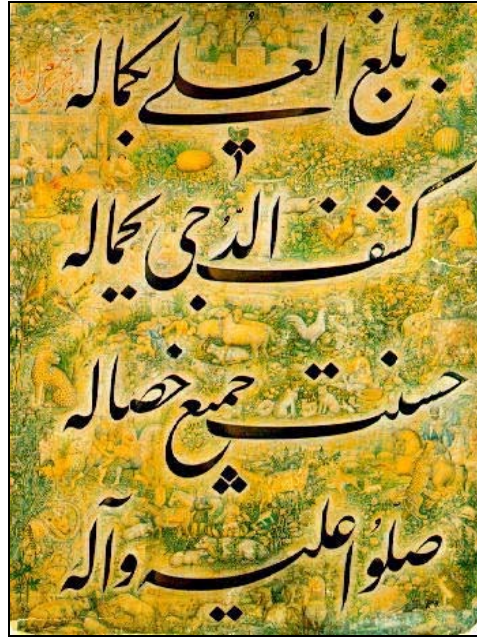




AL MAHDI MADRASAH

Student Notes for Class 11



This poem refers to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S):
He reached the greatest heights by his perfection,
He dispelled the darkness by his beauty,
All his attributes were good ones,
Send salutations on him and his family.



AL MAHDI MADRASAH

FIQH SYLLABUS - CLASS 11

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CLASS 11 - LESSON 1

VOLUNTARY AND OBLIGATORY TAXES IN ISLAM

Islam wants to prevent the excessive accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few people so the society may not fall into two classes: one overwealthy, while the other is starving. The Holy Qur'an gives the reason for taxing wealth by saying,

"...so that it (the wealth) may not circulate among those who are rich among you." (al-Hashr, 59:7)

To bring about this equality in the economic condition of the people, Islam has introduced various methods. An important method is the transferring of the excess wealth from the fortunate sector of the society to its less fortunate members. This is done on two different levels: on an individual level and on a collective level.

1. Individual Level

Islam encourages Muslims to be mindful of the plight of others by prescribing charity. In Arabic, this is known as **Sadaqah** and **Infaq**. There are many verses in the Holy Qur'an which command the Muslims to help others voluntarily. There are more verses dealing with voluntary charity than the obligatory dues. Every one is morally obliged to help others according to his or her own means and resources. There are several levels described in the Holy Qur'an:

First level of charity:

They ask you (O Muhammad) as to what they should spend (in way of charity). Say, "Whatever can be spared (from your wealth after your own expenses)." (al Baqarah, 2:219)

Second level of charity:

(The pious are those who)...spend (in charity) from whatever We have given to them. (al Baqarah 2:3)

Third level of charity:

(The pious people are those) who spend (in charity) when rich or poor... (Ali Imran 3:134)

In all these levels, one must remember to follow the path of moderation, and the Holy Qur'an says,

Let not your hand be shackled to your neck (out of greed), nor outspread it completely open -- otherwise you will sit down blamed and destitute (poor). (Bani Israil, 17:29)

2. On a Collective Level.

The economic equality is guaranteed through the obligatory (Wajib) taxes on the excess wealth of every Muslim. These are taxes like Khums, Zakaat, Fitrah, etc.

In short, Islam aims at eliminating the "need" (Hajat), and elevating the needy people to the level of being "free from want" (Ghani).

CLASS 11 - LESSON 2

KHUMS (1)

Khums is the Fifth branch of Furoo e din and it is Wajib on every Muslim. Khums, in Islamic terminology means one fifth of certain things which a person acquires as wealth and which must be paid as an Islamic Tax.

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

*"Know that whatever of a thing you acquire (Ghanimat), a fifth of it is for Allah, for the Messenger, for the near relatives, the orphans, the needy and wayfarer."
(al Anfal 8:41)*

THE HISTORY OF KHUMS:

Khums is one of those things introduced by Abdul Muttalib, the grandfather of our Holy Prophet (S) and continued in Islam.

Acting upon a command of Allah given to him in a dream when he discovered the well of ZamZam, he found in it many valuable things which were buried in it by the progeny of Prophet Ismail (A) when they feared their enemies would usurp the valuables.

When Abdul Muttalib found this buried treasure he took out one fifth (Khums) in the way of Allah and kept the rest. This became a custom in his family and after the Hijrat of Prophet Muhammad (S), this same system was incorporated in Islam.

KHUMS HAS TO BE PAID ON THE FOLLOWING 7 THINGS:

According to the Ahadith of our Imams (A), the items which are eligible for Khums are seven:

1. NET SAVINGS:

From business or any income source. It applies to a Baligh person who has surplus of lawful (according to Shariat) income and has net savings after the necessary expenditures on maintenance of his family. He or she must pay 20% on the net savings. This saving could be from wages, salary, profits, gifts, prizes, etc.

2. LAWFUL WEALTH MIXED WITH UNLAWFUL WEALTH:

If lawful wealth gets mixed with unlawful wealth; and if the exact amount cannot be distinguished, or if the quantity cannot be determined or the true owner cannot be found then it is Ehtiyaate Wajib to take out Khums out of it, with a general intention i.e. a payment of Khums or Mazalim then it will become legal wealth.

Mazalim means to pay charity as a penalty for valuables obtained in an unlawful way and when one is not able to reimburse the owner, either because he does not know the owner or because it is impossible to do that.

3. BURIED TREASURE:

You pay Khums on buried treasure if the property found is in the form of silver or gold. If the treasure found is neither gold or silver than it is obligatory on the basis of precaution to pay Khums.

4. MINERALS:

After having paid the expenses of mining the minerals out, if the value of the minerals exceeds 70 gms of gold, then Khums will have to be paid on the remaining amount.

5. PRECIOUS STONES OBTAINED FROM SEA BY DIVING:

It is Ehtiyaate Wajib to pay Khums on such valuables even if it is of a small amount.

6. WAR BOOTY:

It is Ehtiyaate Wajib to take out Khums on booty (spoils of war) obtained from the war against non Muslims, with the permission of the Imam (A), even in his Ghaibah.

7. LAND PURCHASED:

If land is purchased by a Non muslim (Kafir e Zimmi) from a Muslim, the Muslim will pay Khums (i.e. 20% of the value received by him for the land).

CLASS 11 - LESSON 3

KHUMS (2)

Khums is Wajib on seven items as discussed in the last lesson; but we will discuss Khums on only two items:

- 1) The net savings, and
- 2) Lawful wealth which is mixed with some illegitimate wealth.

The other five are not generally relevant to most Muslims, and when needed one can refer to the necessary Masail for them.

1. Khums on Net Savings

After the allowable expenses are deducted from the income, what remains at the end of the year or on the annual date set for payment, will be the net savings. You will deduct 20% of this saving as Khums.

The deductible household expenses include food, drink, accommodation, transportation, furniture, marriage expenses, medical expenses, payment of Sadaqah, Haj, Ziyarat, gifts, donations, paying debts, legal penalties, wages of servants, insurance premiums, the amount deducted from your salary for mandatory provident fund or for mandatory pension plan, income tax, etc.

