
Tareekh- Grade 9

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LESSON 1: IMAM ALI ZAINUL ABIDEEN (A)

Name:	Ali
Title:	Zainul Abideen (The Jewel of Worshippers)
Kunyat:	Abu Muhammad
Father:	Imam Husain (A)
Mother:	Bibi Shahr Banu (A)
Birthdate:	5th Sha'ban 38 A.H. in Madina
Imamat:	From 61 A.H. to 95 A.H.
Martyrdom:	25th Muharram 95 A.H.
Buried:	Madina, Saudi Arabia.

Imam (A) was the eldest son of Imam Husain (A). His mother was the Persian princess Bibi Shahr Banu (A), daughter of King Yazdjard II, the last pre-Islamic ruler of Iran.

He spent the first two years of his life under the care of his grandfather Imam Ali (A), and the next twelve years under the guardianship of his uncle Imam Hasan (A). In 61 A.H. he was present in Karbala, where his father, relatives and the companions of his father were mercilessly killed by the forces of Yazid. At the time, he was too ill to fight and was thus preserved by Allah to continue the line of Imamat.

Imam (A) lived 34 years after his father and all his life was passed in prayers and Du'as to Allah and in the remembrance of the tragedy of Karbala. His habit of frequent prostration in Sajdah caused him to be popularly known as Sajjad. He was also called 'Abid.



In his time, no one could equal the piety and awareness of Allah that he possessed. He was so mindful of Allah that whenever he sat for Wudhu, the colour of his face would change and when he stood for Namaaz his body would be seen trembling.

When he was asked why he became like this, he replied, "**Do you not know before Whom I stand in prayers, and with Whom I talk?**"

Imam (A) had a habit of going out at night with bags of money, food and even firewood. When he reached the houses of the poor and needy, he would distribute what he had without revealing his identity. It was only after his death that the people found out that their helper was actually Imam (A) himself.

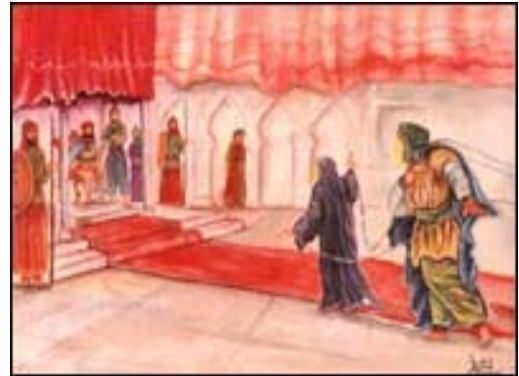
QUESTION BOX

❓ How do we feel about giving *charity*? Would we go out of our way to help those in need?



Imam (A) was part of the caravan of captives that was led from Karbala to Kufa and then to Sham after the martyrdom of Imam Husain (A) and his companions. The cruel army of Yazid chained the hands and legs of Imam (A) and made him wear an iron neckband with spikes facing inwards. The chains used to heat up in the hot desert and burn his flesh to the bone. These wounds continued to give him discomfort for the rest of his life.

In Sham, Imam (A) and the ladies and children of the party of Imam Husain (A) were imprisoned in very harsh conditions. Yazid once called Imam (A) and asked him to speak. Imam (A) gave such a powerful lecture that the feelings of the people began to be swayed towards him. Yazid was alarmed at this and ordered that Adhaan be recited so that Imam's (A) words would be cut off. At this, Imam (A) commented that he was the grandson of the same Muhammad (S) whose name they were reciting in Adhaan.



Due to the pressure of public opinion, Yazid decided to free his prisoners and let them return to Madina. But after his return, Imam (A) was again chained and sent to Sham on the order of the Bani Umayyah Caliph Abdul Malik. Later he was allowed to return to Madina.

After his return to Madina he retired from public life and was only in contact with some of the Shia who learnt from him and taught others.

Once when the Bani Umayyah Caliph, Waleed bin Abdul Malik, came for Haj, he could not get near and kiss the Black Stone (Hajare Aswad) because of the crowd of people. While he was sitting waiting for the rush to die down, he saw Imam (A) enter the Haraam and go straight towards the Black Stone. The crowds parted for him and he managed to kiss the blessed stone quite easily. Waleed was annoyed by this and asked who this man was, although he had recognised Imam (A).

A Shia poet, Farazdak, who was standing nearby, heard him and was irritated by the petty remark of Waleed. In reply to Waleed's question he composed a powerful and moving poem in praise of Imam (A). This poem exists today and is considered to be one of the masterpieces of Arabic literature. A part of the poem reads:

Farazdak's Poem..

**“This is the one whose footsteps the desert knows. The House of Allah,
The sanctuary of Makkah and its outskirts also know him.
This is the son of the best servant of Allah, among all servants of Allah.
This is the pious, pure, chaste and most renowned man. Should any man
from Quraish see him, they would say: Lo! All generosity ends in this
generous man.
This is the son of Fatima, in case you don't know him. With his
grandfather, the Prophet's of Allah were sealed.”**

Imam (A) was prevented by the government to preach openly so he used Du'as to guide the people. His Du'as contained a wealth of teaching and wisdom and many of them exist today. His most famous work is the book of 57 Du'as known as Sahifa-e- Kaamilah or Sahifa-e-Sajjadia.



RESEARCH BOX

 Find out about the 15 whispered prayers in Sahifa-e-Kaamilah.

Imam (A) was poisoned by Waleed bin Abdul Malik in 95 A.H. and is buried in Jannatul Baqee in Madina next to Imam Hasan (A).



Now you know...

- ◆ Other names of our Imam (A) include 'Abid' (the worshipper) and 'Sajjad' (because of his habit of frequent prostration in Sajdah)
- ◆ Imam (A) was present in Kerbala in 61 AH, where he was too ill to fight. He was taken as a prisoner with all the women and children through Kufa to Shaam. Later Yazid was pressured to release them, and let them return to Madina.
- ◆ The cruel army of Yazid chained Imam (A)'s hands and legs, and made him wear an iron neckband with spikes facing inwards. These wounds continued to give him discomfort for the rest of his life.
- ◆ Imam (A) used to go out at night with bags of money, food and firewood, which he would distribute to the poor and needy without revealing his identity. It was only after his death that the people found out that their helper was actually Imam (A).
- ◆ The Imam (A) was the most pious man in his time. He was always mindful of Allah that even while doing Wudhu and standing for Namaaz, he would tremble.
- ◆ Imam (A) was not allowed to preach Islam in public by the government, so he taught and guided the people with his Du'as. His most famous work is the book of 57 Du'as known as Sahifa-e- Kaamilah.
- ◆ Imam (A) was poisoned by Waleed bin Abdul Malik in 95 A.H. and is buried in Jannatul Baqee in Madina next to his uncle Imam Hasan (A).

MORAL BOX

- ❖ We should learn from the generosity and charity of our Imam (A) who shared all that he had, and helped the poor and needy, without them even knowing him.
- ❖ We should understand and follow the footsteps of our Imam (A) especially in his Patience, Piety and awareness of Allah at all times.

