

Surat al-'Asr (The Time)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 وَالْعَصْرِ ۝١ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ۝٢ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا
 وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ۝٣

In the Name of Allah, the Most Kind, the Most Merciful

1. By the time,
2. Truly, man is in a state of loss,
3. Except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and advise each other to [uphold] the truth, and advise each other to [observe] patience.

Explanation

The Arabic word 'asr means time, that is measurable, consisting of succession of periods. Hence, 'asr bears the significance of the passing or the flight of time – time that can never be recaptured.

Four Fundamental Points Concerning Surat al-'Asr

1. Surat al-'Asr was revealed to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in the earliest period of his Prophethood in Makkah.

2. *Surat al-'Asr* is one of the shortest *surahs* of the Glorious Qur'an. It consists of only three verses. The first verse is composed of only two words: *wa* (by) and *al-'Asr* (the time).
3. *Surat al-'Asr* is the most comprehensive *surah* of the Qur'an. Ash-Shaafi'ee said, "If Allah had revealed only this *surah* to His creatures, it would have been enough for them." He also once said, people were to reflect on this *surah*, it would certainly be enough for their guidance."
4. The wording of this *surah* is very simple and easy to understand. The Qur'an is unquestionably the greatest masterpiece of Arabic literature and in its totality can be understood easily, but this short *surah* is the best example of the most lucid *surahs* of the Qur'an. Although it is quite complete and comprehensive, not a single high-sounding or elusive word has been used in it. In fact, the words are familiar even to those who are acquainted with Urdu or Persian and do not know Arabic.

The Analysis of the Meaning of the Translation

Only three verses form one complete sentence in this *surah*. The first verse '*wal 'Asr*' is an oath. The second verse describes a general rule. The third verse describes an exception from that general rule. Combined together, all three verses firmly and clearly form a single statement in our minds. Pondering over it, we should deduce four conclusions, which are the basic lessons of this *surah*.

The Criterion of Success and Failure

The most important truth, which flows forth from this *surah*, is Allah's presentation of the real criterion of man's success and failure.

Every man keeps in his mind a criterion of success and failure, of gain and loss. All his efforts and the whole struggle of his life in this world are directed according to this criterion. Every intellectually mature person has an appointed goal or an ideal before him. Even teenagers keep before them a standard of achievement. If we were to look around in our society, we would find that, in our present time, the real criterion of success or failure according to a large number of people is wealth, property, status, honour, fame and show and worldly power. All but a few are running after these things.

They use their energies to achieve these goals. The minds of most of our students and parents are directed towards obtaining degrees in science or technology so that they may earn a lot of money or achieve status, position and power. The achievement of these things is their criterion of success or failure.

The foremost truth, which comes to our minds by studying *Surat al-'Asr* is very different from this! In other words, the criterion of man's success is not money, wealth, status, position, power or fame. Rather it is faith; the second thing is righteous deeds; the third thing is encouragement to uphold the truth and observe patience.

By this criterion, a person who does not possess the above four qualities is not successful and will never achieve his real goal, and in the end he will be a loser though he might be a millionaire or even a billionaire and might have power, position and status like Pharaoh. Conversely, anyone who has these four qualities will be successful and triumphant even if he may not have any worldly possessions whatsoever, and may be destitute, homeless, friendless or even unknown.

Changing our Criterion of Success and Failure is the Real Lesson of this Surah

The real lesson of this unique *surah* is that the correction of our attitudes and the goodness of our deeds depend upon changing our criterion of success and failure, gain and loss. If the simple truth stated in this great *surah* penetrates our souls and is engraved on our hearts, it will definitely bring about a revolution in our point of view. It will change our values and transform our day-to-day life radically. What was thought most important before will appear to be most trivial. What was insignificant before will become significant.

The Lives of the Prophet's Companions

The great transformation, which was brought about in the lives of the Prophet's companions was the result of this deep-rooted change in their point of view. In their sight, this world and whatever it contains seemed to them totally insignificant compared to the achievement of Allah's Good pleasure. This is the real lesson of this magnificent *surah*.

The Minimum Conditions and Essential Requirements of Success

This *surah* describes the bare minimum conditions and essential requirements of success in this life and the life to come. It explains the

minimum demands for our triumph. Anything less would undoubtedly result in failure. That is why, in this glorious *surah*, the most minimum demands of salvation have been described in the simplest of terms so that people may dedicate themselves to achieving it according to their capability.

All the four Conditions are Essential

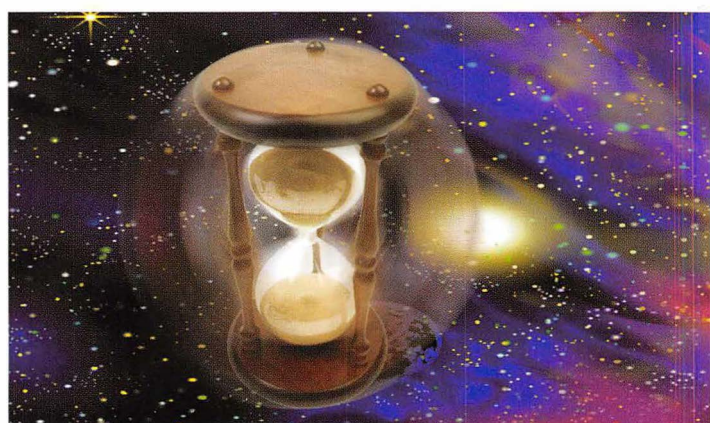
To achieve salvation, faith, good deeds, encouragement to uphold the truth and encouragement to patience and steadfastness are all necessary. None of them can be dropped. Four conditions have been laid down for saving us from utter loss or failure, and all four of them are essential.

If a medical expert prescribes four medicines for a patient, and the patient leaves out any of them according to his own judgment, then the medical expert will not be responsible for the incomplete medication. The patient himself will be accountable for this error. In the same way, if any of the four conditions prescribed is left out, then the guarantee of man's salvation will not rest on the Glorious Qur'an.

We must remember, however, that salvation does not depend on the mere utterance of words of faith. Rather, we Muslims should realize that

the performance of righteous deeds is essential for salvation. The affirmation and declaration of truth and inviting others to accept it as well as remaining steadfast in the face of hardships and calamities for the sake of the truth is also essential.

This is the truth which has been stated in this rather short but most comprehensive *surah*.



The Significance of the Word 'Al-'Asr'

The word *al-Asr* signifies not only time but also a period of time, which passes swiftly. It denotes time that is measurable, consisting of succession of periods. Hence, *al-'Asr* bears the meaning of the passing of time, which can never be recaptured.

One scholar reported that he understood the meaning of '*wal-'asri innal insaana lafee khusr*' (By the time, truly, man is in a state of loss) as follows: When he heard an ice-seller in the marketplace calling out, 'Have mercy on a man whose wealth is melting away!' meaning please buy my

ice before it melts, or I will lose all my investment and have no money left with which to feed my family! Of course, on a very hot day, even with the best of insulation, the ice would melt with every passing second. The scholar thought about this and concluded that our lives are just like blocks of ice: they pass away with every single second, and never to return.

Just as an ice-seller is a loser if he does not sell his merchandise before it melts away, we will certainly be losers if we do not make the most of our time by filling it with good deeds, which will without doubt pay off in the life to come. (Iman Torres-Al Haneef, *The Qur'an in Plain English*, The Islamic Foundation, UK)

The time is a witness to the entire human history. It has seen the rise and fall of human empires and kingdoms. It has witnessed powerful people come and go. It has seen cities, towns, castles, and palaces built and ruined. It seems that everything in this life is uncertain except the coming of death.

When death overtakes us, we leave everything behind. The only thing that will help us after our death is our sincere faith and good deeds. *Surat al-'Asr* is a clarion call for us to wake up from indifference and slumber. It reminds us that everyone in this life is a loser except those who

- (1) sincerely believe,
- (2) do righteous deeds,
- (3) advise one another to uphold the truth by doing acts of obedience and avoiding everything that Allah has prohibited, and
- (4) advise one another to observe patience as a result of calamities as well as harms caused to them due to enjoining others to do good and forbidding them from doing evil.

A believer must invite others to the truth of Islam. If he suffers any hardships while working for the cause of Islam, he must bear them with patience and constantly turn to Allah and seek His help!

Exercises

A. Fill in the blanks.

1. The *surah* has only _____ verses.
2. The *surah* describes the bare _____ conditions and essential _____ of success in our afterlife and present life.
3. Salvation does not depend on the mere _____ of faith.
4. The Arabic word '*asr* means _____.

B. Answer the following questions.

1. Mention Imam ash-Shafiee's views on the *surah*.

2. According to the *surah*, what is the real criterion of man's success?

3. What is the false criterion of success in our present times?

4. What is the real lesson of this *surah*?

5. All the four conditions are essential for salvation. Explain.

6. What do the words '*wal-'asr*' signify?

Belief in the Last Day

The Tremendous Event

While the world we live in continues its course through the ages, this will not go on forever. A day will come when time will come to an end, and our time of trial on the earth will be over. When will the world end? Only Allah (ﷻ) knows.

The Last Day

The Last Day is called as such because no new day will come after it. The word generally used in the Qur'an to indicate life after death is *al-aakhirah*. Death, in the light of the plain teaching of the Qur'an, is not the end of man's life. Rather, it only opens the door to another form of life.

The Last Day has a number of names, and there are many verses in the Qur'an which graphically depict this day. Some of these names are:

<i>Al-Qaariah</i>	the Calamity
<i>Az-Zalزالah</i>	the Earthquake
<i>Al-Haaqqah</i>	the Reality
<i>Al-Yawm al-muheet</i>	the Encompassing Day
<i>Yawm al-Fasl</i>	the Day of Separation
<i>Al-Yawm ath-Thaqeel</i>	the Hard Day
<i>Yawm al-Ba'th</i>	the Day of Resurrection
<i>Yawm an-Nushoor</i>	the Day of Rising
<i>Yawm al-Qiyaamah</i>	the Day of Judgment

It is also called *as-Saa'h* (the Hour). The Hour of Resurrection is so called because it hastens towards us (*tas'aa*) by passing through moments of time and our breaths.

The term 'Hour' also indicates the quickness with which its reckoning will be accomplished, or because it will come suddenly upon mankind, in a moment, and all creatures will die at one shriek.

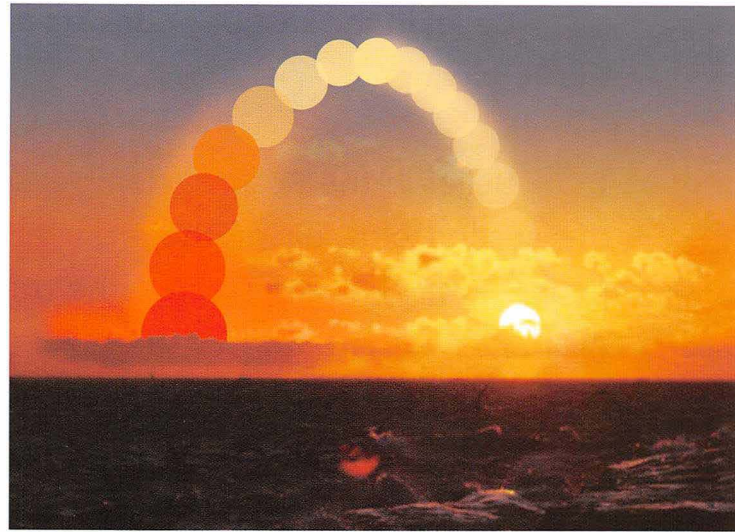
So when someone dies, his Hour has reached him and his resurrection has already begun.

Belief in the Last Day

Belief in the Last Day is one of the essential articles of faith. Belief in the Last Day consists of belief in everything that the Qur'an or the Prophet (ﷺ) has stated about the events of that day and the events that will take place thereafter. There are various aspects of the day like Resurrection, Judgment and Reward, Paradise and Hell, etc. that every Muslim should be aware of and believe in with certainty.

The Qur'an and the Prophet (ﷺ) have mentioned graphic details of this overwhelming day. The more one has knowledge of that day and its events, the greater effect this belief will have on him. Hence, it is necessary that every Muslim should learn about the events that would occur before and after the Last Day.

Imaam Muslim mentions an authentic *hadeeth* which states that before the Day of Judgment and the destruction of the earth, Allah (ﷻ) will send a cold wind from the direction of Syria which will take the souls of every individual who has even the slightest amount of faith in his heart. Therefore, the events of the end of the earth will befall on the worst of people, those having no faith at all.



One of the many events that will take place before this day is that the sun will rise from the west. At that time, all those people alive will declare their faith but it will be of no avail to them. Their coming to believe will not be accepted by Allah. Then the Trumpet will be blown and all those who are in the heavens and on the earth will swoon away, except him whom Allah wills. Then it will be blown a second time, and all the dead will be standing, looking on and waiting. Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Between the two blowings of the Trumpet there will be forty." The people said, "Is it forty days, Abu Hurayrah?" I refused to reply. They asked, "Forty years?" I refused to reply. They asked, "Forty months?" I refused to reply and I added, "Everything of a human body will waste away except for the last coccyx bone, and from that bone Allah will reconstruct the whole body." (al-Bukhaaree)

Belief in the Last Day Consists of the Following

1. Belief in the Resurrection: After the second blowing of the Trumpet, people will be resurrected before Allah.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "O people! You will be gathered together before your Lord, barefooted, naked and uncircumcised. The first one to be clothed will be Ibraaheem (عليه السلام). Some of my followers will be taken to the left. I will say, 'O Lord! These are my followers.' Allah will say, 'You do not know what new things they introduced [in religion] after you.'" (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

2. Belief in the reckoning or weighing of the deeds and the reward or punishment for these deeds. Each descendant of Aadam (عليه السلام) will be brought on the Day of Arising and will have his deeds weighed on the Scales. If his balance is heavy with good deeds, he will be joyful and will never ever be sorrowful again. However, if his balance is light, then he will be extremely sorrowful. Allah has made it abundantly clear in the Qur'an that people's deeds will be weighed.

