





Grade 8



ISLAMIC STUDIES



Molvi Abdul Aziz
MA, English Literature

DARUSSALAM
GLOBAL LEADER IN ISLAMIC BOOKS

Eemaan (Faith)

What is Eemaan?

What is true eemaan, or faith? Who is a true believer (*mu'min*)? What are the essential elements, or articles, of eemaan? These questions are of vital importance. In fact, this is what Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) explained to Angel Jibreel (عليه السلام) when the latter asked him about eemaan.

When Angel Jibreel (عليه السلام) asked the Prophet (ﷺ), "What is faith (*eemaan*)?" He replied, "It is to believe in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and to believe in the Divine Decree (*al-qadar*), both the good of it and the bad of it." (Muslim)

Eemaan is a Statement and Action

Eemaan is a statement and action. In other words, it has three essential elements: belief in the heart, profession by the tongue and performance of the deeds by the physical parts of the body.

1. Belief in the Heart

The heart is the locus of eemaan as well as its foundation. The Qur'an says,

﴿يَتَأْتِيَ الرُّسُولَ لَا يَحْزُنُكَ الَّذِينَ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ
مِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ قُلُوبُهُمْ﴾

"O Messenger, let not those who race each other into disbelief not grieve you, those who say 'We believe' with their lips, but whose hearts have no faith." (Surat al-Maa'idah, 5: 41)

Hence, eemaan is the statement of 'the heart'. It is made up of recognition, knowledge and affirmation. In other words, a believer recognizes that there is none worthy of worship except Allah. He has knowledge of this truth and he affirms it in his heart.

The second element of eemaan is the actions of the heart. This aspect of eemaan is made up of commitment, voluntary surrender and acceptance. These include, among other things, love of Allah, awe of Him, trust in Him, heedfulness of His commands and prohibitions, fear of Him and hope in Him.

2. Declaration of Faith with the Tongue

The second essential element of eemaan is to declare one's faith with the tongue. In this case, one testifies that one recognizes the truthfulness of the testimony of the faith and intends

to adhere to the commands and guidance of what he has testified to. Mere pronouncement of the words in themselves is not enough.

3. Performance of Righteous Deeds by the Body Parts

Eemaan is a statement and action. Faith increases by acts of obedience to Allah and decreases by acts of disobedience. The heart is the driving force behind all actions. If the heart is filled with *eemaan*—with the love of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), fear of Allah, hope in Him, amongst other things—it will certainly prompt the body to perform acts of obedience to Allah. It will keep him away from forbidden, shameful and even doubtful or dubious acts. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "There is a lump of flesh in the body; when it is sound, the whole body is sound; but when it becomes corrupted, the whole body also becomes corrupted. It is the heart." (Part of a *hadeeth* reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Faith, however, differs from one believer to another, and true faith is one that is expressed in actions, as Almighty Allah says, **"And this is Paradise which you have been made to inherit because of your deeds which you used to do [in the life of the world]."** (*Surat al-Hijr*, 43:72)

Branches of Faith

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Faith has sixty-odd or seventy-odd branches; the highest and the best of which is to declare that there is no god worthy of worship but Allah, and the lowest of which is to remove something harmful from the road. Modesty, too, is a branch of faith." (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

If *eemaan* has different branches and each part is called *eemaan*, it follows that *salaat* is *eemaan*, *Zakaat* is *eemaan*, and Hajj is *eemaan*. Virtues such as modesty, trust, fear of Allah, heedfulness of Allah, and total submission to His will, even removing a harmful thing from the way, are parts of *eemaan*. Some of these parts are very basic: like the two testimonies of faith. If you lose them, you lose *eemaan* completely. Others are marginal, such as removing an obstacle from the way. If, for any reason, you lose them, you do not lose *eemaan* completely. Instead, you have moved from the lofty level of *eemaan* to its lower level.

There are a number of things that testify to one's true faith. These include the following:

1. Loving the Prophet (ﷺ) more than one loves one's parents and children. (See al-Bukhaaree, 1:14)

2. Establishing voluntary prayers on the Night of the Decree (*Laylat al-Qadr*). (See al-Bukhaaree, 1:35)
3. Fasting the month of Ramadhaan faithfully and in anticipation of Allah's rewards. (See al-Bukhaaree, 1:37)
4. Establishing the obligatory prayers. (See al-Bukhaaree, 1:40)
5. Following the funeral procession of a Muslim. (See al-Bukhaaree, 1:47)
6. Observing *hayaa'* (modesty, honour, bashfulness) (See al-Bukhaaree, 1:24)

Sweetness of Faith

Anas ibn Maalik (رضي الله عنه) narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "Whoever possesses these three qualities will enjoy the sweetness of faith: (1) One to whom Allah and His Messenger is dearer to him than anything else, (2) one who loves a person only for the sake of Allah and (3) one who hates to revert to disbelief as he hates to be thrown into the Hell-fire." (Al-Bukhaaree)

He is still a Believer he who has Deficiency in Faith

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "A fornicator (a person who indulges in illicit sex) while committing illicit sex is not a [true] believer. A thief while

stealing is not a [true] believer." (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

A similar *hadeeth* states, "When a person commits illicit sexual intercourse, *eemaan* leaves him and remains above his head like an awning. When he parts from this illicit behaviour, the *eemaan* comes back to him." (at-Tirmidhee)

During the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), some people committed adultery, stole and drank wine. The Prophet (ﷺ) did not call them disbelievers. He did not even declare that relations between them and the Muslims be cut off. Instead, he flogged the drinker and had the hand of the thief cut off. At the same time, he sought Allah's forgiveness for them.

Scholars have argued that the Prophet's words in the *hadeeth*, "*Eemaan* leaves him and remains above his head like an awning" suggest that *eemaan* does not depart from him completely. A person who performs such deeds still remains a believer but he has a deficiency in his faith. In other words, he is a believer with respect to his faith and an evildoer with respect to the sin he commits. He is not a true believer. He does not fulfil his faith sincerely.