❖ _____

LESSON 2: IMAM MUHAMMAD AL-BAQIR (A)

Name:	Muhammad
Title:	al-Baqir (One who Dissects Knowledge)
Kunyat:	Abu Ja'far
Father:	Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A)
Mother:	Bibi Fatimah binte Hasan (A)
Birthdate:	1st Rajab 57 A.H. in Madina
Imamat:	From 95 A.H. to 114 A.H.
Martyrdom:	7th Zilhaj 114 A.H.
Buried:	Madina, Saudi Arabia.

Imam (A) enjoys the unique position of having both paternal and maternal grandfathers as Imams. His mother, Fatimah, was the daughter of Imam Hasan (A). The Holy Prophet (S) had told his companion, Jabir bin Abdullah Ansari that he would live to see the Fifth Imam (A) whose name would be Muhammad. He asked him to convey his Salaams to this Imam (A), which Jabir managed to do shortly before he died.

Imam (A) was brought up for 3 years by his grandfather, Imam Husain (A). He was present in Karbala at the time of martyrdom of Imam Husain (A) and his friends. He also spent a year in the prison of Damascus with his father and the rest of the children and ladies of the martyrs of Karbala. He lived for 20 years in Madina after the death of his father.

EXERCISE BOX

- **Draw the family tree of our fifth Imam (A) including both paternal and maternal sides of his family till the Holy Prophet (S).**

Imam (A) was left in relative peace by the rulers because the Bani Umayyah were busy in trying to control the rebellions and wars that were breaking out all over the Muslim empire. Taking advantage of this opportunity, Imam (A) set up and conducted classes on the teachings of the Holy Prophet (S) and the Ahlul Bayt (A). Under his guidance, his pupils compiled various books on different branches of science and arts. Imam (A) also began to teach new sciences like Mathematics and Chemistry for the first time in Arabia.



QUESTION BOX

❓ **The Imam (A) gave great importance to academic education as well as Islamic education. How are we implementing this in our lives?**

Imam (A) gave much importance to holding Majalis where the event of Karbala would be remembered. At the same time, practical instructions about the teachings of Islam would also be given. These meetings were also encouraged by Imam Ja'far Sadiq (A) and Imam Ali Riza (A) in later years.

One of the Caliphs at the time of Imam (A) was Waleed bin Abdul Malik. Once, the ruler of Rome wrote to Waleed saying that the Roman coins, which were also used by Muslims, would now carry anti-Islamic phrases. The Caliph decided that a new Dinar coin should be minted.

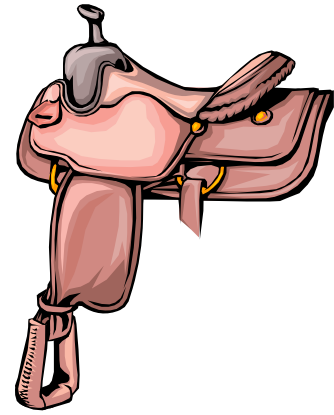
A problem arose as to what phrase should be used on the new coin. When consulted, Imam (A) suggested that the phrase "Laa Ilaha Illallah" be printed on one side, and "Muhammadur Rasulullah" on the other. This advice was accepted, and the first Islamic coin was thus minted.



RESEARCH BOX

📖 **Find examples as to how the Imam of our time (A) is able to help and guide all his followers, even though he is in Ghaibah (hiding).**

Imam (A) continued to preach peacefully until 114 A.H. Then, the Caliph of the time, Hisham bin Abdul Malik, turned his attention to him. He had heard of the fame and following of Imam (A) and he was scared and jealous of the influence that Imam (A) had over the Muslims, especially in Madina. He therefore arranged with Zayd bin Hasan to deliver a saddle coated with poison to Imam (A).



Zayd brought the saddle with a letter from Hisham. On seeing the saddle, Imam (A) remarked that it was a pity that Zayd was involved in this terrible plan. However, demonstrating his contentment in the Will of Allah, Imam (A) rode on the saddle. The poison took effect immediately. His condition steadily grew worse for three days.

QUESTION BOX

❓ **Even though the Imam (A) knew about the evil plans of the caliph, he still rode on the saddle as it was the will of Allah. When we come across things in our life which we don't like, do we complain or thankfully accept the will of Allah?**

Just before his death, he called the people of Madina and told them that his son Ja'far (A) would be the Imam after him, and that he should give him Ghusl and Kafan. Imam (A) breathed his last on 7th Zilhajj 114 A.H. at the age of 57 years and was buried in Jannatul Baqee next to his father.



Now you know...

- ◆ Imam (A) is the only Imam who has Imams as both his paternal and maternal grandfathers.
- ◆ Imam (A) was also present in Karbala in 61AH, and was taken with his father and all the women and children, through Kufa to Shaam where they were imprisoned.
- ◆ Imam (A) had a chance to set up classes in which he taught the teachings of the Ahlul Bayt (A). This was because the Bani Umayyah were busy in trying to control the rebellions and wars that were breaking out all over the Muslim empire. The Imam (A) also taught sciences like chemistry and maths.
- ◆ The first Islamic coin was minted, with the advice of the Imam (A) to print "Laa Ilaha Illallah" on one side and "Muhammadur Rasulullah on the other.
- ◆ During 114 A.H. the Caliph of the time, Hisham bin Abdul Malik had heard of the fame and following of Imam (A). He was scared and jealous of the influence that Imam (A) had over the Muslims so he arranged to kill the Imam with a poisonous saddle.
- ◆ Imam (A) died on 7th Zilhajj 114 A.H. at the age of 57 years and was buried in Jannatul Baqee, Madina, next to his father.

MORAL BOX

- ❖ Gaining knowledge is very important. We should work hard, and try our best in both our Madressa Islamic work, and our school work.
- ❖ We should learn to accept the will of Allah thankfully, even if we don't like it, as Allah knows what is good and bad for us.

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LESSON 3: IMAM JA'FAR AS-SADIQ (A)

Name:	Ja'far
Title:	as-Sadiq (The Truthful One)
Kunyat:	Abu Abdillah
Father:	Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A)
Mother:	Bibi Umme Farwa binte Qasim (A)
Birthdate:	17th Rabi-ul-Awwal 83 A.H. in Madina
Imamat:	From 114 A.H. to 148 A.H.
Martyrdom:	25th Shawwal 148 A.H.
Buried:	Madina, Saudi Arabia.

Imam (A) has the same birth date as our Holy Prophet (S). Amongst his titles are al-Faazil (the Successful) and at-Tahir (the Pure). He was brought up in the care of his grandfather, Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) for 12 years and then remained under the guidance of his father, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) for another 19 years.

During the lifetime of Imam (A), the Bani Abbas took over the reins of political power from the Bani Umayyah. In this period of internal wars and upheavals, he was not disturbed by the rulers. He used this opportunity to advance the work started by his father and he set up a large teaching centre.



JABIR IBN HAYAN (DIED 803 CE)

Many students from foreign countries came to learn from Imam (A). His classes and sessions of instruction produced 4,000 scholars of Hadith and the sciences. Amongst his famous students were Hisham bin Hakam, Jaabir bin Hayyaan and Abu Hanifah. Imam (A) was responsible for organising the Fiqh (laws) of the Shia faith, which is why we are sometimes known as the Ja'fari Shia.