All new items that have not been used (even once) by the end of your Khums year must be counted as your savings.

2. Khums when lawful wealth is mixed with some illegitimate wealth

It is Wajib to pay Khums from a wealth which is mixed with some illegitimate wealth. By "illegitimate" we mean anything that has been acquired by the means not permitted in the Shariah, for example, usury, gambling or liquor business.

By "mixed" we mean that the owner is unable to distinguish the amount or the items which have come to his possession by lawful and legitimate means from those which he has acquired by unlawful means.

If a person cannot distinguish the amount, the item and the owner of the wealth acquired by unlawful means from the legitimate wealth, then the only way to make his existing properties lawful is to pay Khums from the entire wealth.

If a person knows the amount or the item possessed by unlawful means but does not the owner or owners, then he must give that amount or item to the needy as charity (Sadaqah) on behalf of the unknown owner. However, before giving that amount or item as Sadaqah, it is Ehtiyate Wajib to ask the permission of the Mujtahid.

ITEMS ON WHICH KHUMS IS EXEMPTED

1. There is no Khums on the amount of one's Dowry (Mahr) i.e. the wealth which the husband agrees to pay his wife at the time of Marriage, and she can demand it at any time.
2. Khums is not liable on Inheritance. It is Ehtiyate Wajib that when one inherits from the least anticipated person, e.g. a very remote relative from whom one does not expect to inherit, Khums should be paid if any amount remains at the end of the year.

DISTRIBUTION OF KHUMS

The money of Khums has to be divided into two equal parts.

1. One part, i.e. $1/2$ is given to needy Sehme Sadaat (persons from the family of the Holy Prophet (S))
2. The second part, i.e. $1/2$ is given to Sehme Imam, i.e. the Imam of the time. At present in the Ghaibat of the Imam (A) this part of the Khums has to be given to most learned and trustworthy Mujtahid. He is Mujtahid whose taqlid we do. With his permission we use this money for other purposes, like building Mosques, Madressas, etc.

CLASS 11 - LESSON 4

ZAKAAT (1)

In Arabic, the word Zakaat literally means “growth”. It also means “purification” as used in the Ayah below:

"Take alms (Sadaqah) from their wealth in order to purify them and cleanse them by it." (at-Tawbah, 9:103)

And in many places Allah mentions Zakaat, immediately after prayer, showing its importance:

*"And be steadfast in prayer; practice regular charity;..."
(al Baqarah : 2:43)*

Zakaat is the Fourth Pillar of Islam. It is a Wealth Tax of 2.5%. There are 2 types of Zakaat. They are:

1. Zakaat-e-Maal - Zakaat on possessions.
2. Zakaat-e-Fitra - Zakaat payable on Eid-ul-Fitr.

1. ZAKAAT-E-MAAL

It is Wajib on the following things:

1. Wheat
2. Barley
3. Dates
4. Grapes
5. Gold coins
6. Silver coins
7. Camels
8. Cows
9. Goats
10. Sheep

DISTRIBUTION OF ZAKAT

The Holy Qur'an is very clear in its guidance on this. It says:

*"Verily, alms (Sadaqaat) are for the poor and the needy,
and the people employed to administer (the funds),
and those whose hearts are to be won over,
and for freeing of slaves,
and those who are in debt,
and in the way of Allah
and for the wayfarer;
a duty ordained by Allah.
Allah is all-Knowing, all-Wise." (at-Tawbah, 9:60)*

Therefore Zakaat-e-Maal can be given to:

1. **Fukara:** Those who cannot pay their and their families' expenses for the whole year.
2. **Masakeen:** Those whose state is worse than Fukara.
3. **Hamil:** One who has been appointed by Imam (A) or Mujtahid-e-A'alam to collect Zakaat.
4. **Rikaab:** Helping in freeing a slave.
5. Those non-Muslims who come to Islam by taking Zakaat or have been helpful to Muslims in war.
6. **Debtors** who are unable to pay their debts.
7. **Fi Sabeelillah:** In the way of Allah to build Mosques, Madressas, Roads, Bridges, etc.
8. **Ibnus Sabeel:** Poor travellers, who are stranded far away from home.

CLASS 11 - LESSON 5

ZAKAAT (2)

2. ZAKAAT-E-FITRA

On the night of Eid-ul-Fitr, Fitra becomes compulsory on the head of the family who is responsible for the maintenance of the family.

If a guest arrives before sunset on the night of Eid-ul-Fitr then the host has to pay Fitra for the guest, even if the guest is a Kafir.

For a servant, who receives wages but whose food is paid for by the employer, Fitra has to be paid for by the employer.

For a child born before sunset on the night of Eid-ul-Fitr, Fitra has to be paid by the head of the house; however, if the child is born after sunset, then it is Mustahab to pay Fitra.

If a guest or servant leaves the house before sunset then Fitra does not have to be paid; however, if they leave after sunset then Fitra has to be paid.

If anyone dies before sunset then Fitra does not have to be paid.

Fitra for someone who is a boarder in the house does not have to be paid by the head of the family; it is the responsibility of the boarder.

The head of the family who is responsible for paying Fitra should keep the money separate at night with the intention of paying it later. It is better that the money is given away before Eid prayers, but it can be given after the prayers.

FITRA CAN BE GIVEN ON THE FOLLOWING:

1. Grapes
2. Grains - rice, wheat, oats
3. Milk
4. Dates

or the value of the above in money.

The Fitra per person has to be 3 Kgs in weight or its value in money. The money for Fitra can be given to any Organisation who undertake the responsibility of buying the grain and passing it on to the people who are liable for receiving Zakaat.

If you are giving Fitra in the form of grain then you have to ensure that the grain is of good quality and not mixed with dirt.

One person cannot give 3 different kinds of grain as Fitra; however, different forms of Fitra can be given by members of the same family.

FITRA CAN BE GIVEN TO:

1. Anyone who qualifies for Zakaat-e-Maal.
2. Any Shia Ithna Asheri who is poor; but preference has been given to:
 - a. Needy blood relations;
 - b. Needy neighbours;
 - c. Needy scholars.
3. It is Wajib to give Fitra to the needy in your hometown first.
3. It is not necessary to tell that the money given to the needy is of Fitra.

Note:

1. Fitra given by a Sayyid can only be given to a Sayyid.
2. Fitra given by a non-Sayyid can only be given to a non-Sayyid.

HOW MUCH SHOULD BE GIVEN:

1. It should be enough to pay for one year's expenses.
2. It could be given to buy something for the poor from which they can earn a sure income; like setting up a business or buying a sewing machine.

CLASS 11 - LESSON 6

NIKAH (1) (Marriage)

An Introduction

Nature has so arranged that man and woman are attracted towards each other. This natural attraction binds them together and leads them to live a common life and form a family. This natural tendency like any other instinct, should be guided to the right direction so that it may be utilised in the service of humanity. This instinct develops into a sort of deep spiritual and sentimental, social and economic relationship. This is what we call Matrimony.