Allah says, **"And the weighing [of deeds] on that Day will be the truth. So those whose scales are heavy, it is they who will be the**

successful. And those whose scales are light, they are the ones who will find their souls in perdition for denying and rejecting Our Signs." (Surat al-'Araaf, 7:8-9)

One might ask: How can actions be weighed? The answer is that Allah has the power over everything and so He can weigh them in a manner that He knows. He will surely weigh our deeds accurately and in a just way.

On that day, parts of the human body will be able to speak! They will give account of man's deeds individually before Allah, and there will be no one to help him.

Some people assume that the Day of Judgment is a long way away and thus there is no need to worry about it now. In fact, such people are greatly mistaken, for we do not know when death will overtake us. As soon as we die our time is over, and therefore we have to be ready to face our Lord.

Allah has the ability to recreate the bodies even after they have completely disintegrated. We may not be able to understand how this will happen exactly, but a believer knows it full well that it is true because He knows that the One who has created us out of nothing can easily bring us to life again.

Indeed, the Qur'an teaches us that all mankind will be raised from the dead. The resurrection of the dead will come about through the Almighty Power of Allah who has no difficulty whatsoever in creating us out of nothing and, likewise, He will have no difficulty in recomposing the elements of our bodies once again and give us life.

The Resurrection of the body will be a most powerful manifestation of the infinite justice and power of Allah. All mankind from Aadam (ﷺ) to the last person to be born and die will stand on the Day of Judgment before Allah.

We should remember, however, that Allah's reward for His righteous servants will be out of His Infinite Mercy, and that His punishment for His disobedient slaves will be out of His Justice. In fact, His reward will be far greater than the reward the righteous slaves' mere deeds deserve; He will not punish anyone more than what he deserves. Each one's new life will be decided on that day and will mark a new beginning for each and every soul. This new beginning will either lead to everlasting joy in Paradise or to eternal punishment in the Hellfire.

3. Belief in Paradise and Hell. Paradise is the everlasting abode of bliss for the believers and Hell is the

eternal abode of punishment for those who deny of truth. It is important to realize that both Paradise and Hell are in existence at the present time and they will exist forever. Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) make mention of them and describe them in graphic details. A Muslim should not deny their existence or descriptions.

The Grave and the Two Angels: Munkar and Nakeer

Belief in the Last Day also includes belief in everything that will happen to a person after his death and before the Day of Judgment. This consists of the trial in the grave and the joy or punishment in it.

A *hadeeth* recorded by at-Tirmidhee states that the two angels, Munkar and Nakeer, come to the person in the grave and ask him three questions, "Who is your Lord? What is your religion? and Who is your Prophet?" Other narrations mention the two angels coming and asking him, "What did you use to say about this man?" (meaning Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)).

Is the punishment in the grave a punishment that smites the soul or is it one that also afflicts the body, which over time disintegrates? You will learn about such aspects of the grave in the years to come, *Inshaa Allaah*.

We will also discuss in some detail some other aspects of life after death, like the Pool or Basin (*al-Kawthar*) of the Prophet (ﷺ), the various kinds of Intercessors, the handing down of the scrolls of deeds, passing over the *Siraat* (the Bridge set over Hellfire and leads to Paradise) and Paradise and Hell and their descriptions.

We conclude this chapter with a *hadeeth* which presents a fearsome spectacle of Reckoning and should be sufficient to stir one to prepare now for then.

Whenever 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan (رضي الله عنه) stopped by a grave, he would weep until his beard soaked. He was once asked, "How is it that you weep when you stop by a grave?" He answered, "I once heard Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) say, 'The grave is the first stage of the hereafter. Should the one who occupies it be delivered therefrom, then what follows will be easier than it. But if he is not delivered therefrom, then what follows is to be severer.'" (at-Tirmidhee and Ibn Maajah)



Exercises

A. Fill in the blanks.

1. One day, man's time of _____ on the earth will be over.
2. _____ blowing from Syria will take the souls of every individual who has even the slightest amount of faith.
3. Two angels, _____ and _____ question the dead in their graves.

B. Answer the following questions.

1. Mention a few names that refer to the Last Day?

2. Why is the Last Day called 'the Hour'?

3. Is it difficult to believe in man's Resurrection after he is dead and mixed with the soil? Explain your answer.

4. Mention the three important elements of belief in the Last Day.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

5. What questions will the two angels ask the dead in their graves?

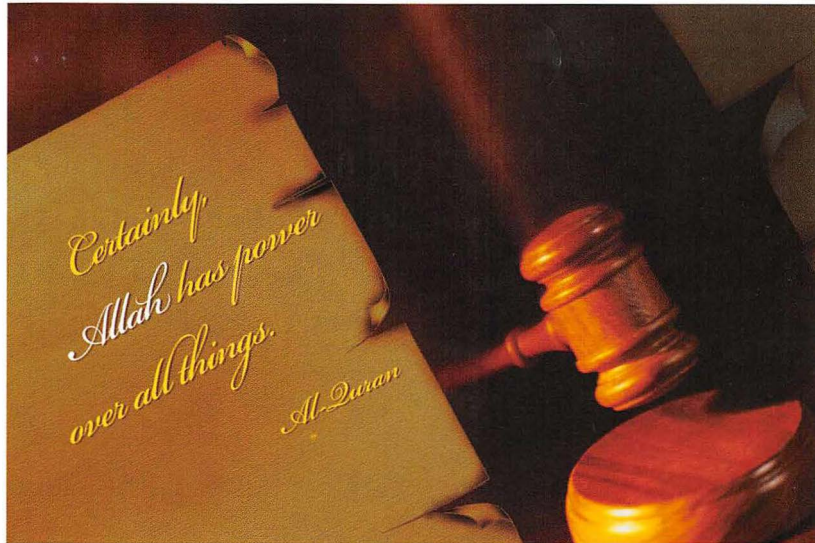
6. Why would 'Uthmaan (ﷺ) weep whenever he passed by a grave?

Belief in the Divine Decree (*al-Qadar*)

It is an essential part of *eemaan* to believe in *al-qadar*.

The word '*al-Qadar*'

Al-qadar is an Arabic word which originally means 'measure or amount whether of quantities or qualities'. The verb form of this word means, among other things, 'to measure or decide the quality, quantity, or position of something before one actually makes it.'



It is obligatory upon every Muslim to believe in *al-qadar*. Once 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab swore by Allah and said, "If anyone who does not believe in the Divine Decree had with him gold equal to the bulk of [Mount] Uhud of gold and then he should spend it [in the way of Allah], Allah would not accept that from him unless he affirms his faith in the Divine Decree." (*Saheeh Muslim*, English Translation, Vol. 1, p. 2)

The Levels of Belief in *al-Qadar*

There are four levels of belief in *al-qadar*.

1. **Knowledge:** This means to believe that Allah has knowledge of everything, no matter how small or big it is. He sees and has knowledge of even the smallest

black ant upon a massive solid rock in an extremely dark night. The hidden for Him is visible and the secret is public. He knows what is secret and what is more hidden than a secret. He knows what is in a person's mind, conceived in his heart, which is not yet uttered by his lips. He even knows the intentions his heart has not yet formulated. He Knows that his creatures will formulate in their hearts such-and-such an intention at such-and-such a time. Thus Allah possesses foreknowledge of all the deeds of the creation according to His Ever-existing knowledge. This includes His knowledge of all their affairs with respect to obedience,

disobedience, sustenance, and lifespan. The Qur'an says,

﴿وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي
الْبُرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٌ
فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٌ وَلَا يَابِسٌ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ﴾ (٥٩)

"With him are the keys of the unseen. None knows them but Him. And He Knows whatever is on the land and in the seas. Not a leaf falls but He Knows it. And no grain is there in the darkness of the earth and no moist or dry [thing] but that it is [written] in a clear record." (Surat al-An'aam, 6:59)

﴿أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا﴾ (١٢)

"Allah has encompassed all things in [His] knowledge." (Surat at-Talaaq, 65:12)

2. **The Recording of Decrees:** This means to believe that Allah had recorded all the decrees regarding His creatures before He created the heavens and the earth. Hence, He not only knew and knows what will happen, but He had also recorded this information in minute detail in the Preserved Tablet (*al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh*). The Qur'an says,

﴿مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي
كِتَابٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ﴾ (٢٢)

"No calamity occurs on the earth or among yourselves but it is inscribed in the Book [of Decrees] before We bring it into existence. Indeed, that is easy for Allah." (Surat al-Hadeed, 57:22)

﴿أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ
فِي كِتَابٍ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ﴾ (٧٠)

"Do you not know that Allah knows all that is in heaven and on earth? Surely, it is in the Book (i.e. the Preserved Tablet). Verily, that is easy for Allah." (Surat al-Hajj, 22:70)

3. **His Will:** This means to believe that Allah's Will is executed and that His Ability is Absolute. If He wills something, it will certainly happen; but if He does not will something, it will never happen. This refers to everything. It denotes Allah's action of giving life, sustenance, causing death and so on. It consists of the acts performed by human beings. Nothing can happen unless Allah wills it and allows it to occur.

A person may intend or try, for instance, to gun another person down, but such a thing can only happen if Allah decrees it. The shooter may take all the necessary steps, but if Allah does not will it to occur, it will not occur!

The Qur'an says,

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٨٢﴾

"Surely, His Command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, 'Be,' and it is." (Surat Yaa Seen, 36:82)

4. **Allah's Creativity:** This means to believe that Allah has created everything and that there is no other creator except Him.

The Qur'an says,

اللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ﴿٦٢﴾

"Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the Disposer of all affairs." (Surat az-Zumar, 39:62)

Hence, everything is a creation of Allah. Even the deeds of mankind are creations of Allah although they are by man's own free will. The One Who created that ability and will is no one else but Allah. Therefore, all of the actions of human beings are created by Allah. You will, *inshaa Allaah*, learn about this interesting subject in greater detail in the years to come.

Exercises

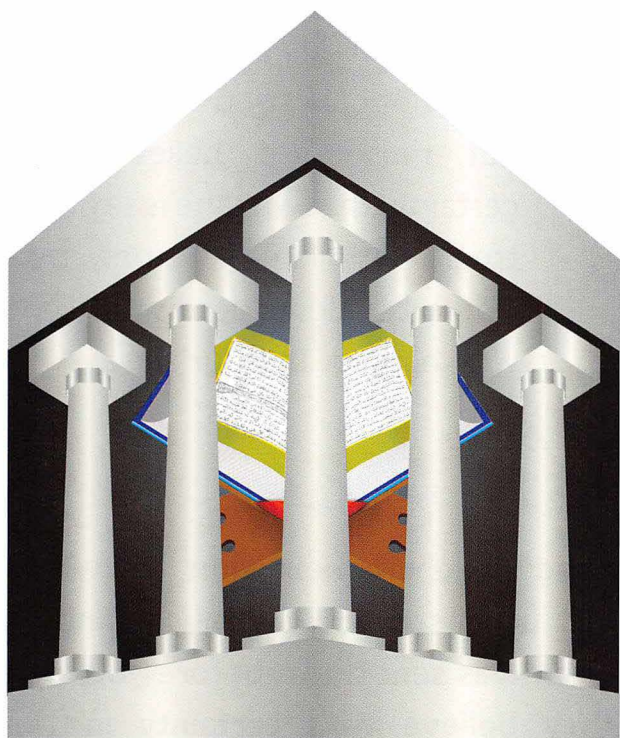
A. Answer the following questions.

1. Mention the original meaning of the word *al-qadar*.

2. List the four levels of belief in *al-qadar*.

Islam: Meaning of the Five Pillars of Islam

9



The Word Islam

Islam is an Arabic term which literally means 'surrender or submission'. The religion sent down by Allah and brought into this world by His Prophets is called *al-Islam* (Islam, for short). It is called as such for the simple reason that a Muslim surrenders himself completely and unconditionally to the power and will of the Lord of all the worlds. He obeys Him wholeheartedly, and obedience becomes the cardinal principle of his life.

¹ The word 'pillars' does not appear in the Arabic but has been supplied for clarity of meaning: An-Nawawee's *Forty Hadeeth*, Tr. Ezzedin Ibraheem and Denys Johnson Davies, p. 34.

Islam is built on Five Pillars¹

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) once said, "Islam is built upon five [pillars]: "Testifying that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing the [obligatory] prayers, giving the *zakaat*, making the Pilgrimage to the House, and fasting in *Ramadh*aan." (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Importance of this Hadeeth

This *hadeeth* is of great significance. It lays down the fundamental aspects of outward surrender to Allah. This surrender is based on certain foundations, which are in a way similar to the foundations of a building. If a person carries out these outward obligations, he actually lays down a solid foundation for his religion as a whole. If any of these 'pillars' is missing, then the entire building will be exposed to danger.

In this *hadeeth*, the Prophet (ﷺ) likens Islam to a building. The foundations or pillars of this 'edifice' of Islam are five. If this building lacks all these five pillars, then it does not exist at all. If any of the pillars is missing, the building will stand but it will have a deficiency. It is significant to realize

that the main pillar is the testimony of faith. The first pillar leads to the fulfilment of the remaining pillars. The firmer the first pillar, the stronger the remaining pillars!

The Testimony of Faith

The testimony of faith, or the *shahaadah*, means: There is none worthy of worship except Allah. This belief in Allah is the cornerstone of Islamic faith. All of the other Islamic beliefs revolve round belief in Allah. It is, therefore, essential that a Muslim's beliefs about Allah are correct. If a person's beliefs about Allah are incorrect, then his entire faith may be ruined.

