as you would your gold"* said Imam Ali (A).

## TOPIC 5: BATHROOM MANNERS

### *There is no shame in religion.*

When it comes to what a Muslim should know and practise, in public or in private, Islam does not hide behind flowery language or frills. Islam is the religion meant for all human beings and therefore talks directly to them.

People may ask, what sort of religion is it that has rules on going to the bathroom?

The reason why Islam explains topics which people often consider personal, is because Islam is a complete religion, and as such offers complete guidance on all aspects of life.

If Islam was not to explain these points, no one else would and so there would be **NO STANDARD** for people to act by.

Islam **SETS THE STANDARD** for the most complete codes of personal hygiene and highest moral standards anywhere in the world.

In today's society we have the convenience of modern toilets, but these facilities will not be available everywhere you go, i.e. Haj, countryside, woods etc..

In these situations (and all others), certain actions should be performed. Not all acts have been mentioned since the rules should be dealt with more fully in fiqh lessons.

The major reason why this topic is being discussed in this class, is that although all of you have been taught the concept of Taharat in younger classes, it is vital that this is emphasised since you will all be Baligh within the next 1-1½ years, and without Taharat prayers are not valid.

In the majority of the places you visit, school, sports clubs, service stations, and other public areas you will be faced with toilets which do not contain water.

The most common facilities available will be those which are against Islamic codes such as "standing urinals" for boys. Since you are now responsible for your Ibadat, it cannot be emphasised strong enough that you **MUST** understand how Islam expects you to maintain your hygiene.

- The area where you choose to relieve yourself should be not belong to someone else, unless you have their permission. (wajib)
- If there is a defined place, like a bathroom, you should enter with the left, and leave with the right foot. This has the effect that you are remembering rules and therefore remembering Allah, and are not entering the bathroom absent minded. This means that you will be more conscience about the other acts you are to perform. (sunnat)
- It is sunnat to cover the head while in the toilet. This can be traced back to areas where hygiene is not very good, and covering the hair prevents infection from "little nasties". (sunnat)

- You must not sit in a position where you are facing Qiblah or where your back is to Qiblah. This is respect for the Sajdah which we perform in the direction of Qiblah. (wajib)
- It is Makruh to urinate in a standing position. This also applies to those places where there are special facilities to urinate while standing, i.e. school toilets etc..
- It is Makruh to hold yourself from going to the toilet when the urge arises, as this is unhealthy.
- It is sunnat to visit the toilet before prayers, any sexual relations and before going to bed.
- It is Makruh to talk while in the toilet or to extend the "visit" for longer than is necessary, i.e. listening to the radio or reading the newspaper etc..
- It is also Makruh (in open areas) to sit where there is a strong wind, or where the wastage will be close to people (i.e. roads, side-walks, by the entrance of a house, by water (especially still water) or under a tree).
- To wash the private parts twice (wajib) three times (emphasised). This must be done otherwise Namaaz will not be acceptable since you will be in a state of Najasat.

**What do you do if you are in a public toilet where there are no facilities for washing yourself?**

If possible, you should try and carry a collapsible cup which you can fill with water and use to clean yourself.

If you do not have a cup, then you can use tissue to dry yourself. This will protect your clothes from becoming Najis, since your private parts are dry. You can then go somewhere else to wash yourself with water to make yourself Pak, since you cannot pray until you are Pak.

## TOPIC 6: MANNERS OF TRAVELLING

When a person travels, he leaves the comforts of his own home, often to go and meet other people for either business or pleasure.

One important thing to realise is that, once you leave familiar surroundings you become a stranger, and in a sense you are free to do what you want. There is no pressure from family or friends, because here, no one knows you, and no one can report back on your activities.

This means that your nafs will make suggestions to you, to go to places that you would not do in your own area, for fear that others may see you.

It is consequently very important that when you leave your house, you should begin your journey with the name of Allah. You should recite Bismillah, ayatul Kursi and a few short du'as. In this way, you are asking Allah to protect you FROM YOURSELF as well as from other dangers.

When Prophet Nuh (A) left for the greatest journey of his life, with all the animals on his ark, Allah told him

**11:41:** *So he said: "Embark upon the Ark, in the name of God, whether it move or be at rest!"*

When you remember Allah, He will always remember you and watch over you. One way of remembering Allah is to take a few coins and put them in a box for sadqa (the poor).

**2:152:** *Then you do remember Me; I will remember you.*

Many journeys are undertaken for pleasure. If we really want to make Allah a part of our lives, then what better time to remember and praise Him when we are happy, and laughing?

Journeys are often very enjoyable, but they can also be very dangerous. Its a wide, wide world, and no one can predict what can happen. It is recommended that when a large family travels to a destination, they should not all go together. They should try to split up among a number of groups so that if anything happens to one group, at least others are still safe.

People tend to forget Allah when going on journeys. Once a man came to Imam (A) and asked him to do Istikhara as to whether he should go with a trading caravan. The Istikhara came out adverse, and Imam (A) advised against travelling. The man went anyway. He came back after the caravan returned and told Imam (A) that the journey had been the most successful he had ever been on, so the Istikhara was wrong. Imam (A) replied, do you remember that on this particular night you slept late, and in the morning you missed your Fajr prayers, it was because of this that the Istikhara came out bad.

This shows that no matter how important our journey, we must still perform our wajibaat.

When you travel through the world, try and see Allah's handiwork. We are told in Qur'an so often that we should try and understand how Mighty and Supreme Allah is by looking at the world around us, and the marvels which it holds. So do not be one track minded, open your eyes to appreciate the creation all around you and you will get even closer to Allah.

#### **Other recommended du'as/suwer to be recited are:**

- reciting Ayatul Kursi before leaving
- Sura al Ikhlas, Naas, Kaafiroon and Falaq
- Suratul Qadr
- Sura-e-Ale Imran

#### **Imam Ja'far-asSadiq (A):**

"I begin in the name of Allah, Allah is enough for me and on Him I rely. Oh Allah, I pray Thee for the welfare of all my affairs and seek Thy shelter from the evils from in this world and the torments of the Day of Judgement." **(Allah will accomplish all his worldly and spiritual tasks of salvation).**

#### **Therefore, before leaving for a journey, remember:**

- create a will
- settle debts
- seek forgiveness from friends and relatives
- prepare kafan (this is a REALISTIC, not PESSIMISTIC, act)
- sadaqa
- thank Allah because the journey would not be possible without His help.

When leaving, Imam Musa-ibn-Ja'far (A) has said to stand facing the house and recite Suratul Hamd followed by:

**"Oh Allah keep me and all the things with me safe and sound and let them reach the destination safely."**

The Holy Prophet (S) recommends to pray for your family:

**"Oh Allah" I leave untoThy care my life, my wife and children, my merchandise,my generation my world here and hereafter, deposits under my custody and place my end of life in Thy hands."**

#### **Staying as a guest**

Remember that we represent our families and Islam so must have good Akhlaq, do not impose on those you are staying with and help the family you are staying with as much as possible.