Once a man from Iran by the name of Sahl bin Hasan came to Imam (A) and asked him why he did not fight for his right when there were so many Shia in Iran ready to fight with him. In reply Imam (A) took Sahl to the fire place and asked him to sit in the blazing fire. Sahl began to tremble and said that he had a family to return to, and begged to be excused from this test.



Meanwhile, Haroon Makki, a close companion of Imam (A), arrived, having just returned from Hajj. Imam (A) asked him to jump in the fire and he did so at once. After a while, Imam (A) asked Sahl to look in the fire place. Sahl saw that Haroon sat there, quite unharmed. Imam (A) asked Sahl how many such followers were there in Iran, to which the man replied, "None, master." Having made his point, Imam (A) asked Haroon to come out of the fire.

QUESTION BOX

❓ **Are we ready to join the army of our Imam (A) no matter what situation we are in, or will our personal matters come in between?**

Once, a man falsely accused Imam (A) of plotting against the Bani Abbas Caliph, Mansoor Dawanaqi. When he was called to the court to explain his actions, Imam (A) denied the allegation and asked the man to repeat his words under oath. The man began the oath by praising Allah, but Imam (A) asked him to make his statement by saying that he was free from the protection of Allah and trusted his own strength and wisdom. When the man took the oath against Imam (A) in this way, his leg was paralysed immediately. Mansoor ordered the man to be thrown out of his court.



Once in Madina there was a shortage of wheat flour and prices of the flour were very high. Imam (A) asked his servant what their situation was. The servant replied that they had plenty of wheat and should have no problem for a long time. Imam (A) said, "sell the wheat in the market and let us face the situation along with everyone else." In this way he taught that hoarding is discouraged by Islam.

Imam (A) was once called to the court of Mansoor who was in an extremely angry mood towards him. When he came to the court, a man called Rabi saw that he was reciting something quietly.

Gradually, the anger of Mansoor died down, and by the time Imam (A) approached him, he was pleased to see him. Later, Rabi asked him what he was reciting, and he said it was the prayer to Allah which his great grandfather Imam Husain (A) used to recite as follows:

"O my Provision in time of hardship, O my Help in the face of disaster, guard me with Your Eye which never sleeps, surround me with Your impenetrable fortress."

Rabi said that he learnt this prayer and never remained in hard times after he recited it.

QUESTION BOX

❓ **How many times have we thought of using Duas and A'maals to solve our problems, instead of complaining and getting angry?**

Towards the end of his life severe restrictions were put on Imam (A) by Mansoor, who used to torture the Shia mercilessly. Finally, he sent some poisoned grapes to his governor in Madina, Muhammad bin Sulayman, with instructions to give them to Imam (A).



The poison took its effect and Imam (A) breathed his last on 25th Shawwal 148 A.H. at the age of 63 years. He is buried in Jannatul Baqee next to his father.



Now you know...

- ◆ The 6th Imam (A) shares the same birth date as the Holy Prophet (S)
- ◆ During his lifetime was the period of internal wars as the Bani Abbas took over the reins of political power from the Bani Umayyah. Therefore, he was not disturbed by the rulers and he used this opportunity to advance the work started by his father and he set up a large teaching centre
- ◆ Imam (A) taught many students from all over the world. His classes and sessions of instruction produced 4,000 scholars of Hadith and the sciences.
- ◆ Imam (A) was responsible for organising the Fiqh (laws) of the Shia faith, which is why we are sometimes known as the Ja'fari Shia.
- ◆ Once Sahl bin Hasan came from Iran, to ask the Imam (A) to fight for his right as there were so many Shia in Iran ready to fight with him. In reply Imam (A) took Sahl to the fire place and asked him to sit in the blazing fire. Sahl begged to be excused from this test, whereas Haroon Makki, a companion of the Imam (A), jumped in at once and remained in it unharmed. This proved that the Shia weren't ready yet.
- ◆ When there was a shortage of wheat flour in Madina. Imam (A) told his servant to sell all their wheat in the market so that they may face the situation along with everyone else. In this way he taught that hoarding is discouraged by Islam.
- ◆ Once the Imam (A) used a prayer to Allah, recited by Imam Hussein (A), to ease the anger of Caliph Mansoor Dawanaqi.
- ◆ The Imam (A) was killed by poisoned grapes on the instruction of Mansoor. He died on 25th Shawwal 148 A.H. at the age of 63 years and is buried in Jannatul Baqee next to his father.

MORAL BOX

- ❖ Hoarding is discouraged in Islam. We should try and use all means to help out in hardships, rather than storing for ourselves alone.
- ❖ We should learn ward off hard times with the use prayers, especially those taught to us by our Imam's (A).

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LESSON 4: IMAM MUSA AL-KADHIM (A)

Name:	Musa
Title:	al-Kadhim (One who Restrains his Anger)
Kuniyat:	Abul Hasan, Abu Ibrahim and Abu Ali
Father:	Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A)
Mother:	Bibi Hamida (A)
Birthdate:	7th Safar 128 A.H. in Abwa
Imamat:	From 148 A.H. to 183 A.H.
Martyrdom:	25th Rajab 183 A.H.
Buried:	Kadhmain, Iraq.

Imam (A) was brought up under the care of his father for 20 years. After the death of his father, he took over the responsibility of Imamat and guided the people from Madina.

At the time of the death of Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A), some of the Shia claimed that Isma'il, his eldest son, was the Imam. This view was incorrect because Isma'il had died during the life time of his father (A) and moreover, it was against the specific instructions of the sixth Imam (A).

RESEARCH BOX

 **Find out more about the Ismailis, and who is their leader at the moment?**

Imam (A) lived during the time of four Bani Abbas Caliphs, Mansoor, Mahdi, Hadi and Haroon Rashid. Although he was allowed some freedom in the beginning, it was not long before the attention of the rulers was turned on him. When Haroon came to power in 170 A.H., he set about killing the descendants of Imam Ali (A). At first, however, he allowed Imam (A) to continue guiding the people.

Ali bin Yaqtin was the prime minister of Haroon. Unknown to Haroon, he was a Shia and followed the rulings of Imam (A). He also used to try to help the Shia secretly by using his powerful influence.

One day Haroon sent him some robes as a gift for his services. Amongst them was a costly black woollen cloak with a gold design. Ali bin Yaqtin sent the robes to Imam (A) as a gift, together with some money for Khums. Imam (A) accepted the money and the robes, but returned the cloak with a letter saying, "Keep the cloak and do not let it leave your hands. An event will occur when you will need it." Although Ali was disappointed that his gift had been returned, he followed Imam's (A) instructions.

Some time later, one of the servants of Ali bin Yaqtin left his service after a quarrel. He went to report to Haroon that Ali was a secret follower of Imam (A). He also told Haroon how he had sent the cloak as a gift to Imam (A) together with money.

Haroon was furious and summoned Ali bin Yaqtin at once, demanding to see the cloak. Because of Imam's (A) advice the cloak was still in his possession and he brought it at once. Haroon was ashamed at doubting his prime minister and ordered that the servant be flogged with a thousand lashes.