The Essential Elements of Eemaan

The essential elements, or articles, of *eemaan*, according to a *hadeeth* reported by al-Bukhaaree, are as follows:

To believe in

1. Allah,
2. His Angels,
3. His Books,
4. His Messengers,
5. The Last Day, and
6. Allah's decree, the good of it and the bad of it.

Exercises

A. Fill in the blanks.

1. The _____ is the locus of *eemaan*.
2. _____ is the driving force behind all actions.
3. Faith has _____ branches.
4. According to a *hadeeth*, the lowest degree of faith is to _____ something harmful from the road.
5. "A thief while stealing is not a _____ believer."

B. Answer the following questions.

1. What are the three essential elements of *eemaan*?

2. What aspects does belief in the heart consist of?

3. What does profession of faith by the tongue entail?

6 Eemaan (Faith)

4. What are the highest and lowest branches of Faith?

5. Which branch of faith will make one lose one's *eemaan* completely?

6. What do you know about a Muslim who commits major sins? Give examples.

7. What are the essential elements of *eemaan*?

Belief in Allah is the cornerstone of *eemaan*. All other forms of belief in Islam revolve around belief in Allah. It is, therefore, very important that a Muslim's belief in Allah must be correct.

The Importance of the Correct Belief in Allah – The *Tawheed*

Tawheed means monotheism, the testimony to the Oneness of Allah, and it is of three types:

1. ***Tawheed ar-Ruboobiyah* (The belief that Allah is the Lord of all the creatures):** He is the Creator, the Provider, the One who gives life, the One who takes it away and the One who disposes of all affairs. Therefore, there is no creator except Allah, as Allah the Almighty says, **"Allah is the Creator of all things."** (*Surat az-Zumar*, 39:62) There is no one who provides sustenance except Allah, as the Qur'an says, **"And no moving [living] creature is there on earth but its provision is due from Allah."** (*Surat Hood*, 11:6) There is no one who alone disposes of all the affairs except Allah the Almighty: **"He manages and regulates [every affair] from the heavens to the earth."** (*Surat As-Sajdah*, 32:5) There is

no one who causes death and gives life except Allah alone: **"It is He who gives life and causes death, and to Him you shall return."** (*Surat Yoonus*, 10:56)

This kind of *tawheed* was declared by the disbelievers during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), but this declaration alone was not sufficient for them to be considered believers, as Allah the Almighty says about them, **"And if you [O Muhammad] ask them: 'Who has created the heavens and the earth?' they will certainly say, 'Allah.'"** (*Surat Luqmaan*, 31:25)

2. ***Tawheed al-Uloohiyah* (The belief that Allah the Almighty is the true God who alone deserves to be worshipped):** therefore, all acts of worship, such as invocation, trust, fear and sacrifice, should be directed to Him alone. Thus, we should invoke none but Allah, rely on

none except Allah, seek no one's help except Allah's help, and seek no one's refuge but Allah's refuge.

It is this type of *tawheed* with which Allah's messengers, peace be upon them, came. Allah the Almighty says, **"And surely, We have sent among every nation a messenger [proclaiming]: Worship Allah [Alone] and keep away from the taghoot."** (*Surat an-Nahl*, 16:36) The *taghoot* here means all false deities that are worshipped besides the True God, Allah the Almighty.

This was the very type of *tawheed* which the disbelievers, past and present, reject. The disbelievers during the Prophet's time scornfully said, as the Qur'an says about them, **"Has he (i.e. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) made the gods [all] into One God (Allah)? Surely, this is a curious thing!"** (*Surat Saad*, 38:5)

3. ***Tawheed al-Asmaa' was-Sifaat*** (The belief that Allah the Almighty has the Most Beautiful Names and the Loftiest, Perfect Attributes): A Muslim believes in all Allah's Names and Attributes with which Allah describes Himself or His Messenger

described Him, without distorting their meanings, denying them completely, qualifying them or likening them to any of those of His creatures.

To clarify this, Allah the Almighty describes Himself in the Qur'an as *Al-Hayy* 'the Ever Living' (See *Surat al-Baqarah*, 2:255). Therefore, we should believe that *Al-Hayy* (the Ever Living) is one of Allah's Names and also believe in the quality which is contained in this name, namely the perfect form of life which is neither preceded by non-existence nor followed by death.

Another example is the Name *As-Samee'* (the All-Hearer). The Qur'an says, **"There is nothing like Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer."** (*Surat ash-Shoora*, 42:11) Similarly, we must believe that *As-Samee'* is one of Allah's Names and also believe that this is one of His qualities; namely, that He is able to hear in a manner that suits His Majesty, without likening this attribute to any of those of His creatures.

Some Manifestations of Allah's Attributes

Allah Alone is the Sustainer – the Lord (*ar-Rabb*). He is the One without any partners in His Kingdom. He is the Only Creator and the True Owner of creation. He is the Only One who nourishes, sustains and maintains His Creation. He created



everything by Himself, and total power belongs to Him Alone. Everything that happens in this creation happens by His permission and will. Sustenance and provisions are from Him alone. Life and death are in His Hands, and all bounties come from Him alone.

He commands and forbids. He causes death and gives life. He changes the day into night and alternates the days of people and nations, replacing one with another. He creates and designs. Things occur according to His will. Whatever He wills comes into being at the time and in the manner He Wills it. His order and His decree are fulfilled in the heavens, in the farthest reaches of the earth and beneath it, in the seas, the skies and in every other part of the universe. He encompasses

all things with His knowledge. He keeps count of every single thing.

He envelops all things with His Mercy and Wisdom. His Hearing encompasses all voices, yet they do not blend into each other or resemble each other. Rather, He hears the clamour of all the various tongues, in all the countless languages, distinct in their countless supplications. None of His creatures distracts Him from another, nor does He confuse their innumerable pleas, nor does the tone of the supplicants' voices repulse Him.