The Holy Prophet (S) advised Imam Ali (A) to recite the following when arriving at a new place in order to keep safe from its mischief and avail of all the benefits of the place:

**"Oh Allah! make my arrival over here rewarding, for Thou art the best host and caretaker."**

On arrival to your destination, thank Allah before any other action. It was through His will and guidance that no calamities befell you, so show Him that you appreciate this.

If you stay with hosts, remember that you are a guest. Do not impose yourself on them and try and be as helpful as possible without disruption. You are representing your family and so have to maintain your self-respect.

If you are going on a fairly long journey where there is uncertainty of your return, it is important that you make a few provisions before you leave.

You should write a will, and ensure that all your debts have been paid. Make sure you do not owe people money and that you have returned everything that is not yours. It is also recommended that on a journey you should carry your own burial shroud (kafan). This is not morbid or pessimistic, but realistic. Should anything happen, you want to be ready to meet Allah with all your "accounts in order".

On return from any journey, again thank Allah. This thanking may seem very little or unnecessary but you do not realise how many accidents are avoided just by the words Bismillah and Alhamdulillah. When you recite these words, you are calling upon Allah to protect you, and Allah never forsakes those who have faith in Him.

**17:110:** *Say: "Call upon God, or call upon Rahman: by whatever name you call upon Him, (it is well): for to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names.*

## TOPIC 7: CONCEPT OF THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

The Day of Judgement (*Yawmul Qiyamat*) is one of the pillars of the Islamic faith. In fact, if a person does not believe in the day of Judgement, then the whole concept of religion become nothing.

It is also referred to as the day of resurrection. On this day, Allah will raise every human being from his grave, and they will all be brought forth to answer for their actions.

This is the day for which we are waiting. It is the day that our examination results are announced. The day when we find out whether we have passed the test of this life, or have failed. Either we wait in fear or with hope for our success.

After all this, many people do not believe in it! It is a common human habit not to believe in something until you see it; but if we wait until we see the day of Judgement then it will be too late to do anything about it.

"The day of Judgement has been promised, but we do not care, why should we? It is far away, we are still young, and we have a long way to go. When I get old, then I will start worrying."

This is by far the most common attitude among people. They think that it won't happen to them, but if it does.....

It is a terrible and frightening day. For those who do not care to obey Allah, there is plenty to be afraid of.

We are taught that Allah is Merciful, that we should not fear Him out of dread or terror, but on that day if we have not tried to lead a meaningful life then we should be scared.

If we cannot raise enough self-motivation to live Islam, then think of that day, and think of the consequences.

### ***Portions of Al-Infitar 'The Cleaving Asunder'***

*In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.  
When the Sky is cleft asunder;  
When the Stars are scattered;  
When the Oceans are suffered to burst forth;  
And when the Graves are turned upside down--  
(Then) shall each soul know what it has sent forward and (what it has) kept back.  
O man! what has seduced you from your Lord Most Beneficent?- Him Who  
created you. Fashioned you in due proportion, and gave you a just bias;  
As for the Righteous, they will be in Bliss;  
And the Wicked --they will be in the Fire,  
Which they will enter on the Day of Judgement.  
And they will not be Able to keep away therefrom.  
And what will explain to you what the Day of Judgement is?  
Again, what will explain to you what the Day of Judgement is?  
(It will be) the Day when no soul shall have power (to do) anything for another:  
for the Command, that Day, will be (wholly) with God.*

Whenever we do something, we should ask ourselves whether it is right or wrong. If we are tempted to commit the action, knowing that it is wrong, just remember the wrath and chaos of the day of Judgement. We do not have to become *Ma'sum* (sinless), we do not have to give up school or sports or university or fun. All we have to do is be aware of our actions, and use them to do something positive for others.

This world is temporary and elusive. It does not mean that you should not enjoy it, but you should be careful that it does not deceive you. In Qunut, we ask Allah to help us in **this world and the hereafter**. The *Akhira* (next life) is determined by our actions here. We are in the world for only a short time, but we have been created to live forever. Ask yourself, where do you want to live, in heaven or hell for the rest of eternity?

The Prophet (S) said *"You have not been created to perish but to remain for ever; only you transfer from one home to another and the souls are strangers on earth and are in the bodies like prisoners."*

Imam Husain (A) said on the day of Ashura: *"Patience O children of noble souls, because death for us is nothing but a bridge which takes you from difficulties and troubles to the vast Paradise and everlasting bliss."*

Imams (A) were human beings. They could have committed sins **if they wanted to**. It was not that they were physically unable to do wrong, but they were AWARE of all the consequences of committing sins. Such consequences are the harm to yourself, the displeasure of Allah and His wrath. It was this knowledge that protected them from breaking Allah's rules.

If we were to have a picture of hell in front of our eyes all the time, then we would definitely think twice before every action we perform.

The day of Judgement is not a joke, do not treat it like one because the laugh will soon fall from your face....Think about it!

## TOPIC 8: INDECENT DRESSING

Indecent is defined as offending against recognised standards of decency (respectability).

Indecent dressing means to have a form of dress which is disrespectful, i.e. which reveals the shape of the body in such a way as to attract attention from others.

It doesn't matter whether the garment is loose, or tight, see-through or dark, or any other combination. If the garment reveals part of or all of the shape of the body, than, according to Islamic standards, it is classified as indecent.

If someone wears clothes which are revealing, it becomes necessary for those who are present to cast down their gaze, so they should not look directly at the person. (Surah 24 ayat 30-31)

*"Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: and God is well acquainted with all that they do.*

*And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over themselves and not display their beauty except to their husbands..."*

Islam helps to secure a females modesty by preserving her beauty with Hijab. This way when a person talks with or looks at a lady, **he sees her ideas and thoughts** rather than just her attractiveness.

A male should not wear tight or revealing clothing either, and should wear a beard so that he is easily distinguished from a female, so that they do not begin to dress like ladies and wear their clothes.

### WHY SHOULD PEOPLE CARE ABOUT THE WAY THAT THEY DRESS?

People wear clothes for many reasons besides just covering themselves. Some reasons are as follows :

- a) covering themselves
- b) for comfort
- c) protection against cold, wind, rain etc..
- d) to look and feel good

All of these reasons and many more are acceptable, even to look good, as long as it is not intended to show off to others.

However some people wear clothes on purpose which are to attract the attention of others. This is wrong, since this is trying to show off to others.