The Conditions of 'Laa Ilaaha Illallaah'

The key to Paradise is the statement 'Laa Ilaaha Illallaah' (There is none worthy of worship except Allah). This testimony has some conditions. Every key has teeth. If you come with the key that has the right teeth, the door will open for you.

1. **Knowledge:** This means knowledge that Allah is the only God who deserves to be worshipped and that to worship other than Him is sheer falsehood. The Qur'an says,

﴿فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾

"So know that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah." (Surat Muhammad, 47:19)

2. **Certainty:** This means that one must not only say this statement but must also believe with certainty that what he is saying is true: that Allah is the only true God who alone deserves to be worshipped. The Qur'an says,

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٤﴾

"And those who believe in that which has been sent down to you and in what was sent down before you, and they believe with certainty in the hereafter." (Suart al-Baqarah, 2:4)

Allah describes the true believers as those who have belief in Allah and then their hearts do not waver. Allah says,

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا
وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمْ
الصَّادِقُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

"The true believers are those who believe in Allah and His Messenger and afterwards doubt not, but strive with their wealth and their lives for the cause of Allah. They are the ones who are sincere." (Surat al-Hujuraat, 49: 15)

3. **Sincerity:** This means one must perform all actions sincerely and purely for Allah, seeking His

pleasure. As the Qur'an says,

﴿وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ﴾

"And they were not commanded except that they worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion." (Surat al-Bayyinah, 98:5).

The Prophet (ﷺ) once said, "Truly, Allah has forbidden for the Hellfire anyone who says *Laa ilaaha illallaah*, seeking Allah's pleasure alone." (Al-Bukhaaree)

4. **Love:** This means one must love Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), giving preference to loving them over everyone and everything. It also means to love this statement and its implications and its adherents who act upon its dictates. The Qur'an says,

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ﴾

And among the people are some who take others besides Allah as rivals [to Allah]; they love them as they should love Allah. But those who believe love Allah more." (Surat al-Baqarah, 2:165)

5. **Truthfulness:** This means one must be truthful in his belief in Allah, in his words and deeds as well as in the way one carries the message of Islam. The Qur'an says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

O you who believe! Fear Allah and be with those who are true [in words and deeds]." (Surat at-Tawbah, 9:119)

6. **Submission:** This means one must submit completely to the dictates of this statement. Submission here compliance with Allah's commands. The Qur'an says,

﴿وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلُمُوا لَهُ﴾

"And turn in repentance to your Lord and submit to Him." (Surat az-Zumar, 39:54)

7. **Acceptance:** This means one must accept all the implications of this statement. The Qur'an says,

﴿قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْنَا﴾

"Say, 'We believe in Allah and that which has been sent down to us.' (Surat al-Baqarah, 2:136)

A Muslim must make certain that he is Muslim only for the sake of Allah. A Muslim cannot be a Muslim for the sake of his parents, friends, family, community or any worldly gains.

He must also make certain to adhere to the dictates of the *shahaadah* until he dies. This is essential if the testimony is to mean anything in the afterlife. The *shahaadah* must be a believer's banner until he departs this life. The Qur'an says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ ۖ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

“O you who believe! Fear Allah in the manner He ought to be feared, and die not except as Muslims.” (Surat Aal 'Imraan, 3: 102)

Muhammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allah

The second part of the *Shahaadah* is to testify that Muhammad (ﷺ) is the messenger of Allah. This means to declare that Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was chosen by Allah to be His final messenger to all mankind.

Indeed, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) conveyed Allah's entire message to all mankind. Every prophet and messenger before him was sent to his own people, but Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was sent to all mankind until the Day of Judgment. It is, therefore, obligatory upon everyone from the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) until the Day

of Judgment to believe in and follow the Prophet (ﷺ). If the message of Islam reaches a person and he still arrogantly refuses to believe in and follow the Messenger of Allah, he is a disbeliever and will be in the Hellfire, unless he repents and embraces Islam.

The Prophet's clear guidance, in its complete form, is present before us. Hence, there is no need for one to turn for guidance to the corrupted books of the Jews and the Christians or indeed to any other man-made laws. When Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) once saw 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab (رضي الله عنه) holding a sheet with some verses from the corrupted version of the *Tawraah*, he said to him, "Were Prophet Moosaa (عليه السلام) alive, he would certainly follow me." (*Fath al-Baaree*)

Therefore, there is no need for any Muslim to turn to any religious or spiritual teachings of the disbelievers, for he will certainly find anything he needs in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. A Muslim bears witness that the Prophet (ﷺ) conveyed the entire message he received from Allah. When he declares that Muhammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allah, he also declares that he is the final prophet and messenger sent by Allah. Thus, there is no Prophet after him. Anyone who claims Prophethood after Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is a blatant liar and a deceiver. To accept anyone as a prophet after Prophet

Muhammad (ﷺ) is to negate one's declaration of the *shahaadah*.

One's Obligation towards the Prophet (ﷺ)

When a person says, "I bear witness that Muhammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allah", it becomes obligatory upon him to love the Prophet (ﷺ) and follow his guidance. This love is not just any form of love. Indeed, true faith requires that he must love the Prophet (ﷺ) more than anyone or anything else in this world. Allah says in the Qur'an,

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسْكَنٌ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

"Say: If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your spouses, your relatives, and the worldly goods, which you have acquired, commerce in which you fear decline, and the dwellings with which you are pleased are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah brings about His Command, and Allah does not guide those who are defiantly disobedient." (Surat at-Tawbah, 9: 24)

This verse offers a criterion by which everyone can plumb his faith and find out if he meets the

requirements of it or not! This verse clearly rejects the tendency to regard ties of kinship and social affiliations as the decisive factors of behaviour. It shows the believers that Almighty Allah, His Messenger (ﷺ) and struggle in His cause represent the only valid basis on which their life should rest.

Moreover, when one makes the testimony of faith, he actually accepts the Messenger of Allah as his example of how to live and behave in a way that is pleasing to Allah.

The Qur'an says,

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾

"Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah, you have an excellent example to follow for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often." (Surat al-Ahzaab, 33: 21)

Hence, it is very essential for one to understand what the *shahaadah* affirms and what it rejects. A believer, therefore, must deepen his knowledge of Islam through the authentic sources of his religion. He must be fully prepared to accept whatever implications of the *shahaadah* are. He should have a firm belief in whatever is stated in the Qur'an or stated by the Prophet (ﷺ), without any right whatsoever to choose what he wants to take and what he desires to reject.

It is worth mentioning here that when we obey the Messenger of Allah

(ﷺ) we actually obey Almighty Allah.
The Qur'an says,

﴿قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحِبُّكُمْ اللَّهُ﴾

"Say, 'If you really love Allah then follow me; Allah will love you.'" (Surat Aal 'Imraan, 3:31)

A true believer must therefore obey Allah and His Messenger. The Qur'an says,

﴿وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا﴾

"And whatever the messenger gives you take it, and whatever he forbids you abstain from it." (Surat al-Hashr, 59:7)

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said,
"Whatever I command you to do, do it to the best of your ability; and whatever I forbid you to do, avoid it."
(Muslim)

Exercises

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

1. If a person's beliefs about Allah are wrong, then his entire faith may be ruined. _____
2. The Prophet (ﷺ) was sent only to the Arabs. _____

B. Fill in the blanks.

1. Literally, the word Islam means _____
2. The main pillar is the _____. The firmer it is the _____ the remaining pillars.
3. The believers strive with their _____ and _____ for the sake of Allah.
4. The Prophet's teachings and his _____ are valid and obligatory upon all mankind, until the Day of _____.
5. When a Muslim declares that Muhammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allah, he also declares that he is the _____ Prophet sent by Allah.

C. Answer the following questions.

1. Islam is built on five pillars. What does the word 'pillars' signify?

2. How is *shahaadah* a testimony of one's heart, tongue, and deeds?

3. What did the Prophet (ﷺ) advise 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) to do when he saw him with a sheet with verses of the *Tawraah* written on it?

4. Explain briefly one's obligation towards the Prophet (ﷺ).

5. Briefly state the conditions of '*Laa ilaaha illallaah*'.

D. Think-up

A person testified to the *shahaadah* but later changed his mind. Does his initial acceptance of Islam hold any weight in the afterlife?

Salaat (The Prayer)



The Term 'Salaat'

Salaat is an Arabic word which lexically means *du'aa*, or supplication. Its legal meaning refers to, among other things, the set of recitations and movements such as standing, bowing and prostrating in a certain manner in response to Allah's command to perform it and seeking to get closer to Him.

The Importance of the Prayer

The prayer is the first deed about which one will be questioned on the Day of Judgment. If one's prayer is sound and acceptable, then one will certainly achieve eternal success and

eternal happiness. However, if one's prayer is incorrect, incomplete or corrupt in some way, one will not be successful on that day.

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said, "Allah has made five prayers obligatory. Whoever excellently performs their ablutions, offers them at their stated times and completes their bows and prostrations with humility (*khushoo'*) has a promise from Allah that He will forgive him. And whoever does not do that has no promise from Allah. He may either forgive him or He may punish him." (Abu Daawood and An-Nasaa'ee)

Once the Prophet (ﷺ) asked his companions, "If there was a river by the door of any of you in which he takes a bath five times a day, do you think that any of his dirt would remain?" They replied, "None of his dirt will remain." The Prophet (ﷺ) then said, "That is the example of the five [obligatory] prayers through which Allah wipes sins away." (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Almighty Allah commands the believers to strictly establish them at all times. The Qur'an says, "**Guard strictly [the five obligatory] prayers.**" (Surat al-Baqarah, 2:238)

He even clearly states that these prayers must be performed at their stated times. The Qur'an says, **"Indeed, the prayer is enjoined upon the believers at prescribed times."** (*Surat an-Nisaa'*, 4: 103)

He also severely warns those who neglect them: **"Then there succeeded them a posterity who neglected the prayers and followed lusts; so they will soon be thrown into Hell."** (*Surat Maryam*, 19:59)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The five set prayers and the Friday prayers provide expiation for what occurs between them (i.e. sins) as long as the major sins are not committed." (Muslim)

He also said, "The key to Paradise is the prayer." (Abu Daawood)

Merits of the Congregational Prayer

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The prayer in congregation (*jamaa ah*) surpasses the prayer performed individually by twenty-seven degrees." (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "To perform the late evening Prayer (*Ishaa'*) in congregation is equivalent to spending half the night in prayer, and to perform the dawn prayer (*Fajr*)

in congregation is like spending the whole night in prayer." (Muslim)

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "Whenever a certain obligatory prayer becomes due and a Muslim performs ablution and prays with full humbleness, perfecting its bowing, this prayer will be expiation of whatever sins committed before it except for the major sins. This remains always true. (Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Whenever a Muslim performs a prostration for Allah's sake, Allah raises him one degree and absolves him of one sin." (Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "If a human being prostrates himself at an appropriate point in his recitation of the Qur'an, the devil withdraws, weeping as he says, 'Alas! This man was bidden to prostrate himself and he has obeyed, so Paradise is his. I was also commanded to prostrate, but I disobeyed and so Hell is my lot.'" (Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "A man gets credit only for that part of his prayer of which he is conscious." (Abu Daawood) This is confirmed by the tradition, "When performing the prayer, one is conversing intimately with one's Lord." (al-Bukhaaree) Conversing in a state of heedlessness is certainly not meant by intimate conversation with the Lord.

According to an authentic *hadeeth*, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "A person may complete [the prayer] and all that is recorded for him of his prayer is one-tenth of it, one-ninth, one-eighth, one-seventh, one-sixth, one-fifth, one-fourth, one-third, one-half." (Abu Daawood and Ahmad)

In short, conscious awareness is the very soul of the prayer.

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) once prayed while wearing a cloak with an ornamental border, a gift from Abu Jahm. He removed it after he had finished his prayer, saying, 'Take it back to Abu Jahm, for it distracted me from my prayer. Bring me Abu Jahm's cloak of coarse wool.' (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

It is related that Abu Talhah (رضي الله عنه) once prayed in his garden where there were trees. He was attracted by the sight of a honey-bird and spent a few moments following the movement of the bird, as it flew about seeking an opening in the foliage. Thus he forgot how many units of prayer he had completed. He told Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) about the temptation to which he had succumbed, and then said, "Messenger of Allah! I offer my garden as a charity. Dispose of it as you wish." (Maalik)

Such conduct was intended to remove causes of mental distraction to atone for deficiencies in prayer. The

medicine tackled the root of the disease; indeed, it is the only effective remedy. This is a technique for quietening the mind. Mental agitations are stilled by these types of 'tranquilizers'. A man, who is normally a scatterbrain, full of pressing concerns, cannot suddenly switch off the noises within him and achieve full concentration and inner calmness. One has to learn the art of continuous inner silence.

Hence, when starting the prayer, you should come into the Presence of Allah, as you would on the Day of Resurrection, when you will stand before Him with no mediator between you and Him. You are in confidential communication with Him and you know in whose Presence you are standing, for He is the King of kings. When you have lifted your hands and said 'Allaahu Akbar', then let nothing remain in your mind in the time of glorification except the Glory of Allah Most High.

When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was once asked about the true meaning of *ihsaan* (essence of worship), he replied, "*Ihsaan* is that you worship Allah as though you are seeing Him; for even though you do not see Him, He surely sees you." (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

If you continually remind yourself that Allah is watching you when you are praying, when you are studying, when you are doing your job, when you are with your family and friends, when you are playing games, when you are involved in sports, then you are well on your way to attaining *ihsaan* — the most excellent form of worship. *Ihsaan* raises us to the higher station of closeness to Allah. This is what gives real worth to everything we do. It makes our actions acceptable in the sight of our Creator and Sustainer.