In the wake of keen desire to establish matrimony between themselves, man and woman enter into contract known as Marriage. A contract has great importance in human life, for it unites two people in different ways. It lays the foundation of the life of human and deeply influences its body, life and thought and future actions. That is why a marriage contract is regarded as a sacred by various nations and enough attention has been paid in different legal systems to the questions connected with it.

Importance of Marriage - An Islamic Point of View

Islam has also attached great importance to the question of marriage in its social system. In the Holy Qur'an and the sayings of the 14 Ma'sumeen (A) we find that marriage has been greatly encouraged. The Holy Prophet (S) says , " No institution of Islam is liked by Allah more than that of a Marriage."

Basic Object of Marriage

1. Securing comfortable atmosphere for husband and wife, with regard to this the Holy Qur'an says:

"One of His signs is that He created for you spouses of your own species, so that you may find comfort with them, and He put mutual love and affection in your hearts. Surely in this there are lessons for the thinking people." (ar-Room, 30:21)

2. Man has got a protective role whereas the woman an emotional role.
3. Man and woman have an instinct to administer and rule. Thus, when they marry, the house gives them the role of administration and therefore both are brought in a family system so that they can rule and administer; and if house organisation is good and successful, tomorrow ruling a nation will be successful. Thus, Islam gives them an opportunity to administer.
4. A girl since young age has got an instinct of motherhood and therefore when she is young will often pretend to be a mummy. A woman feels satisfied when she is a mother. Islam fulfils her desires of becoming a mother.
5. Producing a new generation and bringing up healthy, faithful and virtuous children. In regard to this the Holy Qur'an says:

"... He has given you partners from among yourselves, and similarly made the cattle and also males and females. This is how He multiplies you. Nothing can be compared to Him...."
(ash-Shura, 42 : 11)

The Holy Prophet (S) has said:

"Marry each other and produce new offspring so that your numbers may increase."

Generally if there is no attraction between man and woman, both will be forced to carry out the duties, bring children, etc. It is due to natural love that the mother brings up her children and father to take care of them. So we see that what begins as a sexual relationship is in fact far above mere sexual enjoyment - it is a means to bring up a good and pure society; build up a small unit in the society - one good family plus another good family build up a good society. If these families are not good, naturally the society formed is also not good.

CLASS 11 - LESSON 7

NIKAH (2)

Selection of a Spouse

In the last lesson, we learnt that it will take two good individuals to raise their offspring in a good environment and raise them as good practising Muslims. And therefore the selection of the 'right person' is very important. Often it takes quite a while to enquire about a spouse, his/her family background, etc. but it is, most of the time, an important process which results in a successful Marriage. So this 'homework' is essential.

Orders regarding Marriage

In Islamic Law **TWO** kinds of marriage are permissible by which a woman becomes lawful for a man. These are :

1. Permanent Marriage ('Aqd ad-da'im')

No time-limit is mentioned and it is forever unless terminated by divorce. Aqd means contract. A contract is made between a man and a woman to become life-partners and to fulfil all the responsibilities and enjoy those rights which the sharia has laid down for them.

2. Fixed-time Marriage ('Mut'a')

The length and period of the marriage is specified e.g. a day, a month, a year or more.

IMPORTANT LAWS

1. In a marriage, be it permanent or temporary, a contract (or a marriage formula) must be read. This marriage formula is called **Seegha**. Therefore, simply for the man and woman to be willing is NOT enough and the Aqd (contract) must be recited by the man and woman themselves, or by someone appointed by them (their Wakeel' or agent) to recite it for them.

3. In order to recite the Aqd (contract) of permanent or temporary marriage, one person can become Wakeel of both the parties (and a man can become the Wakeel of the woman and also recite the Aqd himself), but it is Ehtiyate Wajib for two people to recite the contract, if possible.

Aqd means contract. In permanent marriage, a solemn contract is made between a man and a woman to become life-partners and to fulfil all the responsibilities and enjoy those rights which the Shariah has laid down for them. There are preconditions for the validity of the contract:

1. It must not take place during the Ihram period of the hajj.
2. The man and woman must give their free permission to marry each other, and the marriage is invalid if their permission is obtained under compulsion. If it is known that a woman is satisfied with the marriage (even though she does not openly state her satisfaction) the marriage contract is still valid. If the marriage is performed without the permission of the woman or the man (very unlikely in this day and age), but later that permission is given by the individuals concerned, the contract is valid.
3. A woman who is marrying for the first time can marry of her own accord, but a woman who is a virgin must, as an Obligatory Precaution (Ehtiyate-Wajib), obtain permission of her father or paternal grandfather.
4. The man must give, or promise to give, an amount of money to the wife as a **Dowry (Mahr)**. The Mahr is the Wajib wedding-gift which the bridegroom undertakes to give the bride. It is a token of friendship, a mark of honour for the woman, and security for her. It becomes the property of the wife and she has full rights to dispose of it as she likes. Anything with a value can be given as a Mahr, and there is no specified amount. It should not be so high as to be beyond the financial status of the husband; it may be given at, or immediately after, the marriage, or at any time later on; it may be paid in one or several instalments.

The Holy Qur'an says:

*"..... The men shall have benefit of what they earn and the women shall have the benefit of what they (men) earn."
(an-Nisa, 4:430)*

If the preconditions above are satisfied, we can look at the actual recitations and the conditions that go with it.

Conditions of the Marriage Contract (Aqd)

1. That it is recited in valid Arabic, and if the man and woman themselves cannot recite the correct Arabic, then, assuming it is possible, it is Ehtiyat-e-Wajib to appoint for themselves as Wakeel who can recite the Arabic properly. And if this also is not possible, they can recite the contract themselves other than in Arabic, but words must be recited that convey the meaning of the Arabic.
2. That whoever recites the contract has the correct intention. Naturally, if the man and woman recite themselves then the words of the contract will vary compared to if recited by Wakeels (This should become clear later)
3. The person reciting the contract is adult and sane.
4. If the contract is recited other than by the man and woman themselves, i.e. if a Wakeel represents one or both parties, then the names of the man and woman are specified.
5. That the man and woman approve (agree) to the marriage.

Contracting a Permanent Marriage

The permanent marriage ('aqd ad da'im) consists of the recital of the formula (Seegha) which contain the consent of the bride and the acceptance of the bridegroom. For the marriage to be valid the mere consent of the two parties is not enough, the marriage contract must be performed. The conditions stated in the previous page are relevant here too.

One who is reciting the 'aqd formula should be sane, adult & practising Muslim. The reciter should have the solemn intention of reciting it for the marriage, and the bride and bridegroom must be specified. There may be a representative for each of the bride and groom, or one person can recite the formula as the representative of both bride and bridegroom, and the representative can be either male or female, but it is recommended that the 'aqd formula should be performed by two righteous persons, one representing the bride and the other the bridegroom.

You will now be provided with the actual recitations (loose sheets - please obtain from teacher). There is a difference in the recitations depending on whether the Permanent Marriage is being performed with two representatives or with no representatives. Please go through it thoroughly and bear the two different situations in mind. A Khutba, which is normally recited before the marriage formula, is also provided.