*"If a person wear dresses and prides himself over others by means thereof, a flame of hell overtakes him, and he will swing in it till the day of Judgement."*

This means that he will be punished partly in this life (i.e. part of hell in this life). The punishment can be no friends, or no happiness, no satisfaction ...

When we wear clothes, other people see them. If we dress in ANYWAY such that other people can become aroused or affected, then those clothes are indecent.

## **WHAT IS WRONG WITH EXPOSING YOUR BODY, EVERYBODY DOES IT?**

Islam has the highest standard of morals existing in any society on the face of the earth.

Islam tries to make morals part of the individual, so that s/he will act correctly in any circumstance.

It comes down to this. By dressing in such a way that you expose your body, you are inviting people to look at you. By looking at you they can see something that can arouse their desire. This desire can influence their thoughts and make them think about these pleasures. If every one, or even a large proportion of society were to be influenced by these thoughts (influenced by desire) society would break up with people going out with each other, loose and casual relationships, marriages breaking and generally society becoming permissive.

Apart from that, women would be looked at as just objects of desire once again, rather than constructive members of society. A further reason, is that by exposing yourself, you are lowering your dignity. How can a person have so little self-respect so as to dress up just for other people to look at? It is like selling your self in a shop window.

If desire is stopped from being fuelled by exposure, then people will have more respect. There will be less chance of crimes of passion (rape, adultery ...etc.) being committed, and the streets in general will be a safer place to be.

No one is refusing us to wear good or fashionable clothes. Qur'an itself says in Surah 7 ayat 31/2

*"O children of Adam! wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: but waste not by excess, for God loves not the wasters.  
Say: Who has forbidden the beautiful (gifts) of God, which He has produced for his servants, and the things, clean and pure, (which He has provided) for sustenance?"*

## TOPIC 9: THE VALUE OF QUR'AN

When we are told about Qur'an and du'as, we think that this is just worship and prayers, something that we only perform on Thursday nights and on nights of amaal.

It is this narrow attitude which leads us to have less faith since we do not see the benefit connected with such habits.

When we recite Qur'an and du'a, it is not Allah that benefits. With Qur'an, we are told over and over to read it and to memorise its pages, but we just leave it on the top shelf, and polish it now and again.

Qur'an is a Miracle, it is powerful. It is the spoken word of Allah. Can you imagine, the God that we cannot see, hear or feel, the God who created the whole universe, who has unlimited power. The God that spoke to Prophet Musa (A) is now speaking to us. This God, has given to us a book which contains His actual words! Can you not imagine the power such a book?

*2:185 » Ramadhan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur'an, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgement (between right and wrong).*

*27:1 » Ta Sin. These are verses of the Qur'an--a Book that makes (things) clear;*

This explains to us that it was during the blessed month of Ramadhan that Allah revealed the Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad (S), and that the purpose of the revelation was to provide signs to guide mankind between right and wrong. It is a book which makes things clear for us.

*41:44 » Had We sent this as a Qur'an (in a language) other than Arabic, they would have said: "Why are not its verses explained in detail? What! (a Book) not in Arabic and (a Messenger) an Arab?" Say: "It is a guide and a healing to those who believe; and for those who believe not, there is a deafness in their ears, and it is blindness in their (eyes); they are (as it were) being called from a place far distant!"*

This verse explains why the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic. Notice that to those who believe Qur'an is not only a guide, but a healing. It heals the hearts, makes stronger the faith, and brings a person close to Allah. This heals the person from any sorrow or distress. While those who choose to ignore its message are described as narrow minded, blind to the truth.

We are told to read the Qur'an often, but we do not. This Qur'an is so unique, that only Allah could have created it. It is such a miracle of language, that Allah challenges anyone else to try and reproduce even a fraction of it.

**10:37** » *This Qur'an is not such as can be produced by other than God; on the contrary it is a confirmation of (revelations) that went before it, and a fuller explanation of the Book--wherein there is no doubt--from the Lord of the Worlds.*

**17:88** » *Say: "If the whole of mankind and Jinns were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they backed up each other with help and support.*

Finally, look at the power of the Qur'an. If we have faith in Allah and in Qur'an. There is nothing we cannot achieve.

**59:21** » *Had We sent down this Qur'an on a mountain verily, you would have seen it humble itself and cleave asunder for fear of God, such are the similitude's which We propound to men, that they may reflect.*

**13:31** » *If there were a Qur'an with which mountains were moved, or the earth were cloven asunder, or the dead were made to speak, (this would be the one!) But, truly, the Command is with God in things!*

This shows that if we ask sincerely, and recite Qur'an with faith, then no prayer of ours will be unanswered. No matter how great the problem, the reading of Qur'an and faith in Allah will protect us and help us. It is this book that will shield us on the day of judgement.

We have also been told to recite portions of the Qur'an and memorise them. If we do this our own memory will improve. If you spend time to memorise Ayatul Kursi (Surah 2, ayat 255 to 258), and recite it often, Allah will protect us and will improve our memory to such an extent, that people will think that we are magicians.

Allah is the source of ALL knowledge. If we read His word, we will also benefit by learning from Him, and understanding more.

**6:59** » *With Him are the keys of the Unseen, the treasures that none knows but He. He knows whatever there is on the earth and in the sea. Not a leaf does fall but with His knowledge: there is not a grain in the darkness (or depths) of the earth, nor anything fresh or dry (green or withered), but is (inscribed) in a Record Clear (to those who can read).*

The message to you at the end of this note is "*Read Qur'an, do not play with it*". Do not just respect it, but read it, understand it, and memorise it. This will help you more than you can ever imagine, in both this world, and the next. Consider, wisdom, power, knowledge, memory and a guard all at our fingertips, and we don't even bother to use it!

**17:89** » *And We have explained to man, in this Qur'an, every kind of similitude: yet the greater part of men refuse (to receive it) except with ingratitude!*

## TOPIC 10 & 11: THE IMPORTANCE OF DU'A

Du'a is a prayer, a supplication. A frequently repeated notion is that Du'as are only for mullahs, or for the old people who now want thawaab or have nothing better to do. This is limited thinking, and is at the very least untrue.

Du'a is when you ask Allah for something. If we realise the Allah created us, and that we are His creatures, then we have a right to ask him for our needs. Allah wants to give us so many things, He wants to help us, and to make us benefit; but He also wants us to realise that He is there, so we must ask from Him.

You do not have to wait until you need something before you ask. You should make a habit of talking with Allah every single day. Thanking him for what you have, asking his protection against performance of wrong, asking for help to make the day successful and happy.

If you do this you will notice something. You will notice that you feel good inside, that things are going well at school or work. That everything is looking suddenly brighter. You will also find yourself thinking of Allah more, and thanking Him for the favours He has given you. The more you thank Him, the more He gives you.

**17:110** » Say: "Call upon God, or call upon Rahman: by whatever name you call upon Him, (it is well): for to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names."