Once a servant of the Imam (A) was bringing water for him, when she accidentally slipped, spilling all the water on the Imam (A). She became scared about what she had done, but due to the excellent training of the Imam (A), she immediately quoted a verse of the Quran about suppressing one's anger. Imam (A) was happy on hearing this, and told her that he had forgiven her, and forgotten the incident. Not only that, but he also continued with the verse stating that 'Allah loves the Muhsineen' (good doers) and set her free.

Haroon began to resent the popularity and power that Imam (A) had over the Muslims. Once when Haroon went over to Madina, he approached the tomb of the Holy Prophet (S) and said, "Greetings to you, O Prophet of Allah, greetings to you, my cousin." He was trying to show the people that he was related to the Holy Prophet (S) because he was a descendant of Abbas, the brother of Abdullah. Imam (A) also approached the tomb and said, "Greetings to you, O Prophet of Allah, greetings to you, my father." Imam (A) was proving to the people and Haroon that he was a direct descendant of the Holy Prophet (S). When he heard this, Haroon's face went red in anger.



QUESTION BOX

❓ If someone did something wrong for us, would we forgive and forget, or get angry and look for revenge?

In Baghdad, information continued to reach Haroon about the growing popularity of Imam (A) and he felt threatened. In spite of the fact that Imam (A) had not criticised the government, he had him handcuffed and brought to Basra from Madina. In Basra, Imam (A) was imprisoned for one year under the care of Isa bin Ja'far. He was then moved to a prison in Baghdad, and then moved to different prisons. He was finally kept under the guard of Sindi bin Shahik.



The accursed Sindi eventually killed Imam (A) by presenting him with poisoned dates. Imam (A) immediately felt the effect of the poison, and after three days of fever, he left this world.

Sindi put the body of Imam (A) on a bridge in Baghdad and invited the people to come and see the body and prove to themselves that he had not been killed by force, but had died naturally.



Imam (A) died on 6th Safar 183 A.H. after being the guide for the people for 35 years. He was buried in Kazmain, near Baghdad. The Ghusl and Kafan was performed by his son Imam Ali ar-Riza (A), who also led his funeral prayers.

MORAL BOX

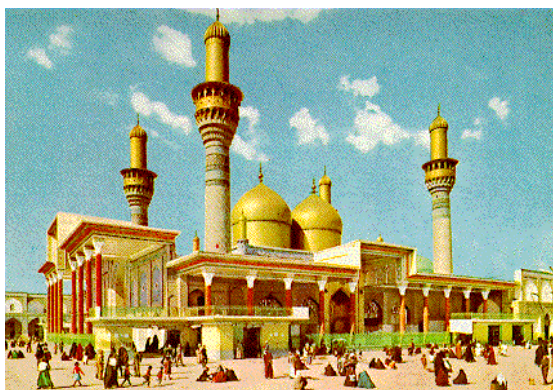
- ❖ **We should learn from the Imam (A) to always help out people when we know they are in trouble.**
- ❖ **There is no point getting angry. Our Imam (A) has showed us to forgive and forget or even to do better.**

- ❖ _____

- ❖ _____

Now you know...

- ◆ At the time of the death of the sixth Imam (A), he had instructed for Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) to be the next Imam. Some of the Shia claimed that Isma'il, his eldest son, was the Imam. This was incorrect because Isma'il had died during the life time of his father (A).
- ◆ Imam (A) lived during the time of four Bani Abbas Caliphs, Mansoor, Mahdi, Hadi and Haroon. When Haroon Rashid came to power, he began killing all descendants of Imam Ali (A).
- ◆ Ali bin Yaqtin was the prime minister of Haroon. He was a Shia and followed the rulings of Imam (A) and used to help the Shia secretly, using his powerful influence.
- ◆ Once Ali bin Yaqtin sent a beautiful expensive robe to the Imam (A) with khums money. The Imam (A) returned the robe, knowing an event would happen when Ali would need it again. It so happened that the robe had been a gift from Haroon to Ali, and when an ex-servant of Ali told Haroon that Ali had given the robe to the Imam (A), Haroon got angry and demanded to see it.
- ◆ The Imam (A) was always patient, and never got angry. Once his servant spilled water on him, but the Imam (A) forgave her, and set her free.
- ◆ Haroon began to feel threatened at the growing popularity of the Imam (A), so he had him arrested and imprisoned in Basra for a year, and then moved to different prisons. Finally he was kept under the guard of Sindi bin Shahik who killed the Imam (A) by presenting him with poisoned dates.
- ◆ Sindi put the body of Imam (A) on a bridge in Baghdad to prove to people that he had not been killed by force, but had died naturally. He was buried in Kadhmain, near Baghdad.



LESSON 5: IMAM ALI AR-RIDHA (A)

Name:	Ali
Title:	ar-Ridha (One with whom Allah is Pleased)
Kunyat:	Abul Hasan
Father:	Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A)
Mother:	Bibi Ummul Baneen Najma (A)
Birthdate:	11th Zilkad 148 A.H. in Madina
Imamat:	From 183 A.H. to 203 A.H.
Martyrdom:	29th Safar 203 A.H.
Buried:	Mashad, Iran.

Imam (A) is also known as Imam Zaamin (A). Zaamin comes from the Arabic word Zamaanat, which means security. Whenever we start a journey, we pray to Allah to keep us safe for the sake of our eighth Imam (A). We also give some money in charity, which is in the name of Imam Zaamin (A).



Imam (A) was brought up under the care of his father for 35 years. His father left behind a written document declaring his succession.

When his father was poisoned in prison in 183 A.H., Imam (A) took over the great responsibility of Imamat under very difficult circumstances. Haroon Rashid, the Abbaside Caliph, made life very difficult for the followers of Imam (A).

QUESTION BOX

❓ **During difficult times do we maintain our peace and calm, or does our anger and frustration take over?**

In Madina, Imam (A) carried out his duties in a peaceful manner in the face of a very difficult period for the Shia, and it was mostly due to his efforts that the teachings of the Holy Prophet (S) and the correct interpretation of the Holy Qur'an became widespread. He had command over several languages and used to answer the questions of his followers in their own language.

QUESTION BOX

❓ **How many languages do we know? Have we kept our mother tongue and have we chosen to learn new languages in school?**

Haroon Rashid died in 193 A.H., having nominated his son Amin as his successor. However, Amin was killed after ruling for 4 years only, by his brother Ma'mun, who then took over the Abbaside Caliphate.

Ma'mun was an intelligent man, and he could see that the Shia were increasing in number despite torture and oppression. He was aware of the position and power that Imam (A) held over the people. Many of Ma'mun's own ministers were Shia, and he began to get worried about the influence of Imam (A).

He decided that the only way he could hold on to power and quieten down the Shia, who were threatening to revolt, was by changing his approach. First, he declared himself Shia also. He ordered that the descendants of Imam Ali (A) should not be harmed. Next, he invited Imam (A) to come from Madina to Marv, which was his winter capital.