His Sight envelops everything; He sees the smallest black ant upon a piece of coal in a moonless, dark night. The hidden for Him is visible and the secret is public. He knows what is more hidden than a secret. He knows what is

secret and contained in a person's mind, conceived in his heart, which is not yet uttered by his lips. He knows even what his heart has not yet intended. He knows that this person will have the intention to do such-and-such a thing at such-and-such a time.

To Allah belong the creation and the command. To Him belong the kingdom and praise. To Him belong this world and the next. To Him belong grace, blessing and respect. In His Hand is all good and to Him all affairs return. His power encompasses everything. His grace extends to all living things. Those in the heavens and the earth ask Him. Everyday, rather every moment, He manifests Himself in a wondrous way! All depend upon Him for their safety and sustenance. He forgives sins, relieves problems and removes woes. He makes the poor rich, bestows knowledge on the ignorant, guides those who have gone astray, directs the confused, aids the desperate, frees the captive, feeds the hungry, clothes the naked and heals the sick. He pardons the one who has been tried. He accepts repentance from His repentant slaves, rewards the righteous and helps the oppressed. He humbles the arrogant, steadies the one who stumbles and gives safety from fear. He does not sleep, nor does drowsiness or sleep overtake Him.

To Him do the deeds of the night ascend before those of the day, and the deeds of the day before those of the night. His Veil is light. Were He to lift it, the vision of His Face will consume all in creation that gaze. He is the Giver of all bounties, and giving does not lessen in the least what He possesses. The heart and the forelocks of every creature are in His Hand. The whole earth will be in His grasp on the Day of Judgment, and all the heavens will be gathered in His Right Hand. The earth will shine bright with His Light on the Day of Judgment.

On the Day
of Resurrection, He will grasp
the earth [by His Hand] and will roll
up the heaven with His Right Hand
and will say, "I am the King. Where
are the kings of the earth?"
(al-Bukhaaree)

No sin is too great for Him to forgive. There is no need too great for Him to fulfil. And if all those in the heavens and the earth, from the beginning to the end of creation, human beings and jinn alike, had the heart of the most pious one among them, it would not add to His Kingdom in the least. And if all those in the heavens and the earth, human beings and jinn, living and dead, were gathered on a single vast plain and

asked from Him and He gave each one of them whatever they asked, this would not lessen even by a tiny particle what He possesses!

If all the trees on earth, from the beginning to the end of time, were pens; if all the seas and seven other seas added to them were ink and those pens were to write in that ink, both the pens and ink would run out but the words of the Creator would not. He is the First before whom there is nothing. He is the Last after whom there is nothing. He is the Inward above whom there is nothing. He is the Outward beneath whom there is nothing. Glorified and Exalted is He!

He is most worthy to be invoked, worshipped and praised. He is the first to be thanked; the One whose support is most desired. He is the Most Generous of those who possess whatever He has bestowed upon them, the Most Merciful of those who have power and the Most Just of those who are just. With His might comes His forgiveness; with His withholding comes wisdom and with His Knowledge comes pardon. No one has a real right upon Him. If He punishes any of His creatures, it is in His total justice; and if He blesses any of them, it is out of His unbounded generosity and grace.

There is no one to withhold what He gives and no one to give what He

withholds! There is no one to guide whomever He leads astray and no one to lead astray whomever He guides. There is no one to permit what He forbids and no one to forbid what He permits. There is no one to hold far what He brings near. He is the Supreme Lord without a partner. He is Unique without equal. He is the Eternally Existent without a son or a mate. He is the One without comparison or kind. Everything perishes except His Face, every kingdom fades except His Kingdom, every sheltering shade except His will be withdrawn and every grace except His Grace has a limit.

None obeys except by His permission and mercy. None sins except by His knowledge and judgment. When He is obeyed He is Grateful, and when He is disobeyed He overlooks and excuses! His anger is always just. His blessings are always by His Grace. For Him all hearts and secrets are open and the hidden is evident. When He wills something He merely says: Be! And it is!

There is nothing similar to Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.

Hence, every rite of worship, be it prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, sacrificing an animal, vowing and so forth, must be done solely for the sake of Allah. Similarly, all supplications and prayers must be directed to Him alone.

If someone does any of these acts for someone other than Allah, he is negating his *tawheed*. These acts include putting one's trust in Allah, fearing only Allah and devoting oneself only to Him.

Furthermore, in order for one's *tawheed* to be correct, one must reject and deny any form of *taaghoot*, false gods or false objects of worship.

To conclude: Islam requires complete submission to Allah Alone. Whoever submits his will completely to Him as well as to someone or something else has actually committed the sin of *shirk*. *Shirk* (associating others with Allah in worship) is an unpardonable sin which opposes true faith. Those who commit such a sin are disbelievers.

Exercises

A. Answer the following questions.

1. How important is belief in Allah?

2. What is the meaning of the word '*tawheed*'?

3. What are the three types of *tawheed*?

4. Give one or two examples for each type of *tawheed*.

5. When does one negate one's *tawheed*?

6. What is the meaning of the word *taaghoot*? Give some examples.

B. Think-up

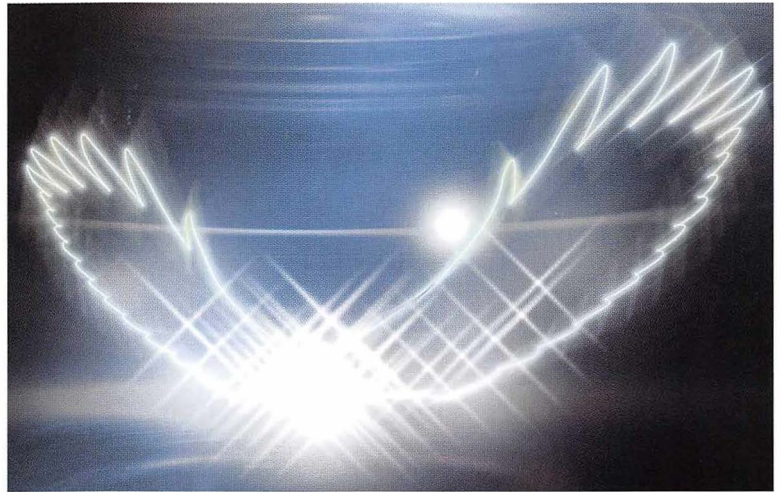
With the help of your teacher, go over the lesson and highlight the attributes of Almighty Allah.