This shows that Allah wants us to call Him, to ask Him when we are in need. You should go to Allah first, since He created you, He should also help you when you require it. If you remember Allah, then He will also remember you.

**2:152** » Then you do remember Me; I will remember you.

In Du'a e Kumail, we ask Allah, and we are told that Allah has promised to answer us.

*For You have decreed Your worship for your creatures, You commanded them to pray to You and You have assured them that they would be answered.*

Imam Ali-Zainul Abedeen (A) has given us a collection of du'as known as Sahifa e Kamila. This collection contains many du'as for all occasions which is one of the treasures left behind by the Ahlul bayt (A). He has also given us short du'as to be recited on each day of the week.

These du'as will help and guide you. There is a guarantee of success to anyone who makes a habit of reciting these regularly, every morning after fajr, or before going to school or work. They are reproduced below.

### **What language should we recite du'a in?**

Reciting a du'a is relatively easy-it is the SINCERITY with which a du'a is recited which is the hardest thing to focus on-when you recite a du'a, your heart should speak at the same time. So do not do it ritually-do it with meaning. If you do not have time to recite a du'a in Arabic and English then recite a small portion of it, in Arabic and English, each day/ week.

### **So why are some du'as not answered?**

Many people often wonder that if Allah tells us to seek Help from Him as much as possible and the Ma'soomeen have left many examples of how Merciful Allah is, then why are some du'as not granted?

We have to remember that Allah is All-Knowing and knows far more about what is good for us than we could ever hope to ourselves. It is important not to be disappointed and lose faith or be angry. Allah wants to give us the most suitable of rewards. We may, unknowingly, ask for things that will not benefit us. If we are patient and faithful, Allah will open many more doors for us and reward is many more, much better, ways.

The following poem conveys these important points and emphasises how we should look to the teachings, manners, beliefs and practices of the Ahlul Bayt. They are our role models in all spheres of life, even with regard to how and why we should do du'as!

Worship, what is it? What does it mean?  
Is it, that can purify and clean...?

Our weak bodies and our yearning souls  
Something to make us hopeful for our goals?

A kind of attraction to nature and its Master  
A feeling which makes the heart beat faster

Do not pray, recite and yell!  
Only for the fear of hell!

For the greed of heaven, don't obey!  
For these selfish reasons do not pray!

Yet not all can follow Ali's way  
From the depths of their heart not all can say

"Only for my love do I worship God"  
For some this reason of worship is odd

Why would a strong powerful man weep?  
And pray all night without any sleep?

Why would he feel so weak before his Lord?  
When he fights like a warrior with his sword?

Why does he cry and weep all night,  
and beg God to show him light?

Ali worshipped in his own unique fashion  
His worship was full of love and compassion

He cries all night and begs for God's love  
Who else is powerful, greater...above?

He begs mercy for his sins  
From the God of men and Jinns

He says, "Forgive the mistakes I have made!"  
Oh bountiful One, I beg for aid!

Guide me, forgive me, have mercy on me  
Oh you who controls land, air and sea

Accept my prayer and forgive my evil deed  
Save a servant who is desperately in need

Lord! Free me from this worldly affair  
Free me from sorrow, pain and despair

Oh my Lord! Calm the struggles of my heart  
In your vast kingdom let me be a part

Lord, the reasons for your orders I don't know  
Your plans are a secret to your friends and foe

Your kingdom is so great, your love so fast  
Owner of the two worlds, forgive my past

You are my love, my only hope  
Without your help, how could I cope?

Oh master, let my tongue talk of thee,  
and of evil let my heart be free

You the friend of the sincere hearts  
Teacher of names, knowledge and arts

You the ultimate goal of the believer  
Do you hear the cries of a self deceiver?

You have promised to listen to our cries  
To hear the poor, the hungry and the wise

Those who bear your name and power they feel  
Your sacred name becomes a cure and a heal

Your name brings remedy and affection  
You are the symbol of perfection

Peace unto any being who seeks you  
The one who's intention and love is true.

**ALEH MARVASTI**  
**02-02-95**

## **SUNDAY**

*With the name of Allah, besides whose mercy, I hope for nothing; I fear nothing except His justice and trust nothing but His word, and do not cling to anything but His rope.*

*To You do I beg for shelter, O Lord of forgiveness and acceptance, from tyranny and oppression, from the changes of time and succession of grief, and from a life ended without preparation.*

*And to You do I beg for guidance in which there can be reformation and improvement.*

*And to You alone do I pray for help in granting me success and satisfaction.*

*And I seek Your protection O Lord, from the suggestions of Shaytan, and with Your power I guard myself from the tyranny of kings.*

*Therefore accept whatever be of my prayers and fasts and let my morrow and thereafter be better than my present hour and day and make me respected amongst my kindred and community;*

*And guard me in my waking and my sleep; for You are Allah the best preserver, and You are the most Merciful.*

*O Lord, in this my day and on Sundays to follow I clear myself in Your presence of ascribing partners to You and of disloyalty and pray to You sincerely to obtain Your answer and am obedient to You hoping for Your reward.*

*Therefore, bless Muhammad, the best of Your servants, the preacher of Your truth; and honour me with Your dignity which cannot be diminished and watch me with Your eye which does not sleep; and finish my affair so as to make me independent of others and rely on You alone and terminate my life in forgiveness. Verily, You are the Forgiving, Merciful.*

## **MONDAY**

*Praise be to Allah who called none to witness when He created the heavens and the earth, and took no assistant when He created the spirits.*

*Never had He any partner in His Godhead nor was He ever helped in His Oneness.*

*Tongues are unable to praise Him to the fullest extent, reason incapable of knowing His essence, the mighty humble themselves before His Majesty their faces bent downward on account of His dread and all the great submit to His Glory.*

*Therefore, to You belongs all praise in increasing succession and unbroken continuance.*

*And may His favour be on His messenger eternally and peace perpetually, forever.*

*O Lord, let the first part of this my day consist in amendment the middle of it in prosperity and the last of it in success.*

*And through You I seek refuge from a day which begins in fear, the middle of which causes distress and which ends in pain.*

*O Lord, verily I ask Your pardon for every vow I vowed every promise I promised and every covenant I made with You and then failed to discharge them.*

*And I pray to You concerning wrongs done to Your creatures; therefore whichever servant of Yours or hand-maid of Yours has suffered from me any wrong which I may have done to his person or reputation or property or kith or offspring; or any slander whereby I may have spoken ill of him; or anything I may have imposed on him on account of inclination or passion or force or jealousy or hypocrisy or prejudice; he being absent or present, alive or dead; and thereafter my hand become too short and my means too narrow to make amends to him or obtain his forgiveness; in that case, I bet You O You who are the Lord of requests (and they are obedient to Your will and ready to conform to Your wish), to confer favour on Muhammad and his family and reconcile him to me by whatever means You choose, and let me have mercy from You; verily pardon causes You no loss nor does bounty injure You O most merciful.*