CLASS 11 - LESSON 8

NIKAH (3)

Fixed-term Marriage (Mut'a)

In this type of marriage, a fixed period for the marriage is specified. There is no specific time-limit for this type of marriage. A validly contracted Mut'a need not include sexual gratification; indeed a woman can make it a condition of the contract that no sexual relationship of any type will take place. Mut'a is often contracted when the object is to establish a Mahram relationship.

Note:

Although the recitation for this type of marriage is not given, it suffices to say that it is different from the recitation of a Permanent marriage.

Those whom it is Forbidden to Marry (Mahram)

In Islam it is forbidden to marry very near blood or foster relations, near blood relations of one's spouse, and those who become forbidden as a punishment for unlawful sexual relations.

Mahram for a Male:

Mother, Grandmothers, Daughter, Granddaughters, Sister, Nieces, Paternal and Maternal aunts (Fui and Masi), Wife's mother, Son's wife, Father's wife, Wife's grandmothers.

Mahram for a Female:

Father, Grandfathers, Son, Grandsons, Brother, Nephews, Paternal and Maternal uncles (Chacha and Mama), Husband's father, Daughter's husband, Mother's husband, Husband's grandfathers.

The difference between Mahram and Na-Mahram must be clearly understood. From this you will see that cousins of the opposite sex are Na-Mahram!

Laws of Looking at the Opposite Sex

It is Haraam for men to look at the bodies of Na-mahram women and girls (even those who are not yet nine years old but who understand good and bad). And the same applies to looking at their hair, whether looking for pleasure or not. Looking at their hands and faces for pleasure is Haraam. Even without the intention of pleasure, to look fully without necessity is forbidden.

For women to look at the bodies of Na-mahram men is also Haraam. Women must cover their bodies and hair from non-mahram men and the obligatory precaution (Ehtiyate Wajib) is that they even cover themselves from boys who are not yet mature but who understand the difference between good and bad.

CLASS 11 - LESSON 9

TALAQ - (Divorce)

In certain circumstances, divorce becomes the only course that a couple can take. Before this stage is reached every attempt must be made by the couple, their family and friends to try to reconcile their differences. According to Hadith, Talaq is the one allowable act that is displeasing to Allah.

In Islamic Law a married man automatically has the right to divorce his wife, but a woman only has that right if she makes it a precondition at the time of making the marriage contract. In certain cases, when it becomes evident that a husband is not fulfilling his responsibilities and is treating his wife unjustly, she can get a divorce with or without the husband's consent.

If a husband divorces his wife, there are preconditions for the validity of the divorce. The man must be sane and adult, and should not be forced by anyone else to divorce his wife. He must pronounce the divorce with the intention of divorcing; thus, if he pronounces the formula in a jokeful manner, it will not be an effective divorce. The guardian of an insane person can pronounce a divorce on his behalf.

Another important condition is that at the time of divorce the woman should not be in a state Haidh (menstruation) or Nifas. Any divorced pronounced during this period is void.

Just like the process of Marriage, there are preconditions before a Divorce can be conducted and announced :

1. The formula of divorce must be uttered in correct Arabic.
2. The word Talaq (divorce) must be said.
4. Two good and righteous witnesses must be present for the divorce to be valid.

Iddah:

Iddah is the prescribed period of waiting after the dissolution (conduction of divorce) of a marriage during which a widow or divorced woman may not arrange another fixed-term or permanent marriage. Its purpose is to :

1. Leave no doubt about the paternity of a child born after the dissolution of the marriage.
2. It also gives the man an opportunity to change his decision if it was taken in haste or under stress.

For a widow, the Iddah is four months and ten days. If she is pregnant she should observe an Iddah equal to the time between the death of her husband and the birth of a child, or four months and ten days, whichever is the longer.

The Iddah for a woman whose fixed-term marriage has terminated due to the end of the specified time or because the husband has waived the rest of the time, is two menstrual periods. Thereafter, as soon as she gets her third period her Iddah comes to an end and she can marry again. If she has no menstruation, she should wait for 45 days. If she is pregnant, Iddah lasts until the child is born. The same rules are relevant of the Iddah for a divorced woman (from a permanent marriage).

It is important to realise that most kinds of divorce are reversible, if the man and woman settle their differences and return to each other within the Iddah. No Nikah would be necessary if that happened. During the Iddah the woman continues to live in her husband's house and is supported by him financially. She also has to obey him and not leave the house without his permission. However, the husband and wife cannot have a sexual relationship, unless the husband decides to revoke (cancel) the divorce. If the man informs the woman of his intention to revoke the divorce, or makes it clear by gesture that he has done so, they will become husband and wife again.

Note:

There is a specific Divorce formula (not given in these notes) which is recited on the occasion (when the permanent marriage is terminated). The time of the Iddah of divorce commences when the pronouncing of the formula of divorce is completed.

Also, a fixed-time marriage is cancelled automatically once the specified period is over and therefore recitation of the Divorce formula is not necessary but Iddah has to be observed by the woman (as explained on the previous page).

CLASS 11 - LESSON 10

HALAAL AND HARAAM FOOD AND DRINKS (1)

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

*"O People, eat from the land what is permitted and good and do not follow in the footsteps of Shaitan, for he is an open enemy to you."
(al Baqarah, 2:168).*

Since food and drink are essential for the survival of humanity, Allah has given clear guidelines on what can and cannot be consumed. In addition we have also been instructed in manners and behaviour of eating. Thus eating and drinking becomes a way by which a Muslim remembers the bounties of Allah and by observing the rules of Shariah, he also shows his commitment to his religion.

Furthermore, Allah has made the habit of eating an important factor in establishing social unity. He has encouraged the sharing of food with each other and stressed the merits of giving food to the poor and needy. This becomes obligatory when certain sins are committed, for which the Kaffara or penalty is to feed poor Muslims. Thus we can see that this subject covers a wide and important area of Islamic Shariah.

Foods can be primarily divided into two sections:

1. Plants, fruits, vegetables and grains.

All these can be eaten as long as they are not harmful to human beings. This means that they must not contain poisonous or narcotic substances.

2. Living creatures.

These can be divided into three:

- a) Those that live in the sea.
- b) Those that live on the land.
- c) Birds.

a) Sea creatures.

We are allowed to eat any fish as long as it has scales. All other sea creatures such as whales, sharks, turtles, lobsters and crabs are Haraam. The only exception is for prawns and shrimps, which can be eaten.

In order for the fish to be Halaal, it must be removed alive from the water. It does not matter who has done the fishing or what method has been used to catch the fish.

b) Land creatures.

This term covers all animals that live on the face of the earth. Allah has permitted the eating of some and forbidden others. The first five verses of Suratu Ma'idah (Sura no. 5) give a summary of the commands regarding what is permitted to eat.

Amongst domestic animals, camels, cows, goats and sheep are permissible to eat. They all possess a hoof or cloven hoof. From amongst wild animals, which means animals which are not normally kept in enclosures, mountain sheep, wild cows and asses, gazelles and deer are permitted.

It is Makruh (undesirable) to eat the meat of a horse, donkey or mule.

It is not permitted to eat the meat of animals that possess canine teeth or fangs. Examples of such animals that are sometimes eaten by man are dogs, rabbits, elephants and monkeys. There are specific verses in the Holy Qur'an forbidding the eating of a pig.