Belief in the Angels

Belief in the Angels

Belief in the angels is another fundamental belief that forms the cornerstone of *eemaan* – faith. When Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) was asked by Angel Jibreel (جبريل), "What is Faith?" He replied, "It is to believe in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and to believe in the Divine Decree (*al-qadar*), both the good and the bad of it." (Muslim)

Belief in the Angels, therefore, is the second article of faith.



The Word 'Malak'

The Arabic word for angel is *malak*, whose plural form is *malaa'ikah*. The Qur'an speaks of the creation of man from clay and that of *jinn* from fire. 'Aa'ishah (رضي الله عنها) narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said that the *jinn* were created from fire (*naar*), and the angels were created from light (*noor*). (Muslim)

Thus, the angels are a type of Allah's creation that cannot be seen by man. They serve Almighty Allah in what He commands them and they do not enjoy any divine attributes whatsoever. They submit to Allah's commands completely. They never stray away from obeying His orders even for a moment.

This shows that the angels and the *jinn* are two different classes of Allah's creation, and that it is a mistake to consider them as belonging to the same class. The Qur'an speaks of the angels as messengers (*rusul*) with wings. (*Surat Faatir*, 35: 1)

Belief in the Angels consists of the Following:

1. We must believe that they exist.
2. We must believe in those angels whose names we know through the Qur'an or the *Sunnah*. For example, Angel Jibreel (جبريل) who brought revelation to the Messenger (ﷺ).
3. We must believe in their attributes, as mentioned in the Qur'an or the *Sunnah*. For example, one of the Prophet's traditions state that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) saw Angel Jibreel (جبريل) in the image in which he was created, with six hundred wings that blocked the horizon.
4. We must believe in the actions that they perform, as mentioned in the Qur'an or the authentic *hadeeth*. The Qur'an says that they worship Allah and glorify Him day and night. It also states that specific angels have specific tasks. Jibreel (جبريل) is entrusted with Allah's revelations which he brings down from Allah to His prophets and messengers. Israafeel (إسرافيل) is responsible for blowing the Trumpet that will resurrect the dead on the Day of Judgment. Mikaa'eel (ميكائيل) is entrusted with the rain and vegetation.



Each one of us has two angels with him who constantly record all his words and deeds. The Qur'an says, "**Behold, two [recording angels] appointed to learn [his doings and note them], one sitting on the right and one on the left. Not a word does he utter but there is a vigilant recorder.**" (Surat Qaaf, 50:17-18)

The believers know that there are angels called *mu'aqqibaat* that protect man in all situations. The Qur'an says, "**For each [person] there are angels in succession, before and behind him. They guard him by the command of Allah.**" (Surat ar-Ra'd, 13:11) Another verse reads, **He is the Irresistible, Supreme over His slaves, and He sends guardians over you.**" (Surat al-An'aam, 6:61) These guardians guard as well as write all of one's good and bad deeds.

Another angel we know of is the Angel of Death who is entrusted with the task of taking souls. The Qur'an says, "**Say the angel of death who is**

set over you will take your souls, then you will be brought to your Lord."
(*Surat as-Sajdah*, 32:11)

Some angels are entrusted with the task of keeping Paradise (*Surat az-Zumar*, 39:73), while others (called *az-Zabaaniyah*) are in charge of keeping the Hellfire (*Surat Al-Muddath-thir*, 74:27-31)

Some angels are entrusted with the foetus in the womb. When the foetus has spent four months in the womb, Almighty Allah sends an angel with the orders to write his provision, his lifespan, his deeds and whether he will be miserable or happy in the hereafter.

There are also two angels that question the dead in their graves as well as angels that pray for the believers and support them when they do righteous deeds to earn the Good Pleasure of Allah. For instance, among many *ahadeeth* of this nature, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Allah, the angels and the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, even the ant in its hole and the fish, pray for the one who teaches people good." (at-Tabaraanee)

Their Prayers for the person continue for a long time, even after the person has completed his good deed. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) once said, "No man goes to visit an ill person in the late afternoon except that seventy thousand angels go with him and

continue to seek forgiveness for him until the morning and he shall have a garden in Paradise. And if one goes to him in the morning, seventy thousand angels go with him and seek his forgiveness until the evening and he shall have a garden in Paradise." (Ahmad, Abu Daawood and at-Tirmidhee)

In fact, a believer can reach a point where the angels begin to love him and spread love for him in the world. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "If Allah loves a person, He calls Jibreel (ﷺ) saying, 'Allah loves so and so, therefore, so love him. The dwellers of the heaven then love him and he is then granted acceptance among the people of the earth.'" (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

The Supplications of those Angels who are very Close to Allah

The Qur'an says, **"Those [angels] who sustain the Throne of Allah and those around it exalt [Allah] with praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask forgiveness for those who believe, saying, 'Our Lord, You have encompassed all things in mercy and knowledge; so forgive those who repent and follow Your path and protect them from the punishment of Hellfire! Our Lord, admit them into the gardens of perpetual bliss which you have promised them, and to the**

righteous among their fathers, their spouses and their children. Truly, You are the Almighty, the All-Wise.” (Surat Ghaafir, 40:7-8)

The believer recognizes that the angels are a very good and magnificent creation. As we have learnt earlier, Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) describes Angel Jibreel (عليه السلام) as having six hundred wings. (al-Bukhaaree) Another *hadeeth* in *Saheeh Muslim* describes Angel Jibreel (عليه السلام) once as filling up the entire horizon. The goodness and magnificence of this creation of Allah certainly points to the greatness and magnificence of its Creator. It is this knowledge that deepens a person’s love, awe and admiration for Allah.