*O Lord, grant me on every Monday, two gifts from You, good luck to obey You at the beginning of the day and the blessing of Your pardon at the end of it.*

*O You who are the only object of worship and except whom none can forgive sins.*

## **TUESDAY**

*Praise be to Allah - and praise is His due, as He deserves it - abundant praise!*

*I hurry to Him for refuge from the mischief of Shaytan who adds sin to my sin; and I guard myself through Him from every wicked tyrant, oppressive king and overpowering enemy.*

*O Lord, let me be of Your force; for verily Your forces - they are victorious and let me be of Your band for verily Your band - they are happy; and make me one of Your friends,  
for surely - Your friends have no fear, nor shall they be sorry.*

*O Lord, reform my faith for me, for verily it is a safeguard for my affairs and make easy for me my hereafter for certainly it will be my place of rest and to it will I retire from the company of the wicked.*

*And let my life be an enhancement of every good to me, and my death a comfort to me from every evil.*

*O Lord, bless Muhammad, the last of the Prophets, the one who concluded the number of sent ones, and his family, the pure, the holy and his chosen companions; and in this third day of the week, grant me three things; leave me no sin un-forgiven, no sorrow un-removed and no enemy un-vanquished by You.*

*With the name of Allah, the best of names; with the name of Allah, the Lord of the earth and the heaven, I drive away every evil, the first of which is His displeasure; and desire to achieve every good, the foremost of which is His approval. Therefore let my existence end in Your pardon, O lord of benevolence!*

## **WEDNESDAY**

*Praise be to Allah who ordained night to be a cover and sleep to be a mode of rest; and made the day to be the time of dispersion.*

*All praise to You for raising me from my sleep, for if You had wished, You could have made it everlasting; a praise perpetual, unceasing and which the whole of creation would be unable to count.*

*Praise be to You, O lord, for, You did create, and did so with symmetry. and You did measure and dispose, and cause to die, and to live, and make sick and restore to health, and give safety and does afflict, and You are exalted above the Throne and are in full possession of Sovereignty.*

*I pray to You like him whose cause is weak and whose resource is cut off, and whose death is fast approaching and whose worldly hope has shrunk and whose need for Your mercy has become pressing, and whose regret for his default has grown intense, and whose guilt and error has been too frequent and whose repentance to You is sincere.*

*Therefore, bless Muhammad the last of the Prophets and the members of his house, the pure, the holy, and let me have the intercession of Muhammad, may Your favour be on him and his family and do not deprive me of his company; verily, You are most merciful!*

*O Lord, in the fourth day of the week grant me four things: employ my strength in Your service; let my delight consist in Your worship, make me love Your reward; and cause me to abstain from that which would make me deserving of punishment from You. Verily, You are kind to whoever Your wish.*

## **THURSDAY**

*All praise be to Allah who removed the dark night with his power and brought the bright day with His mercy; and clothed me with His light and gave me His blessing.*

*Therefore, O Lord since You have kept me alive for this day, be pleased to spare me for other days similar to it; and bless Muhammad and his family and do not afflict me in other nights and days for my having done things forbidden and for my having committed guilt; and confer on me its benefit and the benefit of what is in it and the benefit of what follows; and turn away the mischief of what is in it, and the mischief of what comes after it.*

*O Lord, verily I seek adherence to You through the guarantee of Islam; and rely on You through the honour of the Qur'an; and seek intercession with You through Muhammad, the chosen. May God bless him and his family, therefore O Lord recognise my guarantee, whereby I hope for this satisfaction of my need, O most merciful.*

*O Lord, in the fifth day of the week, grant me five things, which none has power to vouchsafe except with Your generosity, and which none can afford without Your bounty: a soundness whereby I may gain strength to serve You, and a devotion whereby I may deserve Your magnificent reward: and an immediate prosperity by means of fair earnings: and guard me on occasions of danger with Your protection and place me under Your defence against future sorrows and anxieties.*

*O Lord, bless Muhammad and his family and let my adherence to him be effectual intercession at the day of Judgement, verily You are the most Merciful.*

### **FRIDAY**

*Praise be to Allah, who existed before creation and the giving of life, and who shall continue to exist after all things have perished.*

*The knower, who does not forgets the one who remembers Him, Who does not diminish the one who gives Him thanks who does not disappoint the one who prays to Him: and does not frustrate the hope of the one who places hope in Him.*

*O Lord, I call You to witness - and You are sufficient as a witness: and I call Your angels and the inhabitants of Your heavens and bearers of Your throne and Your prophets and Your messengers whom You did entrust with Your mission and the various creatures that You have created; to witness that You and You alone are Allah, there being no god but You; You are alone there being no associate with You no peer and there is no untruth in Your word, nor change.*

*And that verily Muhammad - may Your blessing be on him and his family - is Your servant and Your messenger; he delivered to Your servants the message with which You did entrust him and exerted himself in the Your cause, as it deserved; and he gave happy tidings of a reward which was certain and threatened with punishment which was true.*

*O Lord keep me firm in Your religion as long as You keep me alive; and let not my heart deviate after You has guided me, and let me have mercy from You; verily, You and You alone are the Giver.*

*Bless Muhammad and his family and make us of the number of his followers and his adherents and raise me (on the last day) among his band and give me the grace to be regular in my performance of the Friday prayer and to win such of Your bounty as You will assign to the deserving observers of Fridays, on the day of recompense. Verily, You and You alone are the Mighty, the Wise.*

## **SATURDAY**

*Bismillah which is the creed of those who seek protection and the motto of those who want refuge.*

*I hurry to the exalted Lord for shelter from oppression of tyrants, from the devices of the envious and from the treachery of the wicked and praise Him above the praise of all those who praise.*

*O Lord, You are the One without associate and the King without being made a king.*

*Your command is unopposed and Your sovereignty undisputed.*

*I beg You to favour Muhammad Your servant and Your apostle, and to inspire me with such gratitude for Your favours as would enable me to deserve the utmost extend of Your approval; and with Your loving kindness help me to serve You and worship You regularly and deserve Your reward.*

*And favour me by restraining me from acts of disobedience to You as long as You keep me alive; and give me the grace to do that which would benefit me as long as You spare me; and enlighten my mind with Your book, and remove from me the burden of sin because of my reading it: and favour me by keeping my faith and my life safe, and let not those that love me be frightened from me; and continue Your goodness to me during the rest of my life as You have done during the past, O most Merciful.*

## TOPIC 12: LIES VS HONESTY

To lie means to say something that you know is wrong on purpose.

We all know that lying is a great sin. The unfortunate point is that we do not realise how often we are doing it.