It is not permitted to eat reptiles such as snakes and tortoises. Insects such as fleas and lice are also forbidden. However, locusts are permissible.

CLASS 11 - LESSON 11

HALAAL AND HARAAM FOOD AND DRINKS (2)

c) Birds.

Birds that comply with the following two conditions can be eaten.

1. The body is covered with feathers.
2. They are not classes as birds of prey (possessing talons).

There are two other principles by which one can distinguish between birds which are permitted and those that are not.

1. Every bird which, when in flight glides more than the flapping of its wings cannot be eaten.
2. If a particular bird's movement is not known, then before eating one must check for the presence of one of the following: a craw (where grain collects in the throat), a gizzard (part of the stomach) or a projection (a fork-like extension on the bird's foot which performs the function of a talon).

Thus chickens, turkeys, pigeons and all small birds are permissible to eat. Even ostriches and peacocks are allowed.

Birds of prey like eagles, hawks and vultures are Haraam to eat. Crows, rooks and ravens should not be eaten either.

Other animals which fly but are not classified as birds such as bats, bees and other flying insects are Haraam.

Note that in cases where one is in danger of dying through starvation, anything, including forbidden things, can be consumed to save life. However, this must be done as a last resort and only the absolute minimum must be eaten.

Slaughtering according to Shariah.

All animals and birds that are permissible to eat are nevertheless forbidden to a Muslim unless they have been correctly slaughtered. The laws for hunting differ slightly and can be obtained from books of Islamic Laws of various jurists.

The correct method of slaughtering involves the simultaneous cutting of the gullet, windpipe, carotid artery and jugular vein of the animal with a sharp knife. The conditions for the slaughtering are as below:

1. The one who carries out the slaughtering must be a Muslim.
2. If possible, the instrument used to slaughter should be made of iron.
3. The creature to be slaughtered must be made to face the Holy Ka'aba.
4. The person performing the slaughter must mention the name of Allah as he slaughters the animal.
5. There must be a normal emission of blood from the animal after the slaughter.
6. The animal must show some sign of movement after being slaughtered, especially if there was some doubt whether the animal was alive before being slaughtered.

CLASS 11 - LESSON 12

HALAAL AND HARAAM FOODS AND DRINKS (3)

Alcohol

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

"They ask you about wine and gambling. Say: in both these there is great sin and also (some) profit for men; but their sin is greater than their profit..." (al Baqarah, 2:219)

"The Shaitan only desires to cause enmity and hatred to spring in your midst by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to keep you off from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. (al Ma'idah, 5: 90)

Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) says:

"Allah has prohibited liquor on account of the evils resulting from it and because it renders reason and intellect of no effect and destroys 'Haya' - modesty and sense of shame."

The following sayings are by Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) and also repeated by other Imams (A):

"Do not associate with drunkards because as and when calamity befalls upon them, it will also engulf their associates (friends)"

"One who sits at a dining place at which others drink liquor is cursed (by Allah)"

In modern society alcohol is the most dangerous legal drug. Under its influence, man is not only a danger to himself, but to those around him also.

While it is accepted universally that excess alcohol is harmful, it is thought that in moderate amounts it can be beneficial. Islam totally forbids the consumption of alcohol in any amount. It also forbids Muslims from any involvement in its production, distribution or sale.

The greatest gift of Allah to humans is their ability to reason. This distinguishes us from all other creatures. Without our ability to reason, we become no different from the animals. It is because alcohol destroys this faculty of reason that it is Haraam.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) says:

"Alcohol is the root of all evils and sins. A person who drinks alcohol loses his sanity. At that time, he does not know Allah, does not fear committing any sin, respects the rights of no one and does not desist from committing evil openly. The spirit of piety and faith departs from him and only the impure and vicious spirit, which is far off from the Mercy of Allah, remains in his body. Allah, His angels, His prophets and the true believers curse such a man, and his daily prayers are not accepted for forty days. On the Day of Judgement his face will be dark, his tongue will come out of his mouth and saliva will fall on his chest and he will desperately complain of thirst."

To eat at a table where alcohol is being served is Haraam.

Guidelines to eating at restaurants

When eating out it is important to establish who owns the restaurant. If it is owned by a Muslim who apparently is mindful of the religion then no further investigation is necessary and all food served is Halaal.

If it is owned by a Muslim who appears to be unmindful of the religious laws, for instance he serves or allows alcohol on the premises, then he must be questioned about the source of his meat, the handlers of the food and its contents. You can eat there only if you are certain that it is Halaal.

According to Agha Seestani, Christians and Jews can be considered to be Pak, and food prepared by them can be eaten by his Muqalideen.

If a restaurant is owned by a non Muslim or ownership is unknown, then the meat cannot be eaten, unless one becomes convinced that it is Halaal and has been cooked by a Muslim, Christian or Jew.

As regards vegetable products, the method of preparation has to be checked. For instance, when buying chips, one has to ask the owner

whether the oil used for frying is vegetable oil and whether meat products are fried in the same oil.

Products that are advertised as suitable for vegetarians or fish based products like cod burgers are Halaal, unless one is sure that the contents include animal products or that they have been handled by people other than Ahle Kitaab i.e. Muslims, Christians and Jews.

Eating Manners

There are certain acts that are encouraged when taking a meal:

1. Washing of the hands before eating.
2. Washing hands and drying with a dry cloth after eating.
3. To recite the name of Allah (Bismillah) before eating.
4. The host should begin eating first and end last.
5. To eat with the right hand.
6. To take small bits of food and chew thoroughly.
7. To collect and eat the bits of food scattered on the dining cloth.
8. To take salt before and after the meal.

There are certain acts that are discouraged when taking a meal:

1. To eat when not hungry.
2. To over-eat.
3. To gaze at others while eating.
4. To eat food while it is very hot.
5. To blow on food or drink to cool it.
6. To throw a fruit before one has fully eaten it.
7. To scrape off meat from a bone in such a manner that nothing remains on it.
8. To peel those fruits which are normally eaten with their skins.

CLASS 11 - LESSON 13

TIJARAH (Trade)

Islam encourages Business

The Holy Prophet (SAW) has said:

"There are 70 parts of Ibadat. The best part of it is that of earning in a Halaal way, the best action is to work and earn livelihood by Halaal means. If a person earns by Halaal means then he will get the Thawab equal to the Prophets (A) on the day of Qiyamat."

The Shariah of Islam encourages Trade. There are 10 parts of earning, out of which 9 parts are in business.

However, the Imams (A) always said that a person engaging in trade must know its Masails to avoid falling into sinning.

Etiquette of doing Business

The Holy Prophet (S) said that when doing trade to note the following points:

1. No interest should be transacted (details to follow).
2. No swearing should be done even if one is speaking the truth.
3. Seller should not conceal defect of his own goods.
4. Seller should not falsely praise the quality of ones goods.
5. A buyer should not find fault falsely in goods when buying.

There are 4 Mustahabats to follow while in business transaction :

1. Price should be equal to all Muslims.
2. In question of price, one should not be harsh while dealing.
3. Give more and take less in quantitative measurements.
4. To take goods if returned if buyer does not want goods.