The Electrifying Possibility of Observing Angels

Usayd ibn Hudhayr (رضي الله عنه) was reciting the Qur'an in his enclosure one night when his horse began to jump about frantically. Repeatedly Usayd would stop his recitation until the horse was calm. No sooner had he resumed reciting than the horse would again begin to jump wildly. Eventually he stopped altogether for fear of having his son trampled over by the horse.

Usayd (رضي الله عنه) observed, while standing near the horse, something like a canopy over his head with what

seemed to be lamps in it rising up in the sky until it disappeared. The next day, he approached the Prophet (ﷺ) and informed him of what he had seen the previous night. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Those were the angels who listened to you; and if you had continued reciting, the people would have seen them in the morning and they would not have concealed themselves from them." (Saheeh Muslim, English translation by Abdul-Hameed Siddeeque, *Hadeeth* no. 1742)

Loving Others for Allah’s Sake

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said, “A man set out to visit a brother [in faith] of his in another town, and Allah appointed an angel for him on his way. When he came to him, the angel asked, ‘Where do you intend to go?’ The man replied, ‘I intend to visit a brother of mine in this town.’ The angel then said, ‘Do you have any property with him that you want to check on?’ He replied, ‘No, it is only because I love him for the sake of Allah Most High.’ The angel then said, ‘I am a messenger to you from Allah [to inform you] that Allah loves you as you love him for His sake.’” (Muslim) This *hadeeth* indicates that the angels can assume human shape by Allah’s leave.

The angels record the words and deeds of each and every one of us. They are always in our presence. This is the reason why the Prophet (ﷺ) stated, “Whoever eats of this [offensive] plant (i.e. garlic) must not approach our mosque, for the angels are harmed by that which harms humans.” (Muslim)

Hence, even if no other humans are around, the believer knows that the angels are around; therefore, he should always remain careful and modest in their presence. He should avoid doing anything that may annoy and harm these beloved noble creatures. It is important to note that the angels are neither male nor female, and that they neither eat nor drink.

A very delightful *hadeeth* narrates some of the functions of the angels. Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said, “Allah has some angels who look for those who celebrate the praises of Allah on the roads and paths, and when they find some people celebrating the praises of Allah, they call each other saying, ‘Come to the object of your pursuit.’ The angels then encircle them with their wings up to the sky of the world. Then their Lord asks them, although He is Most Knowledgeable of them, ‘What do my slaves say?’ The angels reply, ‘They say: *Sub-haanallaah, Allaahu Akbar and al-Hamdulillaah.*’ Allah then says, ‘Did

they see Me?’ The angels reply, ‘No, by Allah, they did not see You.’ Allah says, ‘How would it have been if they saw Me?’ The angels reply, ‘If they saw You, they would worship You more devoutly and celebrate Your Glory more deeply, and more often declare Your freedom from any resemblance to anything...” (al-Bukhaaree)

Belief in the angels is one of the essential articles of faith. Therefore, if a person does not believe in them, he is without doubt a disbeliever.

Exercises

A. State whether these statements are true (T) or false (F).

1. The *Jinn* are also angels. _____
2. Angels can assume human forms. _____
3. Belief in the Qur'an cannot be confirmed unless one believes in all the angels. _____

B. Fill in the blanks.

1. The Arabic word for angels is _____
2. Almighty Allah created man from _____, *jinn* from _____, and the angels from _____.
3. Angel Jibreel (جبريل) is recorded as having _____ wings.
4. When a person visits an ill person, _____ angels go with him, and seek forgiveness for him.

C. Answer the following questions.

1. Mention some qualities of the angels.

2. There are two angels who stay with us all of the time. What are their duties?

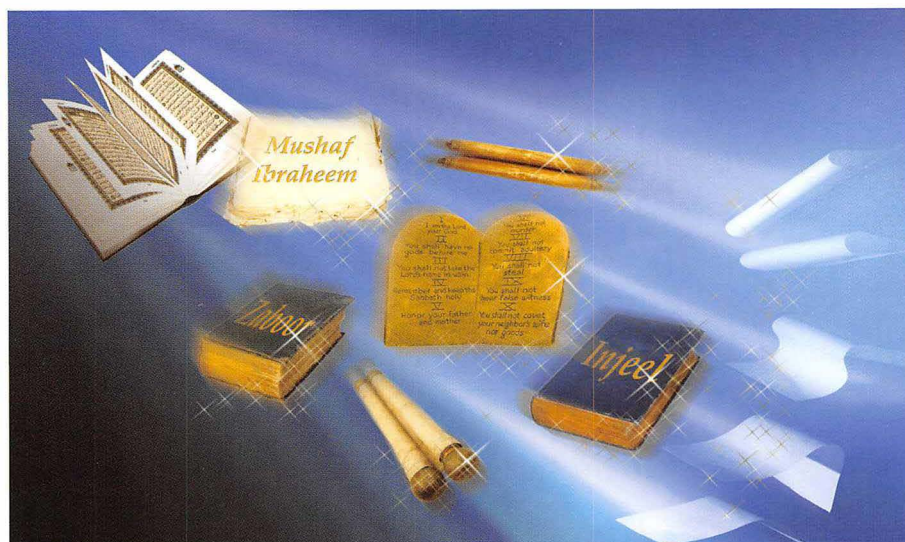
3. What is the ruling regarding someone who does not believe in the angels?

4. What did the Prophet (ﷺ) say would have happened had Usayd (رضى الله عنه) continued to recite the Qur'an?

5. According to a *hadeeth*, what are the things that bother the angels?

D. Think-up

Mention at least five angels and their responsibilities.