On his way to Marv, Imam (A) passed Nishapoor, where thousands of people had gathered to catch a glimpse of him. Some scholars begged him to stop and address them so that they could hear his voice. Imam (A) related to them that the angel Jibraeel (A) had told the Holy Prophet (S), who had told Imam Ali (A), and each Imam (A) had told the next Imam (A), that Allah had said, "Laa Ilaaha Illallah is My fortress, and whoever enters My fortress saves himself from My punishment." Then Imam (A) went forward a little and stopped. He then informed them that there were a few conditions to entering the fortress of Allah, one of which was complete submission to the Imam (A) of the time. This report is famously known as 'The Golden Chain' and has been recorded by many historians.



On his arrival in Marv, Imam (A) was met with respect by the hypocrite Ma'mun. He admitted that Imam (A) had the right to the Caliphate, and offered it to him. Imam (A) refused and so Ma'mun insisted that he accept to become the heir to the throne.

Despite his reluctance, Imam (A) was forced to accept the position, and Ma'mun made the people pay the oath of allegiance to him.

He also ordered that the royal robes would be green in the future, which was the colour of the household of the Holy Prophet (S). Ma'mun then ordered that the Dirham coin should have the name of Imam (A), and issued a royal decree saying that Imam (A) would succeed him and his title would be ar-Ridha min Aale Muhammad.

Ma'mun had not given this position to Imam (A) due to any love for him, but he had done it to quieten the threat of the Shia. He had no intention of allowing Imam (A) to become his successor. When Imam (A) took up his place in the court of Ma'mun, he took the opportunity to spread the teachings of Islam further. He organised Majalis to remember the martyrs and sacrifice of Karbala, and explained to the people the moral lessons to be learnt from that tragedy.

Ma'mun's court was visited by people from all over the world. Imam (A) answered all the questions they asked to Ma'mun. They were always satisfied with his answers, used to say that they had never met a man who argued and explained in the style of Imam (A).

Ma'mun soon felt threatened by the growing popularity of Imam (A) and decided to ensure his own survival by killing him. He did this by inviting Imam (A) to a meal where he fed him poisoned grapes.



Imam (A) became very ill as a result and died on 29th Safar 203 A.H. He is buried in Toos (Mashad) in Iran.



MORAL BOX

- ❖ **We should learn to live peacefully and make an effort to deal with difficult times with patience.**
- ❖ **Communication is a very important tool. Our Imam knew many different languages which he used to teach Islam to people of different countries.**

- ❖ _____

Now you know...

- ◆ The Imam (A) is known as Imam Zaamin (A) (from the Arabic word meaning security). When we start a journey, we pray to Allah to keep us safe for the sake of our eighth Imam (A) and we give money in charity in the name of Imam Zaamin (A)
- ◆ Imam (A) took over the great responsibility of Imamatus under very difficult times. Haroon Rashid, the caliph, made life very difficult for the followers of Imam (A). It was due to the Imam's (A) efforts that the teachings of the Holy Prophet (S) and the correct interpretation of the Holy Qur'an became widespread. He knew several languages and used to answer the questions of his followers in their own language
- ◆ When Ma'mun came to power, he changed his approach as he was worried about the influence of the Imam (A). He claimed he was a Shia, and pressured the Imam (A) to become his successor to the throne. Obviously, Ma'mun had not done this due to love for the Imam (A) but to quieten the threat of the Shia.
- ◆ When Imam (A) passed Nishapoor, thousands of people had gathered to see him. Some scholars begged him to stop and address them so that they could hear his voice. Imam (A) related to them a Hadith which is famously known as 'The Golden Chain'.
- ◆ Imam (A) used his position to spread the teachings of Islam and organised Majalis in remembrance of Karbala explaining to the people the moral lessons to be learnt from that tragedy.
- ◆ Ma'mun began to feel threatened by the growing popularity of Imam (A) and decided to kill him. He invited Imam (A) to a meal where he fed him poisoned grapes. Imam (A) became very ill and died on 29th Safar 203 A.H. He is buried in Toos (Mashad) in Iran

LESSON 6: IMAM MUHAMMAD AT-TAQI (A)

Name:	Muhammad
Title:	at-Taqi (One who is Mindful of Allah)
Kunyat:	Abu Ja'far
Father:	Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A)
Mother:	Bibi Khaizuran (A)
Birthdate:	10th Rajab 195 A.H. in Madina
Imamat:	From 203 A.H. to 220 A.H.
Martyrdom:	29th Zilqad 220 A.H.
Buried:	Kadhmain, Iraq.

Imam (A) was brought up under the care of his father for 4 years. When the Abbaside Caliph Ma'mun forced Imam ar-Ridha (A) to leave Madina for Iran, he knew that he would never see his young son again. He therefore declared Imam (A) as his successor, so that the people of Madina would not be in doubt as to who was the next Imam. In 203 A.H. the cursed Ma'mun poisoned Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) and thus Imam (A) took over the duties of Imamat when he was only 8 years old.

In spite of his minor age, he demonstrated the intelligence and wisdom of his forefathers. He was bold, learned, used to forgive people and was tolerant. He was famous for his hospitality and courtesy to all and for his help to the poor, orphans and the needy. He lived a simple life and worked tirelessly to guide people to the right path.

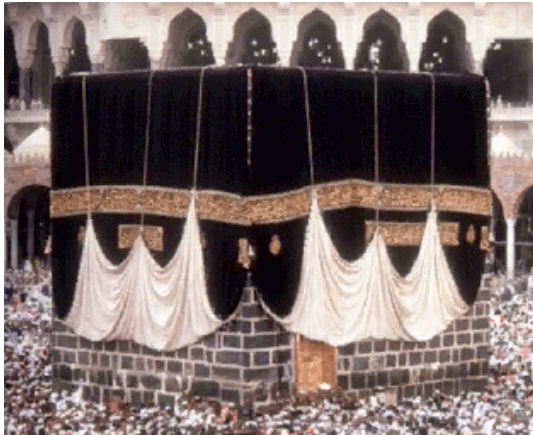
Ma'mun received reports of the brilliance of Imam (A) in debating in matters of Fiqh, Hadith and Tafsir of the Holy Qur'an. He wanted to confirm these reports for himself so he had Imam (A) brought to his capital in Baghdad.

Although Ma'mun had shown in many instances his true enmity towards Ahlul Bayt (A) and their Shia, he welcomed Imam (A) for his own ulterior motives.

He did not doubt that the young man was the Imam of the time despite his age, and he knew that the Shia would follow the rulings of Imam (A) without hesitation. In order to protect himself and the future of the Abbaside empire, Ma'mun wanted to marry his daughter Ummul Fadhl to Imam (A).

The elders of Bani Abbas were very disturbed when they learnt of Ma'mun's intentions. A group of them came to Ma'mun with a view to dissuade him from this marriage. Ma'mun rejected their plea, stating that Imam (A) was a true successor to his father and commanded the same virtues and excellence in spite of his tender years. He further stated that the best scholars of the Islamic world could not hope to compete with Imam (A). This gave the elders an opportunity to prove him wrong and they decided to appoint Yahya bin Aksam, a great scholar and juror of Baghdad, to debate against Imam (A).

Ma'mun agreed to the contest and organised a large gathering in his court, in which 900 scholars and learned men were invited to participate. News of the contest spread quickly and people wondered how a young child could contest against the veteran judge who was famous for his knowledge. When the court was assembled, Yahya confidently asked Imam (A), "What is your verdict about a man who indulges in hunting while in the state of Ehram?"