Dhikr

Dhikr, or remembrance of Allah, is equivalent to awareness of His Presence. We are commanded in the above-mentioned famous *hadeeth* of the Prophet (ﷺ) to pray as if we are actually seeing Allah before us: ‘for, though you see Him not, yet He sees you.’ Awareness of Allah’s Presence and of being seen at every moment of our lives is, in fact, a contemplative virtue. Islam requires us to be active as well as contemplative!

The First Pillar of Islam

The importance of the prayer cannot be over-stressed in Islam. In fact, it is the first pillar of Islam that the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned after mentioning the testimony of faith, by

which one becomes a Muslim. It was made obligatory on all the prophets and on all the peoples.

Salaat is the foremost form of *'ibaadah* (worship). Allah commands us thus, **“Indeed, I am Allah. There is no deity except Me, so worship Me and establish the prayer that you may remember Me.”** (*Surat Taa Haa*, 20: 14)

The whole purpose of *salaat* is His remembrance. When we perform the *salaat*, we involve our whole body — our tongue, our heart, our mind and indeed our whole body. Hence, *salaat* is the most comprehensive form of *dhikr*.

It is unfortunate, though, that we do not always take full advantage of this gift. Many of us enter into *salaat* and come out of it the same person. We miss something; we miss the golden opportunity to achieve something great.

In reality, if the prayer is performed properly, with true remembrance of Allah and turning to His forgiveness, it will have a lasting effect on the person offering it. After he completes the prayer, his heart will be filled with the remembrance of Allah. Such a *salaat* will warm his soul, illuminate his mind and inflame his faith! After the experience, he will detest or strongly dislike stooping low, from his lofty position, wherein he disobeys Allah.

Hence, the most dreadful hurdle to overcome from the beginning, therefore, is absentmindedness. Absentmindedness destroys the quality of our prayer. But remember that *salaat* is obligatory. Never give it up. But try to breathe into it the spirit of heedfulness.

The ability to concentrate in prayer may be improved by undertaking adequate mental and physical preparation before the prayer and by using certain techniques while performing the prayer.

Mental Preparedness

- Plan your daily activities in such a way that they revolve around the five daily prayers. Do not plan everything else and then try to fit prayer into your busy schedule.
- Research in-depth the Qur'anic verses and *hadeeth* relating to the virtues and obligation of *salaat*.
- Be punctual with your prayer.
- Always offer the obligatory prayers in congregation in the mosque.
- Keep your mind free of worldly worries and concerns.
- Learn the meanings of whatever verses or supplications you recite in *salaat*.

Physical Preparedness

- Fulfil all your personal needs before you begin your prayer.
- Always pray in the mosque or in an environment that is free of noises.
- Adorn yourself with nice and clean clothes. Allah says, **“O children of Aadam, wear your best clothes at every time and place of worship.”** (*Surat al-A'raaf*, 7: 31)
- Give due regard to the performance of each posture.
- Pray as if it is your last prayer.

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) is your guide, so follow him.

Work on Perfecting your *Salaat*

Ask yourself: Is *salaat* a burden or is it a pleasure for me? Is it something I look forward to doing or something I leave to the last moment because it is a chore? Does my mind wander when I pray? Is my heart aware of the Presence of Allah? Or do I use *salaat* to balance my unfinished works?

If your *salaat* is falling short; if you cannot leave concerns of the world long enough to complete a single *rak'ah*, then there is work to be done!

Remember that *salaat* is both a protection as well as a litmus test of faith – a barometer of faith, as it were. When *salaat* is straight, your life outside *salaat* will be straight. When your life outside is straight and your priorities are in order, so too your *salaat* will be perfected. What captures your heart outside *salaat* will hold your heart inside *salaat*. Whatever concerns you most outside *salaat* will concern you most inside *salaat*. To modify an English saying: Tell me how you pray and I will tell you who you are!

Exercises

A. Fill in the blanks.

1. Lexically, the term *salaat* means _____ or _____.
2. "The prayer is enjoined upon believers at _____ times."
3. "The key to Paradise is the _____."
4. Performing prostrations for Allah's sake raises him one _____ and absolves him of one _____.
5. A man gets credit only for that part of his prayer of which he is _____.

B. Answer the following questions

1. How important is the *salaat*, according to one of the Prophet's statements in this regard?

2. What is the reward for congregational prayer as compared to individual prayer?

3. State the benefits of performing '*Ishaa*' and *Fajr* in congregation.

4. What is the reward for performing *salaat* in congregation?

5. What part of the prayer does a believer get actual credit for? Why?

6. Explain the word *ihsaan*.

7. How does Allah encourage us to remember and love Him?

8. What effect does a prayer that is performed properly have on a believer?

C. Think-up

What should a believer do when he finds that certain things distract him from *salaat*? Answer by giving examples.

2. Explain briefly how you would improve your ability to concentrate in *salaat*.

3. What are the major sins? Give some examples.

Zakaat (The Purifying Dues)

Zakaat is the Third Pillar of Islam

Zakaat is one of the five pillars of Islam. Some people wrongly think that the place of *zakaat* comes after *siyaam* (fasting), or even *Hajj* (the pilgrimage). *Zakaat* is actually the third pillar of Islam that comes immediately after *salaat*. Among the pillars of Islam, *zakaat* ranks very close to *salaat*. They are often mentioned together in the Qur'an, as in the following verses:

“Establish regular prayer and give *zakaat*.” (*Surat al-Muzzammil*, 73: 20)

“Establish regular prayer and give *zakaat* and obey Allah and His Messenger.” (*Surat al-Ahzaab*, 33: 33)

“Be steadfast in Prayer, give *zakaat*, and bow down in prayer with those who bow down [in worship and obedience].” (*Surat al-Baqarah*, 2: 43)

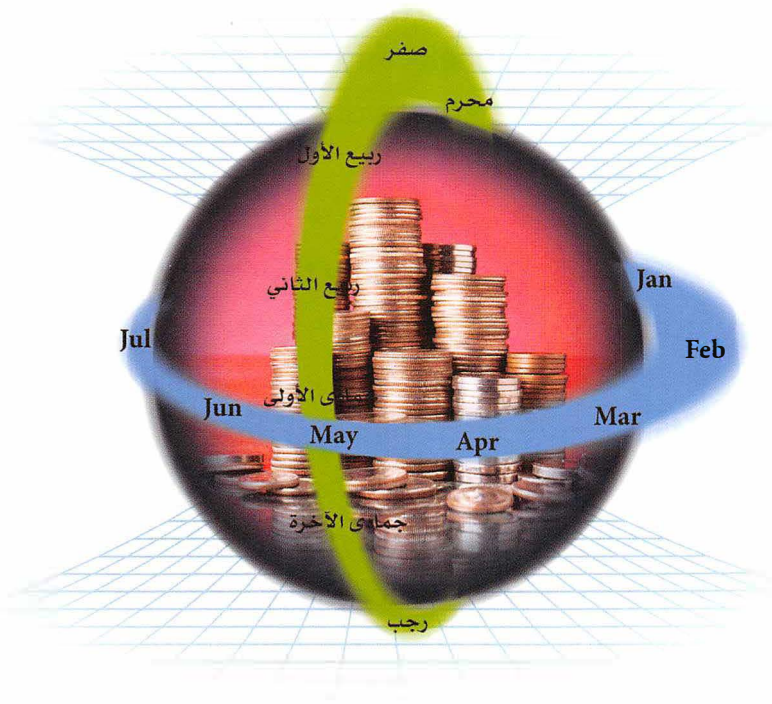
The Term 'Zakaat'

Zakaat is an Arabic term. Lexically, the term denotes purification, blessing and growth. Another term used in the Qur'an and *hadeeth* for *zakaat* is *sadaqaat* (*Surat at-Tawbah*, 9:60). The term is derived from *sidq* (the truth). Both these terms are highly meaningful. The spending of wealth for the sake of Allah purifies the heart of man of the love of material wealth. Hence, the translation of the term *zakaat* as Purifying dues seems appropriate. The person who offers that as a humble gift before the Lord

thus affirms the truth that nothing is dearer to him in life than the love of Allah, and this action of his clearly shows that he is fully prepared to sacrifice everything for His sake.

The payment of *zakaat* purifies the believer, his wealth and his soul by cleansing him of the diseases of miserliness. It also purifies his wealth by removing any evil effect on it. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) once said, "Whoever pays the *zakaat* on his wealth will have its evil removed from him." (Ibn Khuzaymah and at-Tabaraanee)

If someone does not give to the poor and the needy what is their due, his wealth remains impure. Indeed, this person's inner self, too, is impure. His heart is too narrow and filled with thanklessness. He is too selfish and almost worships wealth. While Allah has been kind and generous to give him wealth in excess of his needs, it pains him to give what is His due. How can we expect such a person ever to do some good with the sole aim of pleasing Allah, or make any sacrifice for the sake of Islam, and his faith?



Zakaat in Islam

In the *Sharee'ah*, *zakaat*'s technical meaning is in reference to a specific portion of one's different type of wealth that one must give yearly to a specific group of recipients mentioned in the Qur'an. (*Surat at-Tawbah*, 9: 60)

The Importance of Zakaat

Social justice and compassion to fellow humans is one of the central themes of Islam. *zakaat*, like *salaat* and *siyaam*, had been enjoined on the people of messengers gone by.

Zakaat is obligatory on anyone who has wealth that reaches or exceeds a certain level called the *nisaab*, or scale — an amount on which *zakaat* becomes obligatory, unlike tax, which is levied by governments, *zakaat* is an act of worship for which one receives reward from Allah. Ignoring to pay the *zakaat*, on the other hand, is a major sin. According to the scholars, anyone who does not pay *zakaat* by denying its obligation is considered a disbeliever.

Zakaat Is the Right of the Poor

Zakaat is not a favour that is given to the poor by the rich. Rather, it is their right. It is the right of the poor on the wealth of the rich. Allah says, **"...And those in whose wealth is a known right for the [needy] who asks and him who is deprived."** (*Surat al-Ma'aarij*, 70: 24-25)

Zakaat, therefore, is unlike charity (called *sadaqah*) that is given to the needy voluntarily. To withhold *zakaat* is to deprive the poor of their rightful share. Thus the person who pays *zakaat* actually purifies his wealth by separating from it the portion that belongs to the poor.

The Fate of those who Refuse to Pay Zakaat

The Qur'anic verses and the *hadeeth* use the sternest terms to warn those who refuse to pay the *zakaat*. The Qur'an says, **"And those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in the way of Allah, warn them of a painful suffering [in the life to come]. On that day when [the hoarded wealth] will be heated in the fire of hell and with it will be branded their foreheads, their sides and their backs, [and It will be said to them], 'This is the treasure which you hoarded for yourselves, so taste what you used to hoard.'"** (*Surat at-Tawbah*, 9: 34-35)

Abu Dharr (رضي الله عنه) said, "Once I went to the Prophet (ﷺ) while he was sitting in the shade of the Ka'bah. When he saw me, he said, 'They are indeed the losers, by the Lord of the Ka'bah!' I came and sat down but could not rest and I soon stood up, saying, 'O Allah's Messenger, may I sacrifice my father and mother to save you! Who are they?' He replied, 'Those who have the largest wealth, except whoever does this, this, this and this [pointing in front of him and to his back and left]. Indeed, few who do this. Whoever has camels or cows or sheep and does not pay the *zakaat* on them, these animals will be brought on the Day of Resurrection far bigger and fatter than

before. They will tread on him with their hooves, butt him with their horns and encircle him. When the last does its turn, the first will start again, and his punishment will go on until Allah has finished the judgment among the people.'" (al-Bukhaare and Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said, "Whoever is made wealthy by Allah and does not pay the *zakaat* on his wealth, then on the Day of Resurrection his wealth will be made [into the shape] like a bald-headed, poisonous snake with two black spots over the eyes. It will encircle his neck and bite his cheeks and say, 'I am your wealth, I am your treasure.'" (al-Bukhaaree)

Ruling concerning those who Do not Pay Zakaat

Zakaat is one of the five pillars of Islam, and if a person denies the obligation of *zakaat* or says that it is not a part of Islam, then he is definitely a disbeliever, according to the agreement of scholars. The question once again is: What is the status of a person who accepts *zakaat* as an obligation but due to laziness, miserliness or carelessness, he does not give *zakaat*? Does he remain a Muslim? For the majority of scholars, this person is still a Muslim, but a severe punishment awaits him.

The Worldly Punishment for not Paying Zakaat

A person who does not pay *zakaat* will receive painful punishment in the afterlife for depriving the poor of their rights and for rejecting Allah's command to do so. In addition, he may also incur loss in his wealth and property or face some other forms of calamities in this world. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Whenever an amount of wealth is destroyed in the land or the sea, it could be because its *zakaat* was not given." (at-Tabaraanee)

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said, "*Zakaat* is never mixed with any amount of wealth without destroying or rotting it." (al-Bukhaaree)

Zakaat and Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq

After the demise of the Prophet (ﷺ), some of the tribes refused to pay *zakaat*. Abu Bakr, the first caliph, fought them. He had no hesitation in taking up arms against Muslims who believed in Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) and performed *salaat*, but refused to pay *zakaat*. Some of the Prophet's companions initially had some confusion whether they could wage war against them, but not Abu Bakr. He clearly announced, "By Allah! If these people withhold the *zakaat* they used to pay during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), even if it be a piece of rope by which a camel is tied, I shall raise my

sword against them." His arguments convinced the companions. (Abu Daawood)

Abu Bakr is also reported to have said, 'By Allah! I will fight anyone who distinguishes between prayer and *zakaat*. *Zakaat* is the obligatory right to be taken from the property. By Allah! If they refuse to give me even a young nanny goat, which they used to give at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), I will fight them for withholding it.'