Our Sixth Imam (A) said that it is more difficult to repent for many small sins than for one big sin. Remember the story of the two men who came to Imam (A) to repent for their sins.

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said:

*"Leave falsehood and make speaking the truth a habit."*

*"If a person has a habit of speaking lies, he is a hypocrite until he rids himself of the habit."*

*"A person who is not honest cannot have a perfect and strong faith".*

To lie is haraam since you are deceiving others. There are many reasons why people lie, some of them are,

- a. as an excuse to get yourself out of trouble,
- b. to cheat somebody out of something you want,
- c. to get someone else into trouble.

As you can see, all the above reasons are sinister. If you have done something which will to trouble, then you should face it, and not lie your way out of it because that is being very irresponsible.

Qur'an also tells us not to lie,

*2:42 » And cover not Truth with falsehood, nor conceal the Truth when you know (what it is).*

Prophet Muhammad (S) has also said:

*"Beware of association with the liar for he is like a mirage which draws the far one nearer to you and the nearer far from you."*

If someone entrusts something to you, you should be truthful and return it back to him when it is asked for. It does not matter what the value of the item is, it does not even matter if the person is your enemy.

Imam Ja'far as Sadiq (A) says:

*"Whenever a person entrusts anything to you do not commit breach of trust, although that person may be (the worst person on earth like) the murderer of Imam Hussein (A).*

*"If the murderer of Imam Ali (A) entrusts his sword to me and I accept the trust I shall not misappropriate it and shall return it to him as and when he asks for it".*

What does this show. If you accept something into your trust, you must preserve your honour by holding true to your word. If you do not like the person, or feel something wrong will result, then do not accept the trust, but once you have given your word, you are bound by it.

And on another occasion he says to one of his companions:

*"I recommend two things to you: one of them is truthfulness and the other is honesty, for these two are the key to sustenance."*

If you make the habit of lying, then you will lie very often without realising. You will lie to your family, your friends and everybody you meet. Then one day you will be caught out because you will have trapped yourself in a corner, and there will be no escape.

Also if you make a habit of lying you will start doing other things which are even worse. One evil leads you to another.

## TOPIC 13: MASTURBATION

Masturbation is the artificial stimulation of the genital organs.

Before we discuss this topic further, it should be clearly stated that masturbation is a **HARAAM** act to do.

In the west, at school, we are taught that it is natural, and that there is nothing wrong with it. On the contrary, we are taught that it is of benefit.

Why? Why is there such a difference in opinion between Islam, and the west? This is because the western world looks at everything in terms of the PHYSICAL BODY only.

Islam on the other hand knows that a man is made of **BOTH** MIND and BODY. That mind is called the soul, the self, the nafs, and the spirit.

When a person masturbates, his desire creates images in the mind to make him/her reach a peak of excitement. For boys, this culminates in ejaculation of semen, after which desire soon vanishes. For girls, there is no definite end, and the surge of emotion can arise a number of times. This stage known as an orgasm. These images are made by the imagination, they are fantasised.

This has one major consequence. The person is visualising something that is unreal. They have total control over what actions are performed in their mind. This may start off with curious thoughts of sexual intimacy, but if masturbation continues, the imagination will fabricate more and more until the person has to resort to thinking of unnatural, perverse thoughts to fulfil the level of sexual lust.

One of the results is when the person reaches a stage where they can engage in a lawful sexual relationship (e.g. marriage), then their lust will not be satisfied within this relationship, and may seek fulfilment elsewhere, either prostitution, homosexuality etc.

There is no argument that one can masturbate a little, since the action is addictive. Once a person is into the habit of masturbation, they will find it very difficult, if not impossible to break.

In a certain documentary people were asked about masturbation. They replied that initially they would fantasise normal acts between a man and a woman. **However, after a while, that was not enough to arouse them.** They would start fantasising things which were indecent and perverse, until they started thinking of homosexuality and other crimes which are unnatural.

This is what masturbation results in. It causes you to imagine unreal situations, and unnatural actions. It is **ADDICTIVE**, since once you start, you will find it very difficult to stop.

Sexual desire is one emotion which is different from the rest. With the desires of hunger or thirst, you will reach a limit when you are full that you cannot eat or drink any more. With sexual desire, there is no limit, you will want more and more. The more you have,

the more you will want until you burn yourself up. That is why sexual desire is so dangerous, and needs to be **CONTROLLED**.

Another harm caused by masturbation is that it is an escape from reality. Sex is a natural part of a human being, but it is something that should be private and personal. When a person masturbates, he is living with his imagination, where he has total control. As a result, when he is ready to marry, and is with his wife, he will be at a loss. He will be so used to his imagination, that when the time comes to be with a real person, he will not know how to react.

The western world says that masturbation is necessary to relieve sexual tension, but this is nonsense! If a person is tense, then the body will relieve that tension naturally. When the person sleeps, he might have a wet dream; this releases the tension in the body if necessary. It is important to realise, that a person **MUST** perform Ghusl of Janaabat after semen is released.

The way to avoid masturbation is not to watch or read those things which arouse your desire. You should not sleep without clothes on, nor should you remain naked at any time, even by yourself, because Shaytan is always there to put suggestions in your mind.

Only a person with weak will power will masturbate. When you masturbate, you allow your mind to be taken over by your desire.

### **Why do people start to masturbate?**

The sexual awareness at adolescence is a natural process, and is part of reaching maturity. Curiosity will cause a person to wonder why certain changes are happening in their body, why on occasions thoughts enter their mind.

Without someone to explain or talk to, the adolescent will want to experiment, will wonder why certain actions will arouse him/her, and will wonder why certain actions provide physical pleasure, and will continue with those actions, unless there is a reason not to do so. Some people may stumble across masturbation quite innocently, while bathing or taking a shower.

The important point to understand is this. Islam does not say that sexual activity is evil. It merely confines it within lawful boundaries. What is damaging is self-stimulation since that can cause the lust to imagine and fantasise.

What Islam is guiding you towards, is the natural fulfilment of sexual desire when you are married, not the animalistic satisfaction of lust with yourself, or other partners which has no other purpose.

You should **NEVER** let your **MIND** be a **SLAVE** to anything, not food, not music, not alcohol, not drugs, and not desire.

## TOPIC 14: EARNING A HALAL LIVELIHOOD

We are always used to understanding **Halal & Haraam** in terms of objects, i.e. to eat this is Haraam, this meat is Halal and so on... However, we never think about our actions.

Actions, like objects, can also be classified as to whether they are Haraam or Halal.

If I see £5 note on the ground, on my way to school, I can **EITHER** pick it up and put it into my pocket, **OR** hand it in to the police.

If I travel on the underground all the time, I can easily find a way to skip paying my fare, should I do this or not?