Imam (A) immediately replied, "Your question is vague and misleading. Perhaps you could clarify it by mentioning whether the man hunted within the precincts of the Holy Ka'ba or outside; whether he was literate or illiterate; whether he was a slave or a free man; whether he was Baaligh or not; whether it was for the first time or he had done it previously; whether the prey was a bird or some other creature; whether the prey was small or big; whether he hunted in the day or at night; whether the hunter repented for his action or persisted in it; whether he hunted

secretly or openly and whether the Ehram was for Umrah or Haj. Unless these points are explained, no specific answer can be given to this question".

Yahya was staggered at listening to these words and the audience was dumbfounded. He acknowledged the superiority of Imam (A) and humbly requested to be told the answer. Imam (A) then gave the different verdicts for each of the possibilities listed above.

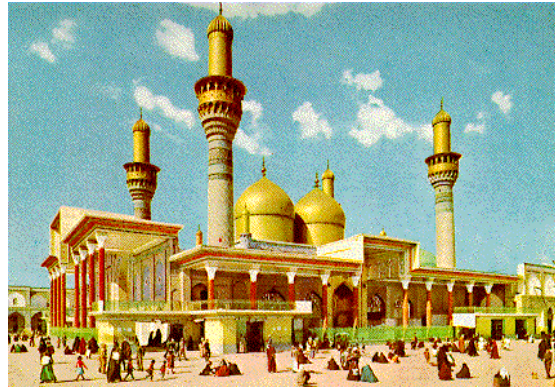
Ma'mun was overjoyed at this display of the knowledge of Imam (A) and in the same gathering, he wedded his daughter Ummul Fadhl to him. After staying in Baghdad for a year, Imam (A) returned to Madina.

His marriage with Ummul Fadhl was not peaceful and she was a source of constant difficulty to him. She was also jealous because he married Bibi Summana Khatoon (A), who later became the mother of the 9th Imam (A).

In Madina Imam (A) once again gave the people true guidance and taught the religion of Islam freely. People from far and wide would come to Madina to seek knowledge and truth from him.

After Ma'mun died Mu'tasim Billah came to the throne. He was a man who hated the Ahlul Bayt (A) deeply. He knew that it was difficult to act against Imam (A) in his home city of Madina, so he called him to Baghdad.

In the same year the cursed man got Imam (A) poisoned. Imam (A) passed away when he was only 25 years old, and is buried beside his grandfather, Imam Musa al-Kazim (A), at Kadhmain in the suburb of Baghdad.



MORAL BOX

- ❖ **We should learn from the Imam (A) to lead simple and humble lives, and try and help those in need.**
- ❖ **It is important that we take part in learning and also teaching Islam in our communities.**

❖

Now you know...

- ◆ Imam (A) took over the duties of Imamah when he was only 8 years old yet he still demonstrated the intelligence and wisdom of his forefathers. He lived a simple life and worked tirelessly to help the poor, orphans and needy and guide people to the right path
- ◆ Ma'mun heard of the brilliance of Imam (A) in debating in matters of Fiqh, Hadith and Tafsir of the Holy Qur'an. He had Imam (A) brought to Baghdad and welcomed him for his own ulterior motives. He knew that the young man was the Imam of the time despite his age.
- ◆ In order to protect himself and the future of the Abbaside empire, Ma'mun wanted his daughter Ummul Fadhl to marry Imam (A). When the elders of Bani Abbas learnt of this, they were very disturbed and came to Ma'mun to persuade him. Ma'mun rejected their plea, saying that Imam (A) was a true successor to his father and the best scholars could not compete with Imam (A). The elders appointed Yahya bin Aksam, a great scholar and juror of Baghdad, to debate against Imam (A)
- ◆ Yahya asked the Imam (A) a question, and was amazed at listening to Imam (A)'s answer. The audience was dumbfounded. Yahya acknowledged the superiority of Imam (A). In the same gathering, Ma'mun wedded his daughter Ummul Fadhl to Imam (A). He returned to Madina after a year.
- ◆ His marriage with Ummul Fadhl was not peaceful and she was jealous because he married Bibi Summana Khatoon (A), who became the mother of the ninth Imam (A)
- ◆ When Mu'tasim Billah came to the throne he hated the Ahlul Bayt (A) deeply, so he called Imam (A) to Baghdad and got him poisoned. Imam (A) passed away when he was only 25 years old, and is buried beside his grandfather, Imam Musa al-Kazim (A), at Kadhmain in the suburb of Baghdad

LESSON 7: IMAM ALI AN-NAQI (A)

Name:	Ali
Title:	an-Naqi (The Pure) and al-Hadi (The Guide)
Kuniyat:	Abul Hasan
Father:	Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A)
Mother:	Bibi Summana Khatoon (A)
Birthdate:	15th Zilhaj 212 A.H. in Madina
Imamat:	From 220 A.H. to 254 A.H.
Martyrdom:	3rd Rajab 254 A.H.
Buried:	Samarra, Iraq.

Imam (A) was only 8 years old when his father died. Thus, like his father, he also took over the responsibility of Imamat at a very young age. The Abbaside Caliph Ma'mun Rashid was succeeded by Mu'tasim, who ruled for 8 years. He was in turn followed by Wathiq Billah. During the 5 years of the reign of Wathiq, Imam (A) and the Shia were allowed to live peacefully. After Wathiq, his brother Mutawakkil came to power.

Mutawakkil was notorious for his free living, immodesty and intoxication. He was the first Abbaside Caliph to hold and participate openly in parties where music, drinking, vain talk and all kinds of evil were practised.

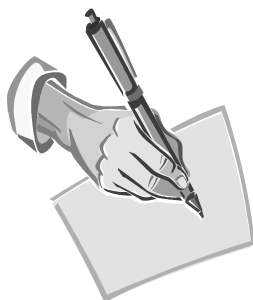


QUESTION BOX

❓ **Do we follow our Imam (A) by obeying Allah, or are we the followers of Satan, by listening to music and doing haraam?**

For the first 4 years of his rule, Mutawakkil was occupied in state matters, so he did not trouble Imam (A). After he was free from his affairs, he turned his attention to the activities of Imam (A).

At the time, Imam (A) was preaching to the people in Madina, guiding them to the right path and increasing their faith in Islam. The recognition of his great knowledge and attributes grew day by day. When Mutawakkil heard about his reputation and popularity, he was overcome by jealousy and felt that his own power was threatened.



Mutawakkil disguised his hatred for Imam (A) and wrote to him, respectfully inviting him to come to Samarra to meet him. He claimed that he believed in the position of Imam (A) and wanted to settle matters peacefully. Although Imam (A) was well aware of Mutawakkil's evil intentions, he knew that the consequences of refusing would be sure death.

He therefore reluctantly decided to leave Madina, the beloved city of the Holy Prophet (S). When he arrived in Samarra, Mutawakkil totally ignored him and ordered that he should be put up in an inn provided by the state for beggars and homeless people.