The Nisaab – or Scale on which Zakaat becomes Obligatory

Zakaat is not imposed unless the zakatable wealth reaches a minimum level, which is called the *nisaab*, or scale. For example, if one has thirty-nine goats then there is no *zakaat* on his goats. However, if he has forty goats, then *zakaat* is certainly due on them. The *Nisaab* on goats, therefore, is forty goats.

Different types of properties have different *nisaabs*. For example, the *nisaab* on money is 85 grams of gold, the *nisaab* on silver is 595 grams, the *nisaab* on camels is five camels, and the *nisaab* on grains is 653 kilograms. *Zakaat* on each type of wealth is calculated separately.

The *nisaab* must be in excess of the basic needs of the owner. Things used for satisfying the basic necessities are not considered zakatable. Basic

needs are food, shelter, clothes, household goods, utensils, furniture, money to pay back debts, basic transport, books of knowledge, etc. To clarify this, let us suppose that the *nisaab* on money is \$1200 and a family of four needs \$20,000 per year to fulfil its basic needs in a particular place. If the head of that family earns \$21,000 in the *zakaat* year and he does not have any other wealth or money, then from the viewpoint of *zakaat*, he has only \$1000. This is short of \$1200 *nisaab* on money and consequently, there is no *zakaat* on that money. However, if, in addition to his income, he also has cash savings of \$500 from the previous year, then his wealth from the viewpoint of *zakaat* is \$1500 (\$1000 + \$500). This is at or above *nisaab* on money. *Zakaat*, therefore, will be due on \$1500.

Zakaat Year

The passage of one lunar (according to *Hijrah* calendar) is required before *zakaat* can be imposed on certain wealth. Assets that remain with their owners for one full lunar year are zakatable. Rich Muslims, therefore, must establish their *zakaat* year. Many Muslims calculate *zakaat* during Ramadhaan for the added reward of worshipping during this blessed month. So, an example of the *zakaat* year may be from the 11th Ramadan 1427 to the 10th Ramadan

1428 (one full *Hijrah* lunar calendar year). Once the *zakaat* year is set, the same date range should be used for future *zakaat* years.

Conditions of Zakaat: Wealth Subject to Zakaat

1. The wealth or the property should be of a growing type. It should have the capability for growth and development, such as money, livestock and property.
2. One full lunar year should pass since the ownership of the wealth for *zakaat* to be due. This condition is limited to money that is saved, livestock and goods for sale. It does not include crops, fruits, minerals and treasure.
3. The asset must be at or above the *nisaab*. There is different *nisaab* for different types of wealth.
4. The assets should be in excess of the basic needs. What is needed by an individual to satisfy the basic needs for him and his family is not subject to *zakaat*.
5. One's debts, if any, should be deducted from one's wealth before calculating *zakaat*. If the owner is burdened by debt that exceeds the *nisaab*, then *zakaat* is not due.

People Subject to Zakaat

Zakaat is imposed on only Muslims. Zakaat is obligatory on wealth regardless of whether the owner is an adult or a minor. Therefore, zakaat is due on wealth owned by minors and the insane as well. Legal guardians should pay zakaat on behalf of minors and insane people.

There is no zakaat on Muslim reverts for the past period of disbelief.

The Nisaab or Scale for some Kinds of Wealth

Silver	595 grams	Number of animals	Zakaat due
		1-4 camels	None
Gold	85 grams	5-9 camels	1 sheep
		10-14 camels	2 sheep
Merchandise	Equal to the value of 85 grams of gold	15-19 camels	3 sheep
		1-29 cows	None
Camels	5 camels	30-39 cows	1 one-year old cow
		40-59 cows	1 two-year old cow
Goats	40 goats	60-69 cows	2 one-year old cows
		1-39 sheep	None
Sheep	40 sheep	40-120 sheep	1 sheep
		121-200 sheep	2 sheep
Cows	30 cows	210-300 sheep	3 sheep

Zakaat is compulsory on merchandise or trading goods. If a lunar year passes and the merchandise or the trading goods reach the *nisaab*, which is the value of 85 grams of gold, zakaat becomes due. Zakaat on them is 2.5% if their value reaches the *nisaab*.

Zakaat on livestock and their *nisaab* is different. *Nisaab* and the rates of zakaat on various animals is as follows:

Jewellery

If gold and silver are in the form of jewellery, then zakaat is payable on them. It is reported that a woman came to the Prophet (ﷺ) with her daughter on whose wrists were two thick gold bracelets. The Prophet (ﷺ) asked, "Do you pay zakaat on this?" 'No,' she replied. Thereupon the Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'Would you prefer Allah to make you wear two bracelets of fire in place of these two on the Day of Judgment?' (Abu Daawood)

'Aa'ishah (ﷺ) said, "Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) entered my apartment and found in my hands a few rings of silver. He asked, 'What is this?' I said, 'I made them in order to use them as ornaments to please you.'" Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, 'Do you pay their *zakaat*?' I answered, 'No,' He said, 'That would be enough for you of the fire.'" (Abu Daawood and al-Haakim)

Zakaat, thus, must be paid on gold and silver, even if they are in the shape of ornaments, just as on cash. According to some scholars, however, *zakaat* need not be given on jewels, pearls, diamonds, and precious stones used for beautification purposes. But if

it is kept as a security if a financial need arises, it requires the *zakaat*. *Nisaab* on jewellery is 85 grams of gold or 595 grams of silver and the *zakaat* rate is 2.5%.

Zakaat on the Produce of the Earth

Agricultural produce, such as grains, fruits and vegetables is also *zakatable*. *Zakaat* is 10% if the land is watered by rain all or most of the period and 5% if it is watered by irrigation all or most of the period. The *nisaab* on crops is 653 kilograms. The *zakaat* on these becomes due at harvest time.

Those Entitled to Receive the Zakaat?

According to the Qur'an, eight categories of people are entitled to receive the *zakaat* (See Surat At-Tawbah, 9: 60).

1. Fuqaraa': the poor

The *fuqaraa'* are those who do have some money but not sufficient to meet their basic needs. They cannot make both ends meet; yet they do not ask for help due to modesty and self-respect. They live in great hardship and difficulties.

2. Masaakeen: the destitute and the needy

The *masaakeen* are totally destitute. They have nothing to meet their needs.

3. Workers in zakaat administration (al-'aamileena 'alayhaa)

Those who collect and distribute *zakaat* could be paid their salaries from *zakaat* funds, according to the verse 9:60. This follows that *zakaat* collection and administration is the function of an organized body of paid employees. These workers can receive wages regardless of whether they are poor or not.

4. Those whose hearts need to be reconciled (*al-mu'allafatu quloobuhum*)

This includes people who have recently become Muslim. They also include the people whose evil acts can be prevented. They are also those who require to be given money to seek their support for Islam or to prevent them from opposition. They may be given *zakaat* to reconcile them by showing at first hand the caring nature of Islam.

5. Freeing from bondage (*fir-riqaab*)

Zakaat money can be used to purchase a slave from his master in order to set him free. According to Sayyid Abul-A'ala Mawdudee, this category can also be extended to such people as those who have been imprisoned for their inability to pay fines imposed upon them. They can be helped with *zakaat* money to secure their release.

6. Those in debt for personal reasons (*al-ghaarimeen*, the overburdened debtors)

These are the people who are overburdened with debt that they cannot pay it on their own. The debt can be the result of buying a house for family use, medical expenses, marriage, or other lawful expenses. Some scholars, however, say that it is undesirable to give *zakaat* to people who have fallen into debt due to their wasteful habits. They argue that the hope of receiving help from *zakaat* will encourage them to continue with their wastefulness. Islam takes a very noble and understanding attitude towards people burdened with debt.

7. For the Cause of Allah (*fee Sabeelillaah*)

The seventh category where *zakaat* can be spent according to the Qur'an (9: 60) is spending in the way of Allah. This refers to *jihad*, or fighting for the sake of Allah. It means giving help to a struggle for making Islam supreme on earth. It is significant to realize that *jihad*, or striving, is not restricted to armed struggle only. It could also include writing, lecturing, and organizing work to support or defend Islam.

8. The travellers (*ibnus-sabeel*)

A traveller may have any amount of wealth in his home, but if he is in need of money while travelling, he may be given *zakaat*. Certain conditions, however, apply, including the fact that the journey should not be made in disobedience to Allah but for a valid cause, such as seeking knowledge, searching for a lawful job or conducting business.

Zakaat money should be given to the above categories according to their priorities – things that are regarded as more important than others. It should be based on actual needs and public interest. But it is important to remember that the primary recipients of *zakaat* are the poor and the needy. Helping such people is the main objective of *zakaat*. Further, sinful Muslims may be given *zakaat* too. A person's sinfulness does not disqualify him from receiving help!

Who Cannot Receive *Zakaat*?

This category also includes the children of those who are rich and those whose living expenses are the responsibility of a rich person. Parents and children cannot give *zakaat* to each other, nor can husbands and wives. A distant relative, however, is beyond doubt entitled to it.

Can Non-Muslims Be Given *Zakaat*?

Only Muslims are entitled to receive *zakaat*. According to the majority of scholars, *zakaat* cannot be given to non-Muslims. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "It will be taken from the wealthy among you and distributed to the poor among you." (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

This concerns *zakaat* with regard to

non-Muslims. It is significant to realize, however, that all poor and needy people, regardless of their religious beliefs, can always be helped from other funds. They have a share in all other general charities or social security payments. It will be wrong to discriminate against them.

The Prophet (ﷺ) once said to Aa'ishah (رضي الله عنها), "Do not turn away a poor man, Aa'ishah, even if all you can give is half a date. If you love the poor and bring them near to you, Aa'ishah, Allah will bring you near Him on the Day of Resurrection." (at-Tirmidhee)

Other Important Considerations



The intention is required when paying *zakaat*. This intention, however, must not be expressed in words. Intention is also needed so that payment of *zakaat* can be distinguished from other charitable donations. Remember *zakaat* is an act of worship.



Zakaat does not have to be paid in kind but can also be paid in value. For example, if one is required to pay *zakaat* on his crops, then he is permitted to pay in cash the value of the crop that is to be given in *zakaat*.



Zakaat is due immediately; payment of *zakaat*, therefore, should not be delayed unless there is a valid reason to wait in order to give it to needy relatives or anyone else in need. Pre-payment is allowed according to most jurists on assets that require the passage of one year, such as livestock, money, trading goods and jewellery, if the payer has the necessary *nisaab*. It is permissible to give *zakaat* even two years in advance.

Should the Receivers be Told it is Zakaat?

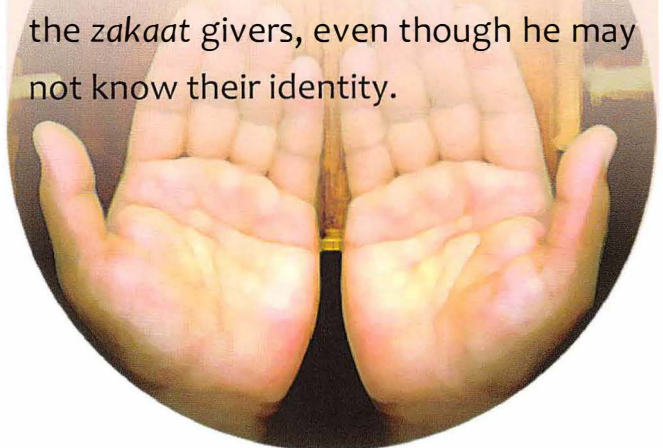
When *zakaat* is paid to those whom the giver thinks are poor, there is no need to inform the recipient that it is *zakaat*. There is no need to humiliate the recipient by saying so. He should pay him and remain silent. One should not humiliate the believers. There are people who would hesitate to receive *zakaat* due to their self-respect and modesty. Some even may feel uncertain about whether they are qualified to receive *zakaat*. If the giver considers the receiver to be poor and deserving of *zakaat*, then this will be enough. There is no need to further check or confirm it.

Du'aa by the Recipient for the Giver of Zakaat

Thankfulness is a trait of all good-hearted people. This is more so for a believer. He is ever grateful for all the bounties of life granted to him by Allah. Such a person never fails to appreciate any help, however small, given to him by others. In this modern time of ours people live for themselves. Self-cantered lifestyle has become the norm these days. To come forward and help the needy is indeed a sign of love and compassion. This is exactly what the *zakaat* giver does. He gives part of his wealth to his needy brothers and sisters. He does not want to receive any worldly benefits by his *zakaat*.

Moreover, he does not offer this sacrifice just once or twice, but he continues it year after year so long as Allah blesses him with a certain amount of wealth.

A *zakaat* receiver, therefore, should pray for blessings and mercy for the *zakaat* givers, even though he may not know their identity.



Exercises

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

1. *Zakaat* is a favour that the rich do the poor. _____
2. *Zakaat* is imposed on only Muslims. _____
3. It is all right to give *zakaat* to wasteful spendthrifts. _____
4. A sinful person should not be given *zakaat*. _____
5. The intention for paying *zakaat* need not be expressed in words. _____
6. There is no need to inform the recipient of the *zakaat*. _____

B. Fill in the blanks.

1. *Zakaat* is the _____ pillar of Islam and ranks very close to *salaat*.
2. "...And those in whose _____ is a known _____ for the [needy] who asks and him who is deprived."
3. The passage of _____ is required before *zakaat* can be imposed on certain types of wealth.
4. Many Muslims calculate *zakaat* during _____ for added rewards.
5. _____ should pay *zakaat* on behalf of minors and insane people.
6. *Zakaat* is _____ if the land is watered by rain and _____ if the land is watered by irrigation.
7. The primary recipients of *zakaat* are the _____ and the _____.