It is Wajib for a person to earn enough so that he may be able to feed his wife and children.

Six types of trades are Haraam:

1. To buy or sell intoxicating drinks, non-hunting dogs, pigs, dead animals e.g. meat, skins, hides of non-zabiha animals, etc. Other dealings involving Najis items is allowed if a good and logic use of it is being made e.g. fertilisers, etc.
2. To buy or sell wild animals.
3. To buy or sell Ghasbi (usurped) things.
4. To buy or sell goods used for Haraam purposea, e.g. instruments of gambling, etc.
5. To receive or give interest during transactions.
6. To sell adulterated (mixed) goods with full prior knowledge - for example, seeling a bag of flour that contains chalk as well, etc.

Types of trade which are Makruh are:

1. To sell ones estate or buildings, unless if one is going to buy a new estate (It is recommended in Shariah of Islam that one should live in ones own house).
2. Just slaughtering animals (It is said that in doing so ones mind becomes very hard).
3. Just to sell Kafan (shroud). As a side business it is allowed.
4. To do transaction with people of low morals e.g. thieves, smugglers, etc.
5. To do any business during the time from Dawn to Sunrise. It is the time reserved for the Ibadat of Allah.
6. To sell grains of foods, because if hoarding is committed then the consequences to be faced from Allah are grave so it has been made Makruh.
7. To swear during a transaction even when it is true.

CLASS 11 - LESSON 14

INTEREST AND USURY

The basic element of Interest is the exchange of one commodity for the same commodity with an increase in payment. The Islamic law strictly prohibits Usury (the practice of lending money at a rate of Interest). The practice of Usury is equal to acting with hostility against Allah and the Holy Prophet (S). The Holy Quran says:

"O Believers, have fear of Allah and forego what is still due to you from usury, if you are (true) believers; but if you do not do so, be warned of war against you by Allah and His Messenger" (al-Baqarah, 2:278)

Our 8th Imam, Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) has said:

"Usury is unlawful, for Allah, the Almighty has forbidden it because it brings ruin and leads to the wastage of the property of the people. Everybody becomes interested in making easy profit and gives up the practice of advancing Interest-free loans, though it is an act of virtue to help the needy and to lend them money without Interest. In any case, Usury leads to corruption, injustice, violation of the rights of others and the wastage of property."

EVIL RESULTS OF USURY

The above Hadith clearly mentions the evil results of Usury. Other common effects of Usury are:

1. Exploitation and destruction of the poor in a society:

In most cases a person borrows money because his needs are greater than his earnings. By taking a loan on Interest, his debt becomes more than he actually needed. Furthermore, his needs begin to continue rising in more proportion than his earnings; thus widening the gap between income and expenditure. On top of the widening gap if he had to pay Interest then his position would worsen to an extent where most of his income would be used up in repaying the Interest and would not be paying the loan off yet.

2. Strengthening the rich society:

With Usury, the rich get richer; as a result the rich society takes control over both the production and consumption of commodities. They control the prices of almost all items, even those grown and produced overseas. Two extremes of the rich and the poor, the well-fed and the starving, the powerful and the powerless; are created in the society. Sadly however, these same rich society then misuses its power and influence to rule over the peoples' properties, honour and lives in any way they wish and desire. Because of their financial power, the rich become arrogant, an attitude totally denounced by Islam.

3. Discouragement towards helping a fellow Muslim:

Because of the temptation of receiving Interest in the extra money lying in the banks, one may be discouraged in advancing an Interest-free loan to a fellow Muslim who is needy, in spite of the fact that Allah has promised abundant reward for lending Interest-free loan money and has regarded this act better than giving the charity.

4. Creation of unemployment:

Due to Interest incentive, many individuals keep their money in the high Interest earning banks instead of investing in the business or industries which create employment. Even if the banks invest the money of savers, they would do it in those areas that benefit them, taking no consideration of the benefit of the poor section of the society.

5. Inflation:

Due to high Interest rates on the borrowing of loans, the production cost rises resulting into high prices of commodities. Furthermore, since the rich continues getting richer, he can afford to bid higher prices of goods especially those items whose availability is scarce.

TAKING INTEREST FROM KAFIR:

According to fatwas of Ayatullah Seestani, a Muslim cannot take Interest from Kafir-e-Zimmi (those kafirs who are under the protection of Islamic state).

It is Ehttyate Wajib not to take Interest from all other Kafirs who are known as Kafir-e-Harbi.

However, in case the Kafirs in both the above cases, agree to pay the Interest on there own free will, then the amount may be accepted not as Interest but with other intentions.

CLASS 11B - LESSON 15

11B - KEEPING A BEARD

A beard is considered a feature of beauty and a symbol of manliness. Men should be conscious of, and cultivate, their masculinity, and women should be conscious of, and cultivate, their femininity; no sex should imitate the other, because it means an inferiority complex with respect to the other. For this reason, it is forbidden to shave the beard, but it is not necessary that the beard should be very long. It is permitted for a man to keep the beard trimmed but not such that people would say he shaved, or he had just neglected to shave : a medium beard is recommended. a moustache should not be allowed to grow too long, it should be clipped so that it does not cover the lips. This may be part of Islam's concern for hygiene and neatness.

A beard distinguishes Muslim men from others. The Prophet commanded Muslims to keep themselves distinct from, and not imitate other communities.

Fatwa 2920:

It is unlawful on the basis of obligatory precaution to shave one's beard, and it is also unlawful to get wages for shaving the beard of another person. However, if a person who does not shave his beard is made a target of ridicule and has to suffer humiliation which is intolerable in the eyes of the wise persons, it is permissible for him to shave his beard. Article of Islamic Acts (Khui)

The Fatwa of our present Mujtahid, Ayatullah al Uzama Syed Ali al-Husaini Seestani, is similar on this issue.

[The rest of the lesson to be utilised for discussion with the youth as to the pressures that cause them to disobey the command of keeping the beard]

CLASS 11A - LESSON 15

11A - IMPORTANCE OF HIJAB

The importance of Hijab will be briefly discussed in the light of the verses of the Holy Qur'an on the subject. Allah says:

"Say unto the believer men to cast down their gaze and guard their private parts; that is purer for them. Verily Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.

And say unto the believing women that they cast down their gaze and guard their private parts; and not to display their adornment (Zeenat) except what becomes apparent of it; and to draw their headcovers (Khumur) over their neck slits (Juyoob); and not to display their "Zeenat" except to their husbands... (an Noor, 24:31,32 part)

The verse first informs men of their duty in Hijab and then the women. Some important words in the second verse are:

Zeenat: This is something we use to beautify ourselves like clothes, ornaments, jewellery, etc.

Khumur: These are head covers or scarves.

Juyoob: The neck slit was usually low in Arab dress and the women did not cover their necks. So in this verse they were ordered to cover their exposed necks with the head covers.

In another verse Allah says:

O Prophet! Say unto your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers that they let down upon themselves a robe (Jilbab); so that they may be distinguished, so that they will not be troubled; Allah is Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful. (al Ahzab, 33:59)

Here the word **Jilbab** refers to a covering that is bigger than a headcover and shorter than a shawl and is designed to cover the head and shoulders.