Belief in Allah's Books: The Third Article of Faith

Belief in Allah's Books is the third article of faith. It refers to the revelations Allah sent down to His Messengers. These revelations were a mercy and guidance from Allah. Their main objective was to bring mankind from the darkness of ignorance and disbelief to the light of faith as well as success in this life and eternal happiness in the hereafter. The Qur'an, which is Allah's Speech, is the final revelation.

Divine revelations Mentioned In the Qur'an and the Sunnah

1. The Tawraah (Torah) revealed to Prophet Moosaa (ﷺ)
2. The Zaboor revealed to Prophet Daawood (ﷺ)
3. The Injeel (Gospel) revealed to Prophet 'Eesaa (ﷺ)
4. There is also reference in the Qur'an to the *suhuf* – the Scrolls revealed to Ibraaheem (ﷺ) and Moosaa (ﷺ).
5. The Glorious Qur'an, the Final Book revealed to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)

Belief in Allah's Books includes four Things

Belief in Allah's Books includes the following:

1. Belief that these Books were truly revealed by Almighty Allah to His messengers.
2. Belief in the divine books mentioned in the Qur'an or the Sunnah.
3. Acting in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an, which is the final revelation. One must submit to it completely, even if he does not altogether grasp the wisdom behind the command or statement.
4. Belief that all the divine books had been abrogated by the Qur'an, as Allah says, **"And We have sent down to you the Book**

(i.e. this Qur'an) in truth, confirming the scriptures that came before it and judging over them." (*Surat al-Maa'idah*, 5:48) Therefore, it is not permissible to apply any of the laws from the previous books unless the Qur'an confirms that law; and if there is anything about which there is doubt, we must not turn to these books, but to the Qur'an, as Almighty Allah says, **"And if you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger."** (*Surat An-Nisaa'*, 4:59)

A Word about the Previous Revelations

The Books that the Jews and the Christians possess today, which they call the Torah, Gospel and the Psalms, may contain some of the original revelations. It should be noted here, however, that they have been distorted and that countless changes, additions and deletions have been made into them over the centuries. Hence, to believe in the *Tawraah* of Moosaa (ﷺ), for example, does not mean that a Muslim believes in the first five books of the present-day Old Testament. The two are different Books altogether. The Old Testament, however, may contain some of what was originally revealed in the *Tawraah*.

All of the previous revelations have been abrogated by the final revelation — the Glorious Qur'an. There is no need for any Muslim to turn to the remnants of any of the previous revelations for guidance. Everything that he needs for his guidance is contained in the Qur'an. It is not permissible to act in accordance with any ruling mentioned in the previous revelations unless it is approved by the Qur'an.

One of the greatest blessings of Allah is that He sent revelations for the guidance of mankind. In fact, He sent specific and different revelations according to the needs and conditions of different peoples over time. This mercy of Allah continued until the Qur'an was revealed. Indeed, the Qur'an contains all the guidance that people need from the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) until the Last Day. Because the Qur'an provides guidance for all places and times until the Day of Resurrection, Allah has undertaken to protect it from any tampering or distortions.

The Glorious Qur'an is Protected by Allah Himself

The Qur'an is the uncreated Word of Allah. It is the Final Message of Allah to all mankind. Its present form is the same as it was at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ). The Qur'an has come down to us complete. No changes have

ever been made in it. Nothing of it is missing. No additions have ever been made to it. No part, not even a tiny syllable of it is forgotten or has gone unrecorded. The Qur'an is protected by Allah Himself from all forms of distortions.

The Qur'an is the only revealed book in the world today that has been preserved in its pure original form. There is no other instance of any revealed book, of whatever description, which has been preserved over such a length of time. The text of the Qur'an will remain as it was revealed until the end of time. It is protected by Allah Himself.

Allah says in the Qur'an,

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾

"Truly, We Who have sent down the Reminder (i.e. the Qur'an), and We will assuredly preserve it [from corruption]."

(Surat al-Hijr, 15:9)

Almighty Allah also says about it,

وَإِنَّهُ لَكِتَابٌ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤١﴾ لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَطْلُ

مِّنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ ۚ تَنزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ ﴿٤٢﴾

"It is an honourable, inimitable book; falsehood cannot come to it from before it or behind it; [it is] sent down by the All-Wise, Worthy of all praise." (Surat

Fussilat, 41:41-42)

The Story of a Jew

Al-Qurtubee mentions a marvellous story in his *Tafseer*. He says: The Caliph al-Ma'moon used to hold occasional debates on various issues at his court where all scholars were invited. It so happened once that a Jew came to attend one of these debates. By his looks, dress, speech and manners, he seemed to be an elegant person. His speech during the debate was excellent and brilliant. When the meeting was over, al-Ma'moon called him and asked him if he was a Jew, which he confirmed. To test him, al-Ma'moon asked him to accept Islam, in which case he could hope to receive the best possible treatment from him. The Jew said that he was not willing to abandon the religion of his forefathers. The matter ended there, and the man went away.

Then after one year the same person returned, but this time as a Muslim. He made a remarkable contribution to the court meetings on the subject of Islamic *fiqh*. When the sessions were over, al-Ma'moon called the man and asked him whether he was the same man who had come the previous year. The man answered, "Yes." Al-Ma'moon asked him, "You refused to accept Islam last time you came. Tell me what made you accept Islam."

He answered, "When I left your court, I decided to do some research on the religions of our time. I am a scribe by profession. I write books and sell them. They bring me good price. This time, I decided to make a test. First I made three handwritten copies of the Torah in which I made some additions and deletions of my own. I took these manuscripts to the synagogue. The Jews found them interesting and bought them.