C. Answer the following questions.

1. How can the phrase 'purifying dues' be considered the appropriate translation of the term *zakaat*?

2. How can we say that a person's inner self is impure when he does not give *zakaat*?

3. On whom is *zakaat* obligatory?

4. List a few punishments in this life and in the afterlife that await those refuse to pay *zakaat*.

5. Explain the term *nisaab* in detail.

6. Mention the condition of wealth that is subject to *zakaat*.

7. List the people who are entitled to receive *zakaat*.

8. What are the conditions of giving *zakaat* to travellers?

9. Pre-payment of *zakaat* is allowed; what about delayed payment?

D. Think-up

1. Distinguish between the terms *zakaat* and *sadaqah*.

2. How can we help non-Muslims if giving *zakaat* to them is forbidden?

Aayat al-Birr (The Righteousness Verse)

There is no book that quickens the hearts, transforms lives and it leads whole people from glory to glory like the Qur'an. Indeed, the Qur'an is the final answer to man's eternal quest for existence. For Muslims, it is the ultimate arbiter of their destiny, be it their rise to the heights of glory and civilization or their fall into the bottomless pits of decay and disgrace.

The Qur'an has untold, priceless treasures to offer. It has the endless joys of communication with our Creator. It has the immense riches of knowledge and wisdom that guide on the path of our Lord. It has the healing that cures our inner and social illnesses. It offers support, aid and comfort so that we can carry the burdens of life joyfully and reach salvation and success both in this life and in the life to come.

These treasures are for all the wayfarers and seekers. They are available to us today now as they were available to their seekers yesterday, more than fourteen centuries ago.

Surat al-Baqarah is the second and, indeed, the longest surah of the Qur'an. It consists of 286 verses and covers about two and a half parts (*juz'*) out of the thirty parts into which the Qur'an has been divided, to facilitate its regular reading.

In this unit, we are going to study Verse 177 of Surat al-Baqarah. This verse, or *aayah*, is not known by any particular name, such as *aayat al-kursee* is. However, we will call it *Aayat al-Birr* for the purpose of study. It is one complete *aayah*. The word *al-birr* occurs in its beginning. The *aayah* has in it one of the most beautiful summaries of essential Islamic beliefs and practices.

Aayat-ul-Birr: The Righteousness Verse

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَءَاتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا وَالصَّادِقِينَ فِي الْبُيُوتِ وَالضَّرَّاءَ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

Translation of its Meaning

"It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is to believe in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Books, and the prophets, and to give wealth in spite of love for it, to the relatives, the orphans, the needy, the traveller and those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; and to establish the prayer and give

zakaat; to keep promises and be patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who are, of truth, the God-fearing.” (Surat al-Baqarah, 2: 177)

Explanation

What does the term *al-Birr* mean?

Al-Birr is an Arabic word which is very significant and comprehensive. It is used for what is good in the absolute sense. It combines in itself all acts of righteousness and obedience, inward and outward.

According to Lane, it means "benevolent and Solicitous (showing great concern for another person's welfare, interests, etc.), regard or treatment or conduct (to parents and others, i.e. righteousness to parents and towards God), and goodness, or beneficence, and kindness, or good and affectionate and gentle behaviour, and regard for the circumstances of another." (E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 2003, Vol. 1, p. 176)

Deep Relationship between Surat al-'Asr And Aayat-ul-Birr

Aayat al-Birr is one of the longest *aayaat* (plural of *aayah*) of the Qur'an. There is a close relationship between *Aayat al-Birr* and *Surat al-'Asr*, and this closeness is quite apparent. If *Surat*

al-'Asr is a rosebud, *Aayat al-Birr* is the flowering of that rosebud. *Surat al-'Asr* gives us four conditions for salvation, and *Aayat al-Birr* discusses three of these main conditions in some detail.

The rosebud of *Surat al-'Asr* opens up, as it were, into five beautiful petals of *Aayat al-Birr*. *Surat al-'Asr* mentions *eemaan* (faith), *Aayat al-Birr* describes its five principal articles:

1. Belief in Allah,
2. Belief in the Last Day,
3. Belief in the Angels,
4. Belief in the Books of Allah,
5. Belief in the Prophets.

The verse also describes three main categories of good deeds:

1. Mercy towards fellow beings,
2. The rights of Allah – *al-'ibaadaat*,
3. *Mu'aamalaat* (social dealings, human relations)

The verse also mentions three occasions which need steadfastness in the life of a believer:

1. Hunger,
2. Physical and mental torture, and
3. Times of peril and strife.

The verse also portrays a full, comprehensive model of a believer's character.

Righteousness is not attained by merely turning One's Face towards the East or the West

The Qur'an stresses that mere obedience to outward appearance does not fulfil the requirements of righteousness. The reference to turning one's face in prayer in this or that direction flows from the question of *qiblah*.

The purpose behind the *qiblah* and all aspects of worship and rituals has never been merely the direction people face or indeed only any outward form. Although the outward forms are essential, these are not what give worship its value or meaning. It does not make people good or righteous. Righteousness is the result of a total feeling. It is an attitude. Righteousness is made up of behaviour which shapes the individual and the collective conscience of human beings. Righteousness is, in fact, a discipline.

Mere Appearances are not enough

It is also important to realize that both directions, the east and the west, have been held sacred by many pagan religions. The Righteousness Verse strikes at the root of direction-worship. It says very clearly that there is no merit at all in merely turning towards any particular direction. Islamic worship is not directed towards any

direction as east, west, north or south, but towards a particular House, on whatever side of the worshipper it may happen to be!

It is also significant to note that Muslims do not worship the House, or the Ka'bah. Rather, they worship Allah Alone, the Lord of the House.

Then who are the truly righteous?

The truly righteous are those who believe in Allah, the Last day, the angels and revelation, (In this context, the term revelation (*al-Kitaab*) carries a generic significance: it refers to the whole group of revealed books, the last of which is the Qur'an) and the Prophets.

The Aayah Continues to further Describe the Righteous

"...and to give wealth in spite of love for it, to the relatives, the orphans, the needy, the traveller and those who ask [for help], and for freeing slave..."

The virtues mentioned here are in fact gateways to success in this world as well as in the hereafter.

The expression '*alaa hubbihee* (in spite of love for it) means however much one may cherish it; the expression can also be understood to mean 'out of love for Allah'. Thus the expression can be read to speak of giving goods and money out of love for

Allah (as opposed to giving for personal motives), or of giving goods or money in spite of holding them dear, rather than just giving away what you don't care about.

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The most superior [kind of] *sadaqah* (charity) in reward is the one you give while you are healthy, unwilling to spend and afraid of poverty and wish to become rich." (al-Bukhaaree)

However, one's family members have priority over others as far as charity is concerned, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Giving charity to the needy is one *sadaqah* but giving it to relatives is twofold *sadaqah* — It is *sadaqah* as well as joining ties of relationship, for they are the people in need of your generosity." (al-Bukhaaree)

The orphans are those who have lost their fathers or both parents, are weak, very young, immature and unable to earn a living. However, once they attain maturity they are no more orphans.

The needy: Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "*Al-miskeen* (needy) is not the one who goes round asking people for a morsel or two of food or one date or two, but rather one who has not enough money to satisfy his needs and whose condition is not known to others, that others may give something in charity." (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

The expression *ibn as-sabeel* (traveller, wayfarer) refers to any person "who is far away from his home, especially one who, because of this circumstance, does not have sufficient means of livelihood at his disposal". (Lane, Vol. 1, p.1302) In its wider sense, it describes a person who, for any reason whatsoever, is unable to return home either temporarily or permanently. He should, therefore, be given sufficient provision to enable him to return to his country.

Ibn as-sabeel also signifies the guest. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) is reported to have said, "He who believes in Allah and the Last Day should honour his guest according to his right." People asked, "And what is his right?" He replied, "One day and one night, and hospitality is for three days. Beyond that it is *sadaqah*." (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) also said, "It is a part of the *Sunnah* that a man goes with his guest to the door of the house." (Ibn Maajah)

"...and those who ask [for help]..." means those who ask for help should be given charity. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "The asker (literally, beggar) is entitled to charity even if he comes begging on horseback." (Ahmad and Abu Daawood) *As-saa'il* signifies anyone who asks for help.

The word *raqabah* (pl. *riqaab*) literally means 'the neck' but refers to the entire human person. The expression *wa fir-riqaab* means “and for freeing slaves”. This applies to both the ransoming of captives and the freeing of slaves. By including this kind of expenditure within the essential acts of righteousness, the Qur'an implies that the freeing of people from bondage – and thus, the abolition of slavery – is one of the social objectives of Islam.

The Verse adds that the regular observance of *salaat*, prayer, is another important aspect of righteousness. *Salaat* is much more than a sequence of bodily movements and recitations. There is more to it than facing a certain direction, east or west. *Salaat* is an act of total submission. It is a total dedication to Allah and a perfect example of Islam's whole outlook on life.

The prayer is a source of strength for the believers. It keeps their faith (*eemaan*) alive and active. The prayer purifies the soul of many diseases, such as despair and cowardice. Indeed, the prayer is so essential to a person's faith that it is similar to the role of one's beliefs and creed. The Prophet (ﷺ) once said, “The covenant between us and them (i.e. the disbelievers) is the prayer; hence whoever abandons the prayer will be a disbeliever.” (Ahmad, at-Tirmidhee and Nasaa'ee)

In fact, the prayer is the hallmark of a Muslim. Paying the *zakaat* – the purifying dues – is another aspect of righteousness. It is clear from the text of the *aayah* that *zakaat* is separate from, rather than an obligation for, the desirable charitable act mentioned earlier.

While giving to those causes is voluntary, paying *zakaat* is a religious duty in its own right, and both are essential factors in attaining righteousness. Unless this was the case, there would be no meaning in giving *zakaat* a separate mention in the same Verse.

Keeping one's promises is another aspect of righteousness. The Qur'an frequently highlights it as a feature of true faith. It is a quality which stems from the fulfilment of one's promise to Allah. It is an essential requirement for creating a climate of mutual trust and confidence among individuals, societies and nations. Islam has given a matchless example of honesty that can never be surpassed.

Steadfastness and perseverance in times of misfortune and hardship, and in the face of danger, are necessary qualities for the education and development of strong individuals with sterling character who will stand firm come what may. Under such conditions, the faithful never lose hope or confidence in Allah, nor will they

seek help from any source other than from Allah. All the believers should have resilience (the ability to recover quickly from shock, injury, etc.) to withstand poverty, weakness, loss of friends and companions, shortage of resources, and rigors and consequences of struggle in the way of Allah.

Thus we see how, in the unique style of the Qur'an, a single brief verse, combines the essentials of faith and personal and financial Islamic obligations and presents them as a complete code under the all-embracing title of *al-birr* (righteousness). *Al-birr* is essentially a concise and complete statement of the basic philosophy of Islam and its principles.

The verse ends with the words: **"Those are the ones who are, of truth, the God-fearing."**

In reflection on the contents of this verse, one can clearly form a mental picture of the great heights to which Allah is aiming to raise human beings through Islam. But as one looks at those who ignore Islam, or those who resist it and suppress or persecute its followers and supporters, and those who simply turn away from it, one cannot help being filled with sorrow. Yet we must not despair. Our faith and trust in Allah fill our hearts with hope and confidence. The day will come when humanity will come around to seeing the profound value, universal beauty and eternal qualities of Islam.

Exercises

A. Fill in the blanks.

1. For Muslims, the Qur'an is the _____ of their destiny.
2. Mere obedience to outward forms does not fulfil the requirement of _____.
3. The Righteousness Verse strikes at the root of _____.
4. Once they attain maturity, they are no longer _____.
5. Mere appearances are not _____.

B. Answer the following questions.

1. What is Aayat al-Birr? Explain the term *al-birr*.

2. Mention some similarities between *Surat al-'Asr* and *Aayat al-Birr*.

3. What is the essence of righteousness?

4. Do Muslims worship the Ka'bah? If not, then who do they worship?

5. Mention some of the qualities of the truly righteous.

6. Explain the term '*alaa hubbihee*.

7. What is the most superior type of *sadaqah*?

8. Who is a real *miskeen*, according to the *hadeeth* mentioned above?

9. What is the right of one's guest?

10. How is *zakaat* different from *sadaqah*?

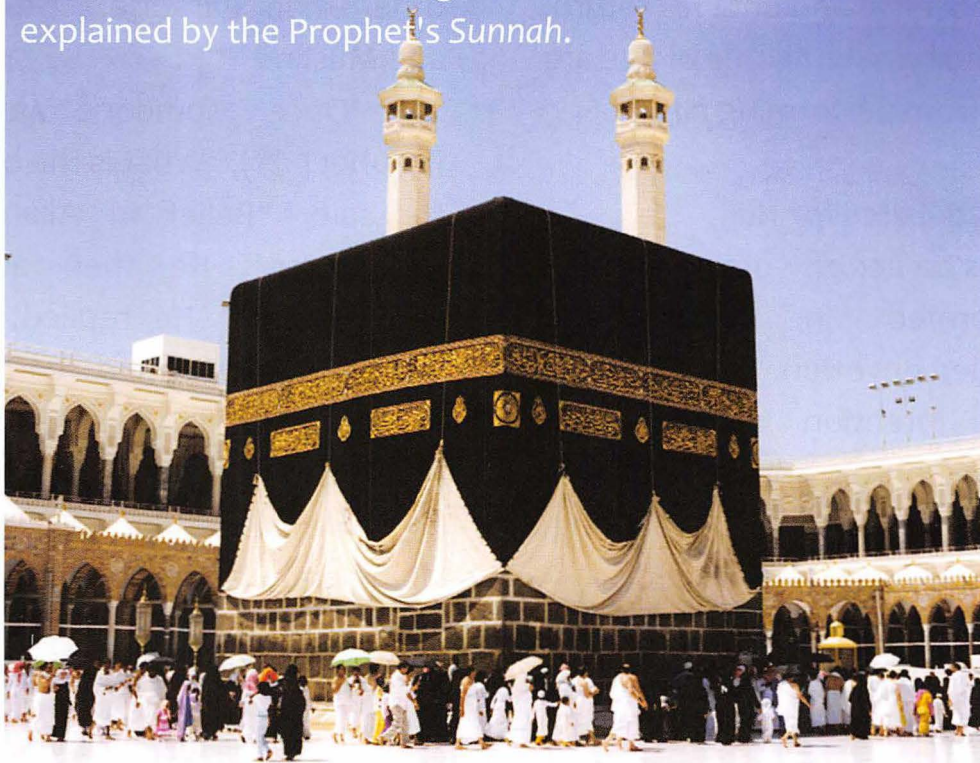
C. Think-up

1. The kinsfolk have priority over others in charity.
2. Hardships and tribulations are essential for Muslims.

The Meaning of *Hajj*

Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam mentioned in the narration of the *hadeeth* [mentioned in Unit 9: Islam has been built on five (Pillars)] is making the Pilgrimage to the House. *Hajj* is an Arabic term which literally means 'to head towards something.' As E.W. Lane states, it means 'he repaired, or betook himself to, or towards a person or towards an object of reverence, veneration, respect or honour.*'

In the *Sharee'ah*, it means travelling to Makkah during the months set for the performance of *hajj* to perform certain rituals that Allah has legislated in His Book and were explained by the Prophet's *Sunnah*.