According to the command of Allah, the coverings for women that form their Hijab is Wajib, and disobedience of this command earns Allah's anger.

The entire body of the woman except hands and face should be covered. The overall appearance of the dress is that it must be loose so it does not reveal the form of the woman, and it should not be attractive in a way that it draws the eyes of the people to the wearer.

[Discuss with your teacher the difficulties in wearing the Hijab in our society in England and see if others have had similar problems and share ideas on how to overcome them]

CLASS 11 - LESSON 16

AN INTRODUCTION TO AQAID - TAWHEED

Aqaid means our basic beliefs as Muslims. It is sometimes called Usule Deen (Roots of religion).

We have to ponder over and understand our Aqaid at individual levels. Although you will hear and read about what the beliefs should be, until you accept them yourself, you will not have faith ('Iman), although you may be a Muslim. That is why there is no Taqlid in matters of Aqaid. Once you accept the Usule Deen, you may then do Taqlid of a Mujtahid in matters of Furue Deen. At that point the rules of Shariah will be easier to understand and obey. Just like a tree, if the roots are strong, the branches will be strong also.

Our Aqaid as Shia Ithna'asheris are five; Tawheed, Adalat, Nabuwwah, Imamah and Qiyamah. In the next few lectures, we will attempt very briefly to discuss these beliefs.

TAWHEED - BELIEF IN THE UNITY OF ALLAH

1. Belief in a One God

Tawheed refers to the belief in One Unique God. Suratul Ikhlas teaches us that there is One God, Who is Self-reliant, He was not born and did not have offspring, and there is no being like Him.

The first step to understanding Tawheed is to accept that God exists. There are many proofs to ponder over - we will discuss only a few.

a) Evidence in Creation.

The perfect harmony of creation around us points to the existence of a Creator. Can such beautiful, original and perfect creations, from single-celled amoeba to the complex brain of man, have evolved by chance?

Let us take the example of a simple protein molecule, which is the basic building block of all living creatures. It contains five basic elements - Carbon, Hydrogen, Nitrogen, Oxygen and Sulphur. The calculated probability that these five random elements came together by chance to create a single protein molecule is 1 in 10^{160} . Immediately the "creation by chance" theory can be disproved from this single fact. This is because the time taken for this one occurrence to randomly occur is 10^{243} years. Even the most exaggerated estimates of the age of Earth do not come close to this figure - and so we have to agree that there was a Designer and Planner who created the Universe.

Imam Ali (A) has said,

"The footprints of a camel and the dung of a donkey give a clue that the camel and donkey have passed, despite the fact that you cannot see them - then what of all creation?"

Imam's (A) example shows that the existence of the Creator cannot be denied just because we do not see Him - His creations point to His existence.

b) Evidence in Man's own Instinct

Belief in God is a natural instinct. An atheist asked Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) to convince him about the existence of God. The man was a sailor, so Imam (A) asked him, "Have you ever been caught in a fierce storm in the middle of the sea with your sails torn away while you try desperately to keep afloat?" The answer was "Yes". Then Imam (A) asked, "and perhaps even that the boat went down leaving you exhausted and helpless in the mercy of the raging waves?" The answer was again "Yes". Then the Imam (A) asked. "Was not there in all that black despair a glimmer of hope in your heart that some power could still help you?" When he agreed, Imam (A) said, "That power is God." The atheist was intelligent and recognised the truth.

c) Evidence from Logic

Everything occurs due to a cause - there is cause and effect. Bertrand Russell once said that he would believe in God, if only he understood who had caused God to come into existence.

Although the discussion about this is a bit complicated, part of it is simplified here. We believe that the existence of an ultimate Cause is necessary, otherwise if we imagine a being that created God, we can ask who created that being? We can see that this argument is endless. However, what we cannot deny is the effect of that ultimate Cause, which is the abundant glory of creation we see around us. It therefore follows that there has to be a Cause that has not been an effect of anything else and that Ultimate Cause is Allah.

Once we accept that God exists, we have to try to understand the nature of His existence.

a) He is One.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) once argued about this saying that there could only be one because: If there were two, one would be stronger, the other weaker - therefore the weaker one could not be God, who is the Most Powerful. If both were equal, what was the need for the second one?

A man once said to Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) that he believed there were two gods. Imam (A) said that as to the existence of the first one, he agreed with the man, but the burden was on the man to prove the existence of the second god!

b) His Attributes

All perfect attributes belong to Him alone. He is the Most Powerful, the Most Knowledgeable, the Most Wise, the Most Merciful, the Most Honourable.

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

"And Allah's are the best names, so call on Him by them....(al Araf, 7:180)

CLASS 11 - LESSON 17

AN INTRODUCTION TO AQAIID - ADALAH

Adalah literally means Justice or Equity, that is to keep everything in its proper place. The opposites of this word is Dhulm (to put a thing in a wrong place).

Frequently people think that Justice of Allah is the same meaning as the justice we expect in courts of law etc. And if a problem befalls a man, he says Allah has been unjust to him. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

"Allah bears witness that there is no God but Him, and so do the angels and possessors of knowledge - (He) is firm, upholding justice..." (Ali Imran, 3:18)

"And Allah does not wish injustice to mankind"

(Ali Imran, 3:170)

It is our belief that because a certain work is good that Allah commands us to do it and because the other action is evil, He orders us not to do it. On the other hand our Sunni brothers believe that there is nothing like good and evil but whatever Allah commands becomes good and whatever Allah forbids becomes evil.

It is a fundamental attribute of Allah that he can do no wrong or evil. All His actions are accordance with Adalah and injustice can never be found in his actions as it is below His dignity. Any person who commits injustice does so because of one of the following reasons:-

1. He does not know that it is wrong. (but Allah is All-Knowledge)
2. He needs something which cannot be obtained without wrong actions. (but Allah has no need)
3. He is forced by someone else to commit that wrong. (But Allah is All-Powerful and nobody can compel Him to do anything)

Thus logically Allah cannot be unjust

Lutf:

It is a common belief that if a person can do some good to another person without any harm coming to himself or any other person, and he does not do it, it would be against virtue. Therefore, if Allah can do anything beneficial to His creatures and supposing He does not do it, it will be against the virtue of Allah. 'Lutf' is that action on the part of Allah which would help His creatures in His obedience and assist their moral correction.

The Shia ithna-asheri faith believes 'Lutf' (Grace) is morally incumbent on Allah (necessary quality). On the other hand Sunnis believe that just like 'Adalah' is not necessary for Allah, 'Lutf' is not incumbent on Allah. A common example given by them is, if Allah sends good and pious persons to hell and Shaitan to heaven, it is quite right. We know that Allah created us to acquire virtue but how are we to know what is virtue and what is evil? Can we rely on our intellect and instinct to tell us what is right and what is wrong?

The sending of Shariah (rules and Islamic laws) and sending the Prophets and Imams to guide us as well as appointing a Day of Judgement are the examples of 'Lutf' by Allah.