Mutawakkil now showed his true colours by imprisoning Imam (A) under the custody of a cruel hearted man by the name of Zarraqui. This man, however, soon changed his feelings on witnessing the manners and behaviour of Imam (A). Thereafter, Mutawakkil transferred him to the prison of another cruel man called Sayeed.



Here Imam (A) remained until Fateh bin Khaqan became the prime minister of Mutawakkil. Fateh was a Shia and could not bear to see the miserable condition of Imam (A), so he used his influence to secure his release. However, Mutawakkil kept a close watch on the activities of Imam (A), trying to prove that he was acting against the government so as to have an excuse to kill him.

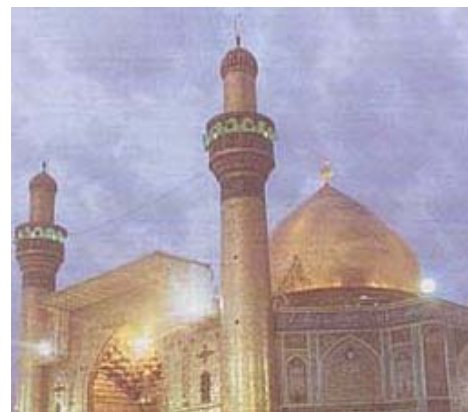


Although Mutawakkil was his most deadly enemy, Imam (A) did not return this enmity. Once Mutawakkil happened to suffer from a serious sickness and his own doctors declared him incurable. Mutawakkil's mother approached Imam (A) for help, and he prescribed an ointment that resulted in a spontaneous cure.

QUESTION BOX

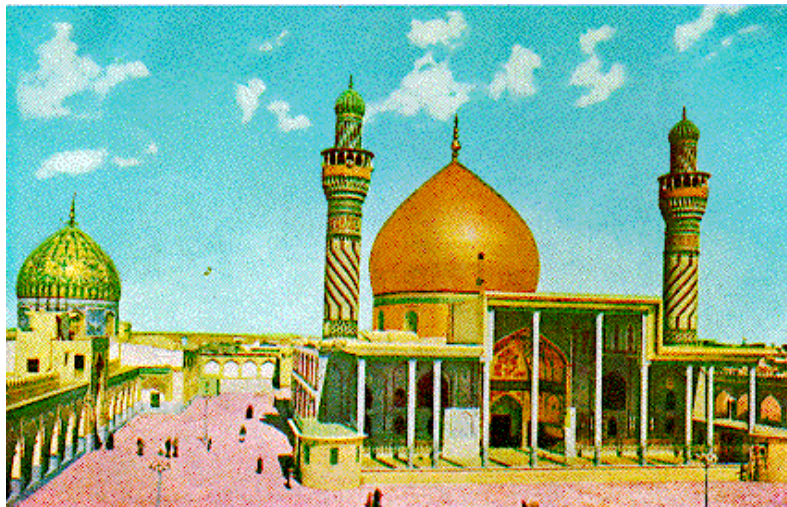
❓ **If someone is trying to harm us, do we do the same back to them, or do we help them when they are in need?**

Mutawakkil made it his duty to hunt out and kill all the descendants of Abu Talib and made life so terrifying for them that they were scattered far and wide. He did not content himself with this, but also showed his disrespect for the dead by demolishing the grave of Imam Husain (A).



He prohibited anyone from going to Ziyarat to Karbala. If anyone tried, they were put into underground prisons, never to be seen again.

Mutawakkil was finally killed by his own son Muntansir, who succeeded him. He was followed by Mustain Billah and Mu'taz Billah. It was the accursed Mu'taz who decided to kill Imam (A) because he could not bear to see the devotion of the people to him. A messenger of Mu'taz came to Imam (A) and managed to poison him. Imam (A) died within a few hours. The funeral prayers were conducted by his son, Imam Hasan al-Askari (A), and he was buried in Samarra. He was only 42 years old at the time. Of the 34 years of Imam (A)'s Imamah, 17 years were spent in freedom of guiding the people, and the other 17 years were spent in prison.



MORAL BOX

- ❖ **We should learn from the Akhlaq of Imam (A), seeing which even the cruel prison guards started to respect Imam (A), and became his followers.**
- ❖ **'Do unto others, what you would have them do unto you', even if others treat us badly and try to belittle us.**

❖ _____

❖ _____

Now you know...

- ◆ Imam (A), like his father, took over the duties of Imamah when he was only 8 years old. Ma'mun Rashid was succeeded by Mu'tasim, who was in turn followed by Wathiq Billah. During the reign of Wathiq, Imam (A) and the Shia were allowed to live peacefully.
- ◆ When Mutawakkil, came to power, he was the first Abbaside Caliph to hold and participate openly in parties where music, drinking, vain talk and all kinds of evil were practised
- ◆ For the first 4 years of his rule, Mutawakkil was occupied in state matters, so he did not trouble Imam (A). When Mutawakkil heard about his reputation and popularity, he was overcome by jealousy and felt that his own power was threatened. He wrote to Imam (A), respectfully inviting him to come to Samarra to meet him.
- ◆ When he arrived in Samarra, Mutawakkil totally ignored him and ordered that he should be put up in an inn provided by the state for beggars and homeless people. Later he imprisoned Imam (A) under the custody of a cruel hearted man. Seeing the Akhlaq of Imam (A), the prison guards would become followers of Imam (A).
- ◆ Imam (A) remained in prison until Fateh bin Khaqan, a Shia, became the prime minister of Mutawakkil. He used his influence to secure Imam (A)'s release.
- ◆ Once Mutawakkil became seriously ill and his own doctors declared him incurable. Mutawakkil's mother approached Imam (A) for help, and he prescribed an ointment that resulted in a spontaneous cure.
- ◆ Mutawakkil was killed by his own son Muntansir, who succeeded him. He was followed by Mustain Billah and Mu'taz Billah. The accursed Mu'taz decided to kill Imam (A) by poisoning him. Imam (A) died within a few hours.

LESSON 8: IMAM HASAN AL-ASKARI (A)

Name:	Hasan
Title:	al-Askari (One who Lives Near the Soldiers)
Kuniyat:	Abu Muhammad
Father:	Imam Ali an-Naqi (A)
Mother:	Bibi Saleel (A)
Birthdate:	10th Rabiul Akhar 232 A.H. in Madina
Imamat:	From 254 A.H. to 260 A.H.
Martyrdom:	8th Rabiul Awwal 260 A.H.
Buried:	Samarra, Iraq.



Imam (A) began his period of Imamat during the reign of Mu'taz Billah. Mu'taz was followed by Mu'tadi and then Mu'tamad. Although the Abbaside Caliphs were busy with their own political problems, they all kept a very strict eye on Imam (A), and restricted his movements. In fact Imam (A) spent the greater part of his life in the prisons of these cruel rulers.

The Abbaside Caliphs were more worried about the presence of Imam (A) because they knew that his son would be the awaited "Mahdi". The Hadith of the Holy Prophet (S) about the Mahdi was well known and the people eagerly waited for him to come and relieve them from their difficult life under the Abbasides. As a result, the rulers inflicted all sorts of calamities on Imam (A). In spite of the fact that he had very little time with the people, he remained ever busy in guiding them to the right path by imparting his great religious knowledge. He managed to discharge his duties of Imamat with cheer and perseverance. History shows that the commentators of the Holy Qur'an have often quoted the interpretation of verses from Imam (A).