The Importance of *Hajj*

The *hajj* is an obligation upon every adult Muslim who is physically fit and has the financial means to perform it. It is, however, much more than an obligation. It is one of the pillars of Islam itself.

* E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 2003, Cambridge, England: The Islamic Texts Society, Vol. 1, p.513.

Who Must Perform Hajj?

Every Muslim who fulfils the following conditions must perform *hajj* at least once in his lifetime:

1. He must be an adult – sufficiently mature to understand the import and significance of what he is setting out to do.
2. He must be of sound mind and full control of his mental faculties.
3. He must be sound enough financially to be able to not only bear all of his expenses for *hajj* but also to provide adequately for his dependents during his absence and until his return. Children who have not come of age are exempted from performing *hajj*.

Prerequisites for Hajj

Hajj is an act of worship. It must be performed in peace and single-minded devotion.

1. Your intention must be to perform *hajj* purely for the sake of Allah. It should not be for pleasing, impressing others or showing off.
2. The *hajj* expenses must be met with money obtained through lawful (*halaal*) means.
3. All of your debts and financial obligations must be settled before you start your journey.
4. You must make a sincere effort to resolve your outstanding differences with others and seek forgiveness from those you may have hurt in any way in the past.

Virtues of Hajj

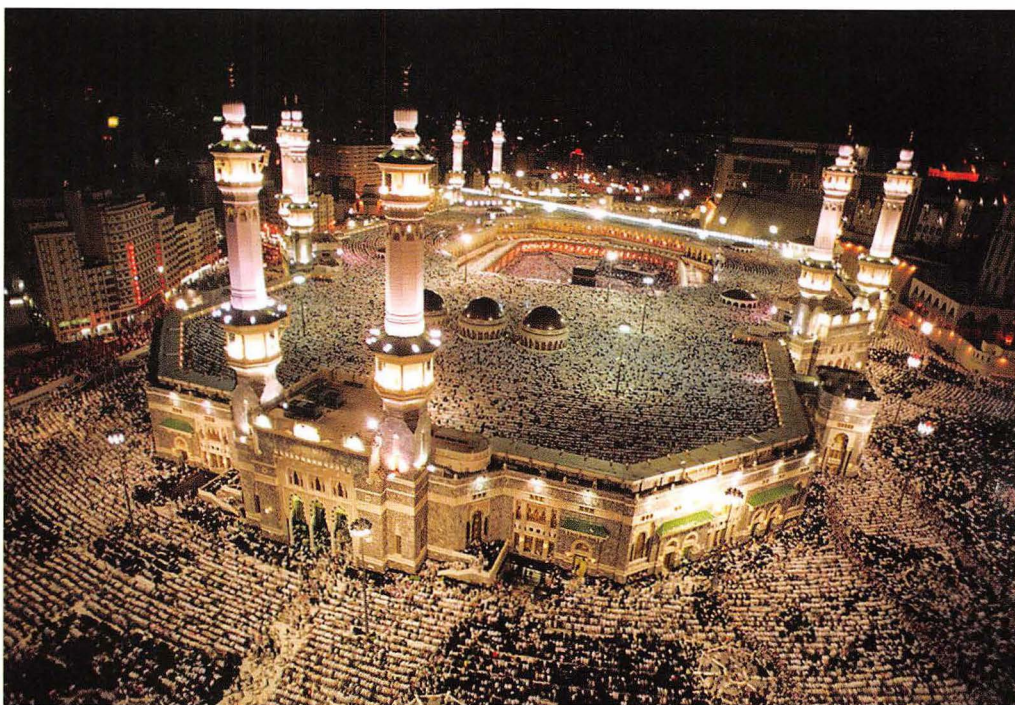
The reward for the performance of *hajj* is great. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "Whoever performs *hajj* and does not commit any indecency or any sins during it returns as he was on the day his mother gave birth to him." (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) also said, "One '*umrah* (to the next '*umrah* is expiation (*kaffaarah*) for [the minor sins committed] between them, and the *hajj* that is accepted by Allah and performed properly has no reward other than Paradise." (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Once someone asked the Prophet (ﷺ), "What is the best deed?" He said, "Belief in Allah and His Messenger." He then asked him, "What next?" He replied, "The *hajj* which is performed correctly and accepted by Allah." (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

He also said, "Make frequent circumambulations (*tawaaf*) around the House, for this will be among the glories of your records on the Day of Resurrection as well as the most fortunate action credited to you." (Al-Haakim: Saheeh)

Doing *tawaaf* (circumambulation, going round the *Ka'bah*) is therefore commendable in itself, not only as a part of *hajj* (pilgrimage) or '*umrah* (lesser pilgrimage). We read in a *hadeeth*, "To go around [the House]



seven times is as meritorious as freeing a slave, while the person who goes around [it] seven times in the rain will have all his past sins forgiven." (At-Tirmidhee)

Hajj is equivalent to *jihad* for women and those who are not capable of taking part in *jihad*. In one *hadeeth*, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) was asked whether or not women were required to take part in *jihad*. He replied, "Yes, upon them is [a type of] *jihad* which does not involve any fighting whatsoever: *hajj* and 'umrah." (Ahmad and Ibn Maajah)

Moreover, *hajj* has many benefits. Indeed, it provides a meeting place for Muslims from all over the world to come and worship Allah together. This provides an excellent opportunity for them to meet one another, understand one another and get closer to one another. They all

dress in a similar way and perform the same rituals. The wealthy, the poor and all others stand in the same manner before Allah.

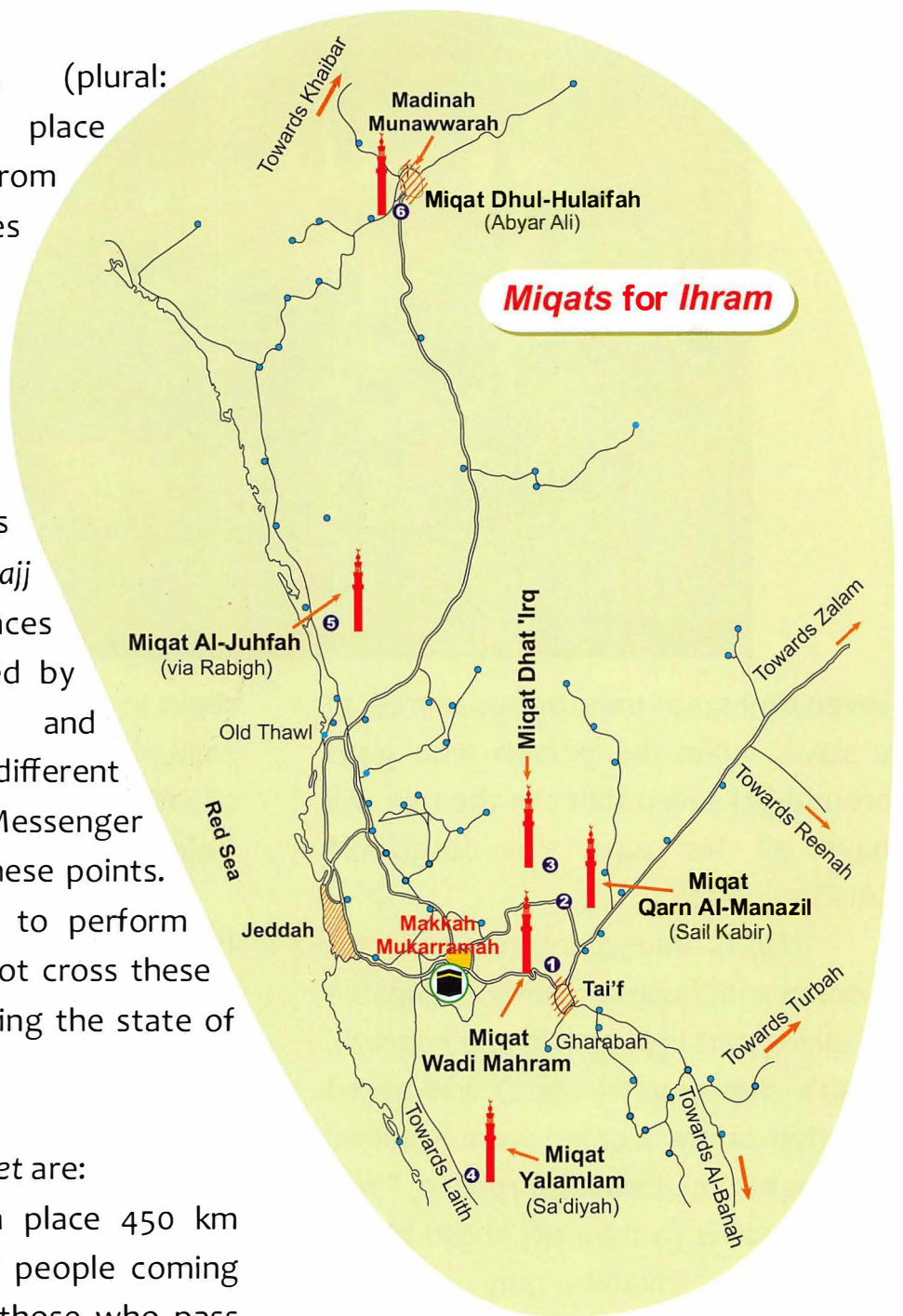
The *hajj* is a perfect sign of faith. It combines in itself all the outstanding qualities of other obligatory acts. It represents the quality of *salaat*, since a pilgrim offers prayers towards the *Ka'bah*. It encourages spending of one's material wealth for the sake of Allah, which is the chief characteristic of *zakaat*. When a pilgrim sets out for *hajj*, he leaves behind his hearth and home, his dear and near ones to please Allah. He suffers hardships and sometimes suffers a lack of basic comforts and things necessary for life – the lesson we learn from fasting and *i'tikaaf*. In fact, the pilgrimage is an act of worship of a lifetime. It represents the completion of surrender and perfection of one's religion.

The Meeqaat

The *meeqaat* (plural: *mawaaqeet*) is the place around Makkah from which a pilgrim assumes the state of *ihraam*. Here, the pilgrim changes into *ihraam* clothing if he has not done so before and pronounces his intention to perform *hajj* or '*umrah*. These places (*mawaaqeet*) are fixed by different townships and localities in different directions. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) himself fixed these points. Anyone who intends to perform *hajj* or '*umrah* must not cross these points without assuming the state of *ihraam*.

These *mawaaqeet* are:

- *Dhul-Hulayfah*, a place 450 km north of Makkah, for people coming from Madeenah and those who pass by it.
- *Dhaat 'Irq*, a place 94 km to the northeast of Makkah, for people coming from Iraq and those passing through Iraq by land or air.
- *Al-Juhfah*, a place 187 km to the northwest of Makkah, for people coming from Egypt and Ash-Shaam (i.e. Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and



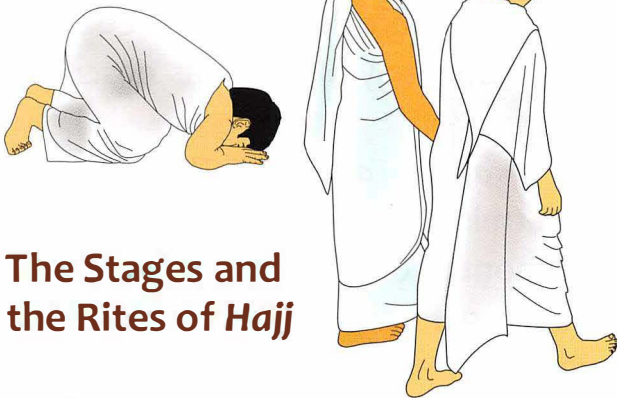
Jordan). These days, pilgrims coming from Egypt, Ash-Shaam and those coming through these areas by land, sea or air assume their *ihraam* from Raabigh instead of Al-Juhfah.

- *Yalamlam*, a place (a mountain) 54 km to the south of Makkah, for people coming from Yemen and those passing through Yemen.

● Qarn al-Manaazil, a place 94 km to the east of Makkah (now called As-Sayl), for people coming from Najd by land or air.

● Those who live between these mawaaqeet and Makkah assume the state of *ihraam* for *hajj* and '*umrah* from their homes. As for those who live in Makkah, they go out of Makkah's Sacred Area to assume their *ihraam* for '*umrah*. As for *hajj*, they assume the state of *ihraam* from their homes.