"Then, I did the same thing with the New Testament. I made three manuscripts, complete with my additions and deletions and took them to the church. The Christians were pleased with these manuscripts and bought them from me. After that I tried the same thing with the Qur'an. I made three superb handwritten copies of the Qur'an but with a few additions and deletions of my own. When I went out to sell them, I faced a problem; for when Muslim booksellers examined the manuscripts they hurled them across saying that the books had been corrupted. From this incident, I learnt that this Book is protected and preserved by Allah Himself. I, therefore, embraced Islam." (Muhammad al-Qurtubee, *Al-Jaami' Li Ahkaam al-Qur'aan*, Vol. 5, pp. 6-7)

Exercises

A. Fill in the blanks.

1. Belief in Allah's Books is the _____ article of faith.
2. Belief in Allah's Books refers to _____ Allah sent down to His Messengers.
3. A Muslim must believe in all the Books revealed by Allah but must follow only the _____.
4. _____ is the only revealed Book today that is preserved.

B. Answer the following questions.

1. What is the purpose for Allah's revelations?

2. What made the Jew embrace Islam when he had refused to do so the previous year?

3. What are the divine revelations mentioned in the Qur'an that Almighty Allah sent down, and to whom had they been sent?

4. Can the Qur'an, in your opinion, be subject to any human changes whatsoever, and why?

5. Do we have to believe in all Allah's Books? Why or why not?

6. Can we, in your opinion, follow any of the laws mentioned in the present-day Old and New Testaments? Why or why not?

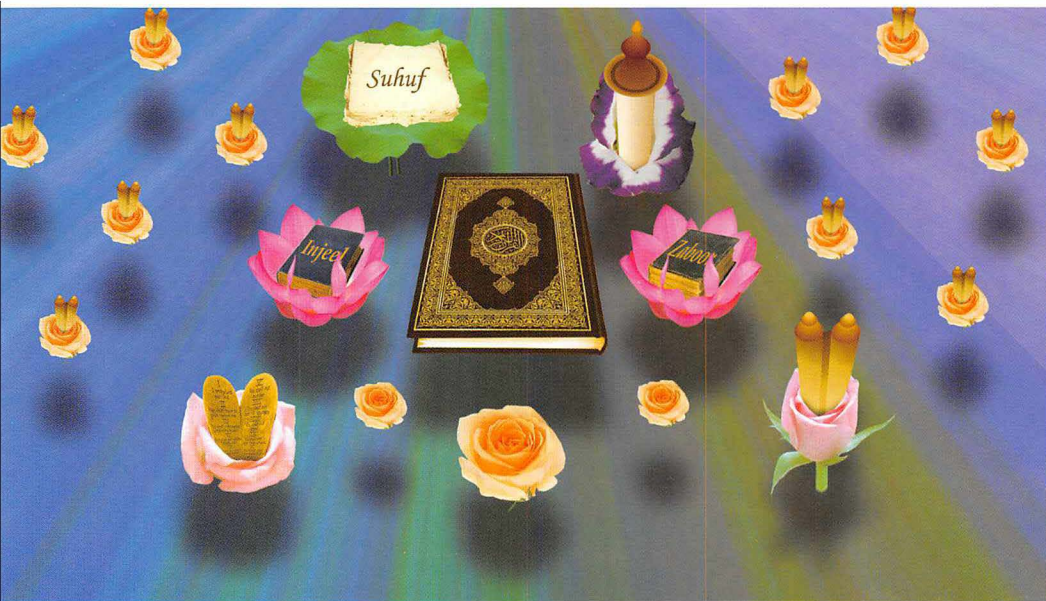
C. Think-up

Why do you think Allah has preserved the Qur'an from distortions while He did no such thing with the previous scriptures?

Belief in the Messengers of Allah

The fourth article of faith is the belief in the Messengers of Allah.

To believe in Allah's Messengers means to believe with certainty that Allah sent a messenger to each nation, calling them to worship Allah alone and not to associate any partners with Him in worship.



knows best whom to choose.

Indeed, Allah chooses messengers from both angels and men, as the Qur'an says, **"Allah chooses messengers from angels and from men."** (Surat al-Hajj, 22:75)

Almighty

All Messengers were Human Beings

All the prophets and messengers were human beings chosen by Allah to receive revelations from Him. They were commanded to pass on these revelations to people of their time. A person cannot by himself attain Prophethood or Messengership through spiritual exercises or personal efforts. It is Almighty Allah alone who chooses His Messengers and He alone

Allah also sent prophets and messengers to every nation. **"There was not a single nation among whom a warner had not passed."** (Surat Faatir, 35: 24)

We do not know about all of them, as the Qur'an says, **"[We sent] messengers about whom We have related [their stories] to you before and messengers about whom We have not related to you."** (Surat an-Nisaa', 4: 164)

As time passed, the original message of each prophet and messenger was distorted or entirely lost, and it became necessary for a new prophet or messenger to appear. Since Islam is the final religion, Allah has preserved its message from all forms of corruption. Therefore, the beliefs and practices which Muslims recognize today are the same beliefs and practices taught by Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) himself.

It is significant to note that all the messengers and prophets were human beings. They ate and drank. They became ill and recovered from illness. They married and had children. They lived and died. They suffered from what other humans suffer. They were, however, unlike ordinary folks. They were mortal but the most perfect of human beings. They were extraordinary men but did not have any divine status. They did not know anything about the unseen except for those matters about which Almighty Allah revealed to them. The Qur'an says, **"Say, 'I am only a human being like you to whom it has been revealed to me that your god is but one God.'"** (Surat Fussilat, 41:6)

Correct Belief in Allah's Messengers consists of four Things

The correct belief in the messengers of Allah consists of four things:

1. Belief that the message of all of them is the truth from Allah. If a person denies any single one of them who is confirmed in the Qur'an or the Prophet's traditions, then he is in fact denying all of them. Denial of one is tantamount to denial of all of them, since their message is essentially one and the same. Muslims must believe in all the prophets and messengers.
2. Belief in all the prophets and messengers mentioned by their names in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. As for those not mentioned in the Qur'an, one must believe in them in general. One must believe that there is not a single community among whom a warner had not come. Allah sent many prophets and messengers although not all of them are mentioned in the Qur'an or the *Sunnah*.
3. Belief in everything they said. They communicated their message from Allah completely and correctly. They tried hard to deliver Allah's message. They strove hard for Allah's sake in the most complete manner. They were the most knowledgeable of all people. They were the best servants of Allah. Allah protected them from

ascribing to Him something of their own invention or judging according to their whims and desires. He also protected them from committing sins or adding or deleting something from the religion.