Tests and Difficulties

Allah has established a system of tests so that we may see how we stand up to these and understand the judgement of Allah on us. Tests will be held for all persons, believers and non-believers.

There are 2 main categories of tests. First is the everyday test of rules of Shariah and articles of faith. To pass this test man has to sincerely believe in the true religion and obey its rules faithfully.

The second type of test is the harder one, and that is by suffering. This includes test by fear, hunger, loss of wealth and lives. Also accidents, floods, earthquakes, fire, robbery, famine and disease are all the things that have considerable effect on our lives. We are tested to see how we react to them. Does our faith remain unshaken? Were we patient and faced these with fortitude and courage? Our eternal happiness depends upon these tests.

Do we have free will?

Our belief is that man acts of his own accord and Allah has not pre-arranged all man's actions, although what everyone will do is in His knowledge. If we were not free, there would be no purpose to the creation of hell and heaven.

There are some actions or aspects of life which are not in our control and on the other hand we are given control and power over other actions by Allah. A question arises in our minds. 'At what point are we free?'.

Replying to this Imam Musa al-Kazim (A) said, "A man acquires that ability when 4 conditions are fulfilled:

1. When there is nothing to hinder his plans.
2. When there is nothing to hinder his health.
3. Faculties (needed for that work) are up to the required standard.
4. Allah provides him the occasion for that work.

When all these conditions are fulfilled a man acts according to his own free will.

In summary, we believe that Allah is has given us the choice of actions after having guided us and he will act with us perfectly Justly depending on our actions.

CLASS 11 - LESSON 18

AN INTRODUCTION TO AQAIID - NABUWWAH

Nabuwwah is the belief in the Prophets (A) sent down by Allah to guide mankind to the right path. There were 124000 Prophets (A) and the last of them was our Holy Prophet (S).

The message and mission of every Prophet (A) was the same. The Holy Qur'an says:

*"And indeed We raised in every nation an apostle preaching,
'Worship Allah and avoid every kind of idol'.."*

(an Nahl, 16:36)

If Allah had just created man but not made provision to guide him, then they would not have been able to worship Him in the correct manner, nor would they know what was expected from them.

Allah chose men at various times to convey His message to the people. These were Prophets (A), and they received revelation from Allah through His angels and through dreams. Since they were also human, they could then go and guide their communities and be role models for them.

Our belief is that all the Prophets (A) were Ma'sum (free from sin and error) and that this was a Divine protection for them. We believe in all the Prophets (A) of Allah and respect all of them. The Holy Qur'an says:

"Say: We believe in Allah and in that which has been sent down to us, and in that which was sent down to Ibrahim and Isma'il and Ishaq and Ya'qub and the tribes, and in that which was given to Musa and Isa and in that which was given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him do we submit."

(al Baqarah, 2:136)

The other essential quality of the Prophets (A) apart from being Ma'sum was that they could display miracles to support their claim to prophethood. By Allah's permission, they did things which the people were unable to do. The miracles that Allah gave them were designed to have the greatest impact on the people. For example, in the time of Prophet Musa (A), the people admired the magicians. When Prophet Musa (A) displayed his serpent, which overcame the magic of the court magicians of Fir'awn, the magicians were the first to believe in him. Similarly, at Prophet Isa's (A) time the people lay great store in their knowledge of medicine. Yet when he cured the lepers and the blind and even brought the dead back to life, they were forced to admit the genuineness of his claims.

The miracle of our Prophet (S) is the Holy Qur'an and we have it with us today - let us take full advantage of the Divine words contained therein to guide our lives and to make us better Muslims.

CLASS 11 - LESSON 19

AN INTRODUCTION TO AQAIID - IMAMAH

Imamah is the belief in the 12 Holy Imams (A) who were the inheritors of the Holy Prophet (S) and who were his Caliphs (successors).

We believe that the Imams (A) are divinely appointed starting from the appointment of Imam Ali (A) at Ghadire Khum on the command of Allah. The order that Imam Ali (A) was appointed the guardian of the nation is in the verse of Wilayat. Abu Dhar recounts, "Once, I was saying my prayers in the company of the Holy Prophet (S) when a beggar came to the mosque asking for some alms. Nobody gave him anything. Ali (A) was in the state of Ruku' and he pointed out his ring to the beggar, who approached him and removed the ring from his finger." At this time the following verse was revealed:

Verily your guardian (Wali) is Allah and His messenger (Muhammad) and those who believe and establish the prayer, and give charity (alms) while they are (in Ruku') bowing down. (al Maidah, 5:55)

When we say Aliyyun Waliyullah (Ali is the Wali of Allah) in our Adhan, it is based on this verse.

Although the Holy Prophet (S) had left the Holy Qur'an, there was a need for someone to continue to explain it and guide the people in their daily affairs. This is the role and the office to which the Imams (A) were appointed.

Just as the Prophets (A) were Ma'sum, so the Imams (A) of his Ahlul Bayt were also Ma'sum, and protected from any error by Allah Himself. The famous verse of Tathir is:

Verily, Allah wishes to drive away all evils from you, O Ahlul Bayt, and cleanse you thoroughly. (al Ahzab, 33:33)

Some Muslims argue that even though Imam Ali (A) had a high status in the eyes of Allah and His Prophet (S), nevertheless, he was not the first Caliph, but the fourth. They quote from the Holy Qur'an that the Caliph in power must be obeyed and respected:

O you who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority (Ulul Amr); ..."

(an Nisa, 4:59)

This verse says that we should obey those in authority. The Shia ask, "Yes, but who are these 'Ulul Amr'?" The answer can be found in Qur'an if we look for the verses where Allah has talked about the ones we should **not** obey:

So submit patiently to thy Lord's command, and obey not of them any guilty one or disbeliever. (ad Dahr, 76:24)

The same word for "obey" has been used in both verses, therefore the "Ulul Amr" must not be a sinner or a disbeliever - he must be Ma'sum. Now from the verse of Tatheer, we know that the only person after the Holy Prophet (S) who fitted the description of being Ma'sum and deserving of being "Ulul Amr" was Imam Ali (A).

CLASS 11 - LESSON 20

AN INTRODUCTION TO AQAIID - QIYAMAH

Qiyamah is the belief in a Day of Judgement when every person will account for his actions in this world. On that Day he will be judged fairly and be rewarded for his good deeds and punished for his sins.

On that day people who were oppressed in this world will receive justice and the oppressors who seemed strong in this world will be humbled and punished.

With death, man's soul separates from his body. The body decomposes, but the soul lives on, starting a new phase in its existence. On the day of Judgement, Allah will raise the dead from their graves, and their bodies will be reformed and they will gather for a reckoning of their actions. Man will be his own witness and his limbs will bear witness to his deeds. Everything he ever did will be replayed in front of him, with not even a little detail missing. People will be terrified awaiting their fate. The Holy Qur'an describes the scene as follows:

And when the books (of the deeds of mankind) are spread. And when the heavens are stripped. And when Hell (Jahannam) is set ablaze. And when the garden (Jannat) is brought forward. (Then) every soul will know what it had sent forward. (at Takweer, 81:10-14)

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