Today people coming to Jeddah by air often put on *ihraam* at the point of embarkation.



The Stages and the Rites of Hajj

At the Meeqaat:

On arrival at the *meeqaat*, the pilgrim must attend to the following:

1. He is recommended to perform a major ablution (*ghusl*), if possible, and make himself clean and tidy. *Ghusl* is not obligatory, though.
2. *Ihraam*: Having divested himself of all his clothes, he must now change into the *ihraam* clothing. A man wears a white seamless piece of cloth (*izaar*) around his waist and the lower part of the body, and another seamless piece of cloth (*ridaa'*) over his shoulder. He should not cover his head even for

salaat, while in the state of *ihraam*. Both these pieces of unsewn cloth should be white and clean. He may freshen his body with perfume before changing into the *ihraam* clothing.

Ihraam for women consists of their simple and modest clothing of daily wear. They are required to keep their hands and faces uncovered, while in the state of *ihraam*.

A pilgrim must intend the consecration (*ihraam*) with his heart. He is now a *muhrim* (i.e. in a state of *ihraam*; a woman is called *muhrimah*) and is subject to certain obligations and prohibitions, which are discussed at the end of this unit.

While in the state of *ihraam*, he may use certain things for comfort and convenience. He may wear flip-flops or similar slippers, provided that they cover as little of his feet as possible. He may also wear a watch, sunglasses, use an umbrella, take a shower or bath, wash and change his *ihraam* clothing, use unscented soap, use a belt and a pillow, and cover himself with a blanket during cold weather, leaving his head and face uncovered. Women may continue to wear their modest garments but may not use gloves.

3. He should now perform two units of prayer and pronounce his intention to perform *hajj* or '*umrah* as the case may be. He should then start reciting the *talbiyah* loudly and frequently and continue to do so until he arrives at *al-Masjid al-Haraam* (the Sacred Mosque). A woman must not

Obligations and Prohibitions of Ihraam

Once the pilgrim has entered the state of consecration (*ihraam*), he must not cover his head, and he may wear neither stitched cloth nor shoes. Women though keep their heads covered. He should not apply any kind of perfume to his body or clothing. He should neither clip his nails nor shave his head – nor cut his hair.

He may not have sexual relations with his wife. He should avoid suggestive or provocative talk or gestures. He should remain focused on his mission of *hajj*.

He must not perform a marriage contract (*nikaah*) for someone else or enter into it for himself. He may not hunt or kill an animal of any kind for any reason unless it poses a danger to him or other people around him. If he does any of these things, he will have to expiate for this (*dam* or *kaffaarah*). A *dam* is not designed to punish the pilgrim. It simply reminds him of his special state and offers him an opportunity to renew his commitment to perform the *hajj* according to the commands of Allah and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ).

The Expiation (Dam or Kaffaarah)

Should a Muslim violate the sanctity of the *ihraam* knowingly and wilfully, he is required to offer a *dam* by way of expiation and of renewing his commitment to *hajj*. There are three

ways he may offer this *kaffaarah*:

1. By sacrificing a sheep and distributing its meat among the poor in Makkah,
2. By feeding six poor people,
3. By fasting for three days.

A Muslim must offer the *dam* as soon as possible. If, however, he has sexual intercourse during this state of *ihraam*, his *hajj* becomes void, and so he has to perform the rest of the *hajj* rituals, sacrifice a camel and repeat the *hajj* the following year.

Types of Hajj

Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam. There are, however, three types of *hajj* one may perform as described below:

1. **Hajj at-Tamattu'**: This involves performing 'umrah first during any of the months of the *hajj*, removing the *ihraam* garments after 'umrah, and then assuming the state of *ihraam* again for *hajj* on the eighth day of Dhul-Hijjah of the same year.
2. **Hajj al-Ifraad**: This involves assuming the state of *ihraam* for *hajj* only and remaining in this state until *hajj* is finished. No 'umrah is required.
3. **Hajj al-Qiraan**: This involves assuming the state of *ihraam* for both 'umrah and *hajj*.

It is worth noting that the killing of a sacrificial animal is obligatory only on those who perform *hajj at-tamattu'* and *hajj-al-qiraan*. Those performing *hajj-al-ifraad* are not required to slaughter a sacrificial animal.

The Talbiyah

Labbayk-Allaahumma labbayk.

Labbayka laa shareeka laka labbayk.

Innal-hamda wanni'mata

laka wal-mulk, laa shareeka lak

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ،
لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ،
إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالنَّعْمَةَ
لَكَ وَالْمُلْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ

Here I am at Your service, O Allah! Here I am! Here I am at Your service! You have no partners. Yours alone is the praise and all bounty, and Yours is the kingdom! You have no partners.



The Tawaaf: Going around the Ka'bah

Tawaaf is the act of going around the Ka'bah seven times. It forms the essential part of *hajj* and *'umrah*.

The *tawaaf* is done anticlockwise with the Ka'bah on the left hand side seven times. It is the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) to kiss the Black Stone on every round. However, if this is impossible due to the large crowds of pilgrims, one can simply touch it or even point at it with one's hand while saying "*Allaahu Akbar*".

There are mainly five different types of *tawaaf*:

1. *Tawaaf al-Qudoom*: The *tawaaf* of arrival

The opening *tawaaf* of *hajj* is called *tawaaf al-qudoom*: the *tawaaf* of arrival. This initial *tawaaf* is performed by the pilgrim upon entering the Sacred Mosque for the first time, following his intention for *hajj*.

Each turn is called a round (*tawfah*, plural: *tawaaf*), or a circuit or a course (*shawt*, plural: *ashwaat*). One complete cycle of seven turns is an *Usbu* (a sept). Each circuit or *shawt* starts from *al-Hajar al-Aswad* (the Black Stone).

In order for you to recognize the point of start of the *tawaaf*, there is a green light on one of the walls to show the location. Like any other act of worship, the *tawaaf* starts with the intention (*niyyah*) to perform the act for the sake of Allah. Each *shawt* or circuit ends at *al-Hajar al-Aswad*. The pilgrim begins a new *shawt* after reciting *Bismillaah*, *Allaahu Akbar* as before from this point.

The first three circuits of the *tawaaf al-qudoom* are done with the quickened step known as *ramal*. The pilgrim walks briskly with his chest thrust forward and his shoulders slightly rolling during the first three rounds of the *tawaaf al-qudoom*. Ladies are not required to practise *ramal*. *Ramal* is performed only in *tawaaf al-qudoom*. It is not required in other types of *tawaaf*.

The male pilgrim drapes the *ridaa'* (wrapper for the upper part of his body) in such a way that his right shoulder is exposed and his left shoulder is covered. This is called *idhtibaa'*. *Idhtibaa'* is practised only while actually performing the *tawaaf al-qudoom*. Since female pilgrims wear no such *ihraam* clothing, the question of *idhtibaa'* does not arise.

2. *Tawaaf al-'Umrah*

Tawaaf al-'umrah is the *tawaaf* which the pilgrim performs as part of the rites of *'umrah*. It is identical in its essentials except for the intention

(*niyyah*).

3. *Tawaaf al-lfaadhah*

This is the *tawaaf* the pilgrim performs on the 10th of *Dhul-Hijjah*.

4. *Tawaaf al-Wadaa'* (The Farewell *Tawaaf*)

Tawaaf al-wadaa is the *tawaaf* the pilgrim performs immediately before leaving Makkah for his next destination. This is the last act the pilgrim performs in Makkah.

The Various Acts and Stages of the Hajj at a Glance

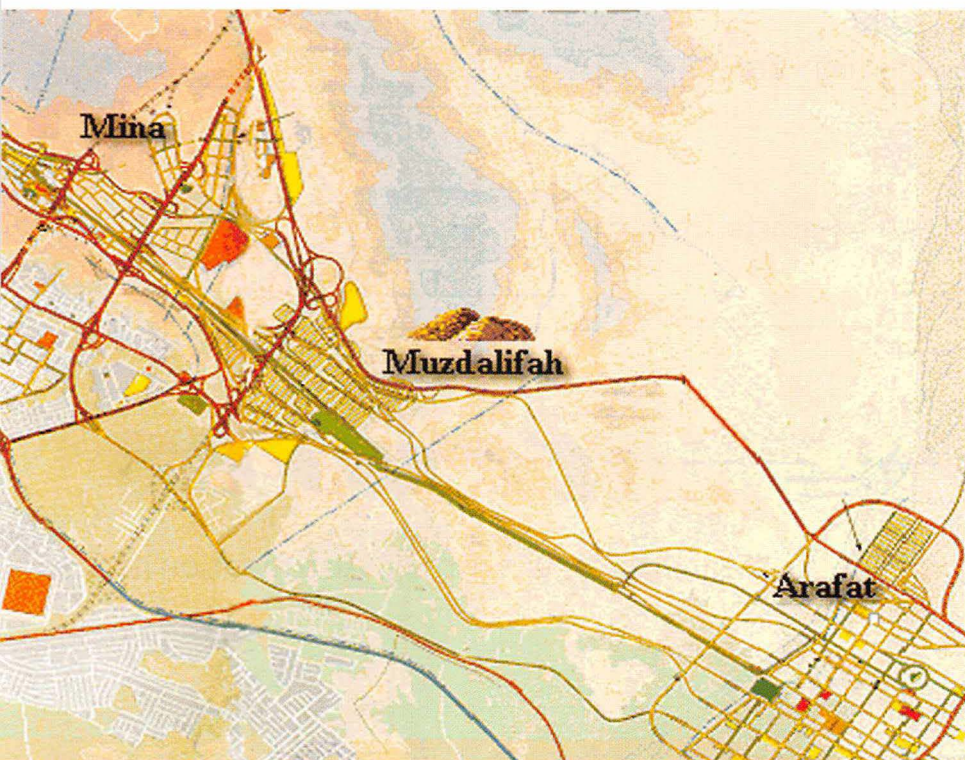
The acts and stages of the *hajj* as a whole are as follows:

1. The *ihraam* at the *meeqaat*.
2. *Tawaaf al-Qudoom*.
3. The *Sa'ee* – The walking at a pace seven times between the two hillocks Safaa and Marwah in Makkah. This is one of the rites of *hajj*, and *'umrah*. It is performed immediately after the *tawaaf* around the Ka'bah is completed by the prayer at the Station of Ibraaheem (*Maqaam Ibraaheem*) and the drinking of Zamzam water.

The *sa'ee* is performed walking except for a portion in the middle, today marked by green lights, where the pace is quickened. The fast pace consists of a distance of some twenty meters. The covered course of the *sa'ee* is called the *mas'aa* and is today paved and enclosed within the bounds of the Sacred Mosque. Its length is about 293 m/ 927 ft. The entire

seven-time-walk between the hills of Safaa and Marwah covers a distance of about 3 miles or 4.5 km.

The origin of this rite goes back to Haajar, who, despairing for the life of her son Ismaa'eel, when the goatskin of water that Prophet Ibraaheem (عليه السلام) had given them was spent, ran back and forth between the two hills. Then suddenly water gushed forth from the well of Zamzam.



al-'Aqabah.

8. *Yawm an-Nahr*: (Day of Sacrifice) The Sacrificing of an animal in Mina, on the 10th of *Dhul-Hijjah*.

9. *Halq* or *Taqseer*: *Halq* is the act of shaving the head by the male pilgrim. This is the last thing a pilgrim does before getting out of the state of *ihraam*. The *taqseer* means shortening or clipping of the whole head of hair by the male pilgrim. Either *halq* or *taqseer* may be performed to fulfil the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (عليه السلام). Female pilgrims, however, are only required to cut a fingertip's length of their hair.

4. Spending the night of 8th *Dhul-Hijjah* at Mina. Mina is about 4.5 km from Makkah.

5. *Wuqoof*, or the halt at 'Arafah, on the 9th *Dhul-Hijjah*. 'Arafah is about 13.5 km away from Makkah.

6. The nightly stay at Muzdalifah: From after the sunset on the 9th of *Dhul-Hijjah* to after *Fajr* on the 10th of *Dhul-Hijjah*.

7. *Ramiy*: Stoning the *Jamrat al-'Aqabah* in Mina on the 10th of *Dhul-Hijjah*. Seven pebbles are pelted at the Biggest Pillar, called *Jamrat*

or *taqseer* may be performed to fulfil the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (عليه السلام). Female pilgrims, however, are only required to cut a fingertip's length of their hair.

10. *Tawaaf al-Ifaadah*: going round the Ka'bah seven times, and performing the *sa'ee* between Safaa and Marwah, according to the type of *hajj* chosen by the pilgrim.

11. *Ramy al-Jimaar*: Stoning the three pillars in Mina, for two or three days, in memory of Ibraaheem's rejection of Satan (*Shaytaan*).

12. The Farewell *tawaaf*.

Exercises

A. Fill in the blanks.

1. 'Umrah is called the _____ Pilgrimage.
2. The *hajj* that is accepted has no reward but _____.
3. The three types of *hajj* are _____, _____ and _____.
4. Each circuit of the *tawaaf* starts from the _____, with the pilgrim reciting _____.

B. Answer the following questions.

1. According to E. W. Lane, what is the meaning of the term *hajj*? Also mention its *Sharee'ah* meaning.

2. Mention the conditions that make *hajj* obligatory on a Muslim.

3. State what the Prophet (ﷺ) said regarding making frequent *tawaafs*.

4. If not actual war, what is the *Jihaad* for women?

5. How is *hajj* a completion of one's Religion?

6. Explain the term *meeqaat*. What is the purpose of *meeqaat*?

7. What should a pilgrim do if he commits any of the prohibited acts while still in the state of *ihraam*? Also mention the expiation.

8. How many different types of *tawaaf* are there? Explain them.

9. What should one do if he cannot hold and kiss the Black Stone?

C. Think-up

Draw a chart indicating the various rites of *hajj*.