These are all things which can happen to us anytime, and we should find a way to choose the right action.

Our **LIVELIHOOD** is the way in which we live and earn in our day-to-day lives.

For adults, it is the way they earn their money, the way in which they help their friends, how they act to other people, how they pay taxes, how they run the business, whether they pay Khums etc..

For youngsters, still at school, it is the way they treat their friends, the way they do their homework, what excuses they make if they do not do something, etc..

Islam emphasises the importance of making sure that these actions are not against Shari'a i.e. making sure all these actions are HALAL.

The attitude of very many people is that it doesn't matter how you do something, for example, it doesn't matter if I usurp someone else's property, as long as I give some of it to charity. It doesn't matter whether I pay Khums or not, as long as I pray. This attitude is not an Islamic one and it is something that the youth of the community should realise and teach others by example.

### **Why should we earn a halal livelihood? What is wrong in cheating others?**

If we were to cheat someone, we would be gaining at their loss.

If we were doing a job together, and we were paid 10. If instead of splitting it half/half, I was to keep 6 and give you 4 and you didn't notice, I would be gaining, 1 at your expense.

In the same way, Allah has given us a short term on this world. He has put us in a position where we have the choice of cheating or being fair.

If we can stay on the path of Islam, the path of justice, we will benefit **BOTH in this life and the next**. However if we cheat and follow Shaitan, we may become rich, but we will never be happy in this world, and definitely not in the next life.

The Holy Prophet (S) has said

*"Whoever lives on halal earnings for 40 days, Allah shall enlighten his heart, and cause springs of wisdom to come from his heart, following to his tongue."*

This does not mean that we should earn a halal life for 40 days, and then forget it and start cheating!! It shows us the reward that Allah gives us for obeying Him, and resisting temptation.

Imam Ali (A) said to his people:

*"Who is a believer ?"*

Then he gave a detailed answer, part of which said:

*"The believer is one with whom people's life, wealth, and dignity are safe.*

*His livelihood is earned in an honourable way."*

We must always remember, Allah is giving us the chance to prove ourselves to Him. We can gain his pleasure by fighting our nafs and being just in this world, or we can displease Him by following our nafs. Remember the example of Hur, when he saw before him two paths, one was death in an honourable way with Imam Husain (A), and one was riches and wealth without principles. He made the right choice and set us the example. Do we have the courage to follow this?

**The choice is ours.....**

## TOPIC 15: TAKABBUR.

Takabbur means to have pride, to think that you are above, or superior to a someone else. This is a very dangerous attribute to have, and leads only to downfall.

If you are good at something, or achieve good results in something, don't start thinking too much of yourself.

When you accomplish something good, your nafs starts to tell you that you are great, and that you are better than the rest. It makes you think that there is no one else like you, and that you have reached the top.

When this happens, you start to believe that you are the greatest, and then you will not try harder to become better.

Takabbur enters our hearts very secretly, it tries to hide from us, and takes our thoughts over quietly, that is why Prophet Muhammad (S) has told us:

*"Pride enters the heart like a black ant crawling over a black rock at night."*

The first thing that you should do when you achieve something good is to thank Allah. Just by saying 'Alhamdulillah', you will stop your nafs from praising yourself. Remember, it was through Allah's help that you achieved it, so thank Allah instead of forgetting, and thinking that you did it all by yourself. By thanking Allah, we are including Him in all aspect of our lives, and sharing our joy and happiness with Him, and recognising that it is through His bounty that we have achieved success.

In the du'a after Asr prayers we say to Allah

*"Allaahumma maa binaa min ni'matin faminka"*  
"My Lord , whatever talents I have got, it is only from You."

When Allah created Prophet Adam, he told all the creatures to bow down before Adam. Iblis refused, saying that **I am BETTER than him**. This was the first takabbur, the first pride, and it was because of this that Iblis is called Shaytan, one who is removed from Allah's Pleasure.

We all achieve something good in our lives. It doesn't mean that we should not be happy. We should be happy, we should feel glad, we should laugh and enjoy, but we should also remember that it was Allah who helped us, and so we should thank Him. What Islam does not like is that we think "Oh, I am fantastic, there is no one else in the world like me. What a brilliant person I am." If we think like this, then Allah will also remove us from His pleasure, and then we will fall, just like Shaytan.

Allah has created us all equal, how can one person say that he is better than another?

## VANITY

Vanity means to have false ideas about how great you are, about your appearance, or about yourself.

When a person becomes vain, they spend a large amount of time making sure they look good, not a hair is out of place, and clothes are new and beautiful. All this is to make others think *"That person really looks the business!"*

Vanity is harmful, since it leads to pride, and it stops you from becoming better. If you spend plenty of time over your own appearance without any reason, then it is bad akhlaq, and this will make you think very highly of yourself. You start spending so much time on your dress and image (outside), that you forget about spending time to improve your character (inside), you forget about Allah, the One who gave you all your qualities.

The Prophet (S) said

*"There will come a time when people will have unclean inner selves, but BEAUTIFUL APPEARANCES; they will have greed for the worldly affairs (things) and they will not wish for that which is with Allah. Their religion will be for show. Then they would pray like a drowning one, and Allah will not answer their prayer."*

There is nothing wrong with looking and dressing well, but there should be limits to the amount of attention you pay to yourself. If you start using mousse, cream and gel just for an ordinary occasion such as going to school or with friends, and if this takes up time, then you should try and avoid it. If you have an appointment, an interview, or some other occasion, which requires you to be presented in a special way, then it is perfectly acceptable to spend more than your usual amount of time on dressing.

The most important thing to note is that you should not dress up to impress others, to show off or to act as something, which you are not. This will only make you think that you are great and then you will be fooling yourself as well as others. Be happy with what you are, and everyone else will also be happy with you.

## TOPIC 16: PERMISSIVENESS

This means to be too liberal, too free or too loose.

It is a moral judgement and is difficult to define, but can be explained as follows:

When people say that the western world is bad, what they actually mean is that the moral attitude is bad. The west itself technologically is very developed, but unfortunately there has been no parallel development within, in the morals.

Whenever you walk down the main road you will see people walking with scanty clothing, you will see books and magazines in windows, which reveal scenes, which are sexually attractive.

This is also true in the case of television, where programmes often tend to provoke reaction and desires in their audience.

When society becomes such that almost every aspect of it tends to cater for human desires, (not needs), especially sexual, than that society is said to be permissive.

In Islam, a human being is provided with a quality by Allah known as "Hayah". This means modesty, bashfulness, and nobility all in one word. It is this quality which is constantly under attack in the western world.

The reason why it is so easy to fall into the trap of becoming permissive is because there is a physical pleasure, which attracts a person more and more, and it is very difficult to avoid or deny.