QUESTION BOX

❓ How do we prioritise our daily tasks when we only have a little time to do them in? First TV or first Namaaz?

When Mu'tamad came to power he realised that the way to stop the birth of the Mahdi was to make sure that Imam (A) had no chance to marry and have a child. Accordingly, he decided to imprison him for life. Imam (A) passed very difficult times in this prison and often had to go without food or water. He used to offer his prayers by carrying out Tayammum with earth.

One day Mu'tamad decided to torture Imam (A) by putting him before wild lions. To his surprise and disappointment the beasts bowed in respect to Imam (A) and did not harm him at all.



Imam (A) had been in the prison of Mu'tamad in Baghdad for 2 years when Allah set in to motion a series of events that was to lead to the birth of the Mahdi, our 12th Imam (A).



At the time, there was a drought in Baghdad and people were desperately praying for rain. A Christian came to Baghdad and claimed that he could make it rain by praying in the Christian manner. As soon as he raised his hands in prayer, it began to rain. The people became confused and many began to listen to his teachings because they thought he had miraculous powers.

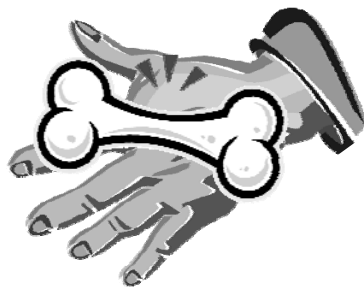
When news of this reached Mu'tamad, he realised that he had to do something to save the situation. After all, he was ruling in the name of Islam and he knew that his power would be threatened if the Muslims began to turn to Christianity.

Not knowing what to do, Mu'tamad at last decided that there was only one person who could help and that was Imam (A). When Mu'tamad came to him, Imam (A) did not refuse to help because it was his duty to defend Islam.

QUESTION BOX

? Do our daily actions attack Islam, or defend our beautiful religion?

Imam (A) asked Mu'tamad to gather the people and then call the Christian. When the people had assembled, he invited the Christian to demonstrate his ability. When he raised his hands to pray, some rain clouds appeared.

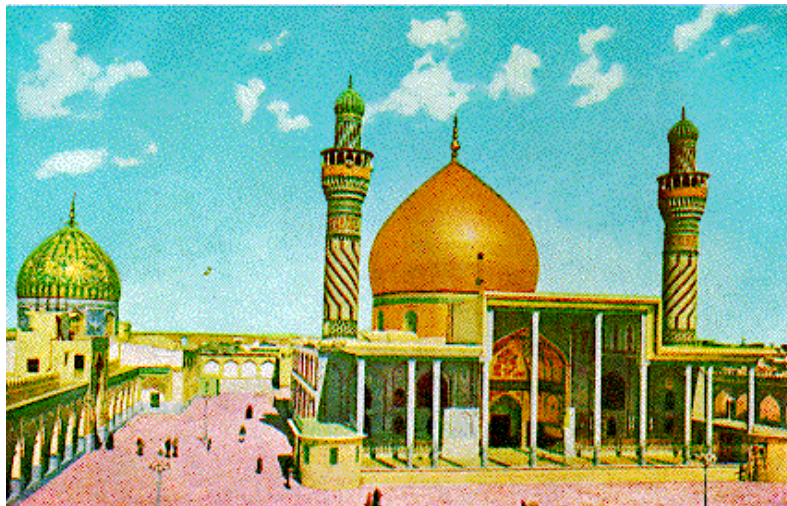


Imam (A) stopped him and asked a soldier to go over to the Christian and bring back what he had in his hands. The soldier returned with a bone. When the Christian was told to resume his prayers, nothing happened. Imam (A) explained to the people that the Christian was using a bone from the body of a Prophet of Allah. It was a special blessing from Allah that whenever a bone of one of His Prophets was raised to the sky, it showered with rain. Imam (A) then told the people that he himself would pray for rain.

As he raised his hands, rain clouds appeared immediately. The people began to go to their homes in fear of being drenched, but Imam (A) told them that those clouds were not for Baghdad. Finally some clouds appeared which he said were meant for Baghdad. He told the people to go to their homes and then there were heavy rains and the water shortage in Baghdad came to an end.

The people were delighted at the actions of Imam (A). Many did not know him because he had been in the prison for most of his life. When they asked him his address, he pointed to Mu'tamad and said that he was the king's guest. Mu'tamad was too embarrassed and scared to admit to the people that Imam (A) was his prisoner, so he gave them the address of Imam Ali an-Naqi's (A) house in Samarra. The people escorted Imam (A) to his home and here he lived for a time during which our 12th Imam (A) was born.

Mu'tamad could not bear hearing about the popularity of Imam (A) and tried many times to have him killed. At last he sent a poisoned drink to him which caused the martyrdom of the Imam (A) at the age of 28 years. The funeral prayers were led by our 12th Imam (A) who was only 5 years old. Imam (A) is buried besides his father in Samarra.



MORAL BOX

- ❖ **We should learn from the Imam (A) to use our time wisely. Even though he had very little time with the people, he taught and guided them to the right path.**
- ❖ **It is our duty to defend our beautiful religion, Islam.**
- ❖ _____

Now you know...

- ◆ Imam (A) spent the greater part of his life in the prisons of the cruel Abbaside Caliphs who were more worried about the presence of Imam (A) because they knew that his son would be the awaited "Mahdi". So Imam (A) had very little time with the people yet he always remained busy in guiding them to the right path.
- ◆ When Mu'tamad came to power he thought that the way to stop the birth of the Mahdi was to make sure that Imam (A) had no chance to marry and have a child. So he decided to imprison him for life. The rulers inflicted all sorts of calamities on Imam (A). Once Mu'tamad decided to put Imam (A) before wild lions to torture him, but the beasts bowed in respect to Imam (A) and did not harm him at all.
- ◆ Once, there was a drought in Baghdad when a Christian came claiming that he could make it rain. As soon as he raised his hands in prayer, it began to rain. The people became confused at seeing his miraculous powers. Mu'tamad realised that his power would be threatened if the Muslims began to turn to Christianity
- ◆ Mu'tamad knew that only Imam (A) could help him. The people were gathered and the Christian called. When he raised his hands to pray, some rain clouds appeared. Imam (A) stopped him and showed that the Christian was using a bone from the body of a Prophet of Allah. Imam (A) himself prayed for the rain to fall. There were heavy rains and the water shortage in Baghdad came to an end.
- ◆ Many had not known Imam (A) because he had been in the prison for most of his life. The people escorted Imam (A) to his father's house in Samarra where he lived and our 12th Imam (A) was born. He became very popular and Mu'tamad could not bear this. He a poisoned drink to him which caused the martyrdom of the Imam (A).

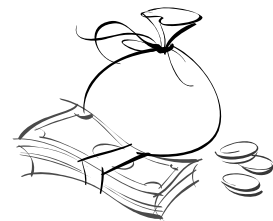
LESSON 9: IMAM MUHAMMAD