4. One must act in accordance with the guidance and the teachings of the messengers Almighty Allah sent for man's guidance.

Indeed, it is one of Allah's great blessings that He sent prophets and messengers to guide mankind to the right path. In fact, people are more in need of the prophets' guidance than they are of food, drink and shelter. Allah sent prophets and messengers with clear proofs and supported them with miracles.

Aadam (ﷺ) was the first man and the first prophet, and the succession of prophets and messengers came to an end with Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), who was the Seal of the Prophets. Indeed, he was the universal and final messenger of Allah to all mankind. Every prophet and messenger was sent to his own people, but Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was sent to all mankind, as the Qur'an says, **"Say [O Muhammad], 'O mankind, truly, I am the Messenger of Allah to you all.'"** (Surat al-A'raaf, 7:158)

The Qur'an speaks of Aadam (ﷺ) as the first man and the first Prophet. Prophethood began with Aadam (ﷺ), and it came to a close with Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). The end is always in a sense a return to the beginning. This is equally true of the Prophets' mission and Islam. Islam, being the final message, has in it not only the fragrance of the end but also of the beginning. Islam, in its final form, is the most beautiful, adequate, the most wonderful and perfect religion. Prophet Muhammad's character was the Qur'an itself. His whole life was the Qur'an in action.

The Purpose of Sending Prophets and Messengers

The Qur'an says, **"And We certainly sent into every nation a messenger, [saying], 'Worship Allah and avoid the Taaghoot (i.e. false gods).'"** (Surat an-Nahl, 16:36)

Thus, the basic message of all prophets and messengers was the same: to call to the Oneness of Allah (tawheed), to worship Him Alone and to shun false gods and powers of evil.

All the prophets and messengers were inspired by Allah. They all brought the same basic truth that there is only One God — Allah, who will reward the good and punish the wicked. They all had the same mission to call people to the Straight Path.

Difference between *Nabee* and *Rasool*

A '*rasool*' (messenger) is a man who was inspired with a new law or set of laws and sent to a transgressing people, conveying to them Allah's message.

A '*nabee*' (prophet) is a man who was inspired with a message, but the message was to follow the law of those who came before him. He was sent to apply a previously revealed law.

Stories of Prophets and Messengers in the Qur'an

The stories of prophets and messengers form a significant portion of the Qur'an. The Qur'an, however, does not tell the stories of the large number of prophets and messengers as mentioned in the *hadeeth*. There are twenty-five prophets mentioned in the Qur'an: Aadam, Idrees, Nooh, Hood, Saalih, Ibraaheem, Ismaa'eel, Is-haaq, Ya'qoob, Lot, Yoosuf, Shu'ayb, Ayyoob, Dhul-Kifl, Musaa, Haaron, Yoosha, Ilyas, Daawood, Sulaymaan, 'Uzayr, Zakariyya, Yahyaa, 'Eesaa, and Muhammad—May Allah's peace and blessings be upon them all!

The Qur'an speaks of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as the Last of the Prophets – *Khaatam an-Nabiyyeen*. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) once said, "My example and the example of the prophets before me is like that of a

man who has built a house and he made it very good and very beautiful with the exception of one stone in the corner; so people began to go round it and to wonder at it and say, 'Why has the stone not been placed?'" The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "I am this stone, and I am the Last of the Prophets." (Al-Bukhaaree)

It is thus the same procession moving forward throughout human history since Aadam (عليه السلام). They brought the same guidance, warned people against Allah's punishment and gave them good news of a happy life in this life and eternal bliss in the hereafter. This procession includes noble men from various nations and various countries who lived at different times. Every one of them received revelations from Allah, and none of them invented anything in religion.

The Reason behind Raising Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)

The Prophet's (ﷺ) Mission:

The Qur'an states in several places the objectives of Prophet Muhammad's mission. It says in one place:

كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ
وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾

“Just as We sent to you a messenger from among you, who recites to you Our revelations and purifies you and teaches you the Book and wisdom (i.e. the Prophet's *Sunnah*) and teaches you that which you did not know.” (Surat al-Baqarah, 2: 151)

One of the Prophet's duties was to teach his followers how to understand and interpret the Qur'an, and translate it into a practical code for daily life. The Prophet's Mosque was the focal point of Muslim life and its centre of learning. It produced a unique and great civilization as well as a community of believers that has no parallel in human history.

Exercises

A. State whether these statements are true (T) or false (F).

1. All prophets and messengers were human beings. _____
2. Anyone can become a prophet. _____
3. Denial of one prophet is tantamount to the denial of all prophets. _____
4. All prophets and messengers Allah sent are mentioned in the Qur'an. _____
5. All the prophets gave the same guiding light. _____

B. Answer the following questions.

1. Why has Almighty Allah preserved Muhammad's message from corruption?

2. Why did people reject prophets and messengers even though they brought clear signs and proofs to them?

3. Mention some of the qualities of the prophets and messengers.

34 Belief in the Messengers of Allah

4. What was Allah's purpose for sending prophets and messengers?

5. What example did the Prophet (ﷺ) used to explain his position as the Last Prophet?

6. What was Allah's purpose in sending Muhammad (ﷺ)?

7. What's the difference between a 'nabee' and a 'rasool'?

8. Why, in your opinion, is Prophet Muhammad's message universal?