When a person reaches the stage of responsibility and maturity (baligh), he has changed his spiritual appearance as well as his physical one. His desires are loose now, he is attracted by things which did not bother him when he was a child. That is why Islam has made its rules wajib for those people who are mature, because they will require ways of cleansing themselves from the filth which enters their minds from outside.

If one takes no heed and ignores these rules, he will slowly become more like the thoughts that enter his mind until he will give himself totally up to his desires which will just waste his life away.

Examples of being permissive is dressing such that enough of your body is revealed to cause others to look at you, dressing with tight clothes so that the contours of your body can be seen, telling jokes which are crude, watching programmes which arouse your own sexual desires.

Going out on dates to discos, or with girl/boyfriends, keeping loose relationships are all common examples of a permissive society.

The desires for companionship are not evil or wrong, but they have to be CONTROLLED within the border of Islam. It is like a fire, if you use it properly, it is a great help to cook food and keep warm, but if abused, it grows and spreads until it becomes out of control and consumes everything.

The real test of a person is to let the self control the desires, and not the desires controlling the self.

Permissiveness is one extreme of society, to be too loose, to be too free with your desires, the other extreme is celibacy, which means to never get married and to stop your desires all together. Both these are extremes, and Islam says that extremes are wrong. Islam takes the middle path of chastity, where you are allowed to fulfil your desires, but only within the boundaries of marriage.



Islam explains to us the concept of chastity, which lies between these two extremes, and allows us to CONTROL our desire, rather than STOPPING them.

**Why does a society become permissive?** If you were given a locked box, and told that you should not look inside it for many years, you would always be curious of what is within. If that box were placed somewhere where it was easy to see, then day-by-day your curiosity would develop. If you were then given the key, and still told not to open it, you would feel a terrible urge to just unlock it when no one was looking, and take a peek inside.

**Why?** In the western society, from a very young age, we are exposed to behaviour and scenes, which only display the glamorous and provocative aspect of sex. Yet, at that age, we are told that this is not something for children. Then as we grow up, we become baligh, and have the ability to "unlock the box" in the example above. Since we do not know what is in the box, or we think the box contains untold pleasure, we are tempted to open it and experiment. This is the cause of permissiveness.

The mistake that is made is that sex is not discussed in its moral framework. Sex is not dirty or wrong, but at the same time it is not to be displayed and performed as a show. Since western society displays sex as exciting and daring, without responsibility and love then youngster who are coming to grips with this new emotion are bound to experiment. This may seem enjoyable in the short term, but very quickly they will find themselves slaves of sexual desire, and not masters. This concept will be discussed in detail in a later note.

## TOPIC 17: CHASTITY

To be chaste means "Abstaining from immoral or unlawful, from sexual intercourse, to be pure, virgin, decent of speech, restrained, pure in taste or style, simple." - The Concise Oxford Dictionary.

This is the opposite of permissiveness, which has been discussed earlier.

Islam puts great emphasis on chastity and it is this aspect, among others, which is under attack in the western world.

### **Why should we be chaste?**

We should be chaste in our every action by not doing immoral or unlawful acts, by not using foul words. We should regard these things as wrong and avoid them.

Islam also tells us that until nikah (marriage) is recited, all relationships which can lead to intimacy between two people are disallowed.

A person's chastity is a gift given by Allah. It is a sign of purity and noble character. It is a very prized and personal possession. When a person marries, he/she enters a new stage of life. The bond of marriage is cemented by the couple sharing something that is personal and intimate to them. This helps to secure the marriage from breaking during future ups and downs and helps to make it endure.

If people do not guard their chastity, and treat sexual relationships as casual, then they are losing the higher purpose which Allah has made, the sharing of something very intimate which binds the two people.

If it is treated as easygoing and as enjoyment with any partner, then the sensitive side of the relationship will be closed off.

Allah has made the human being from several elements; one is the physical element with the five senses of touch, taste, sight, smell and sound. Then He added a whole new level to human beings, he gave them thought and understanding.

If we treat our most private parts without modesty, and go and abuse them carelessly, we will gain a physical pleasure, but we will lose all the "love and contentment" which our mind can give us.

Thus if we just be permissive and have sexual relations whenever the urge arises, we will be lowering our dignity from the intellect to the animal/physical element of our life, and will be missing out in the real sense of living.

### **What is wrong with being unchaste?**

It is a well known fact that once a physical sense is stimulated by an object, it will require more of that object the next time, to reach the same level of stimulation i.e. If I drink alcohol, I will lose physical control over my body. The next time it will take even more alcohol to make me reach the same level of drunkenness, the next time even more... and so on.

Similarly, if I concentrate in sexual activities just for pleasure, the next time I will do more and more until I am addicted and cannot stop.

Thus if we are chaste in our every action (especially sexual), and treat them as something "sacred" not to be squandered, then we will attain a level of discipline that will make us strong, determined and able to achieve anything which we put our mind to.

### **Why is it difficult to be chaste?**

The western society has lost all concept of spiritual life. They have closed the eye inside them and have concentrated totally on physical pleasures. Sex is something, which is made into an open pastime, an enjoyment. This attracts our desires and makes us want to join in. Almost all pleasures are orientated about this idea, parties, videos, books, magazines, discos, film, TV, and cinemas. Then we ask what is wrong with having girl/boyfriends. If they can do it, why can't we?

Would you ask a person who 'shoots drugs', "if you can do it why can't I?"

No you would not, because you can see that he is damaging his mind and body by doing so.

It is only because we cannot see the long-term effects of being unchaste that we ask the above questions. Our elders who have watched and seen these effects warn us, but we call them old fashioned. If we knew what they did, there is a guarantee that we would never even think of following our desires and having sexual relations other than those allowed by Islam.

### **How can we be chaste?**

Being chaste does not mean keeping locked up away from the west and not even listening to what they tell you.

It means listening to everything they ask you and following that which is right and not doing that which is wrong. Only by listening to them can you decide what is right and wrong.

It also means not letting your desires carry you away to commit something which you know might give you physical pleasure, but on the higher level, will make you lose out.

We can be chaste by avoiding telling dirty stories or rude jokes, by not watching films/TV which display other peoples private parts and so cause arousal, by not allowing our relationships with people of the opposite sex to get too close, and by generally asking ourselves in our heart, "Am I doing this because my desires are telling me, or because my intelligence is telling me."

If it is because of desires, then don't do it. If it is because of intelligence, then do it and you will enjoy yourself much more, physically and spiritually.

The path to enjoying life truly is very difficult, and is balanced on both physical and spiritual pleasures. It is like climbing a mountain, only when you reach the summit, can you look around you and see how fresh everything is. And when you look down below, you see everything from a different point of view. You see the maze of life from above; the paths which confused you while you were in the maze are now suddenly clear and easy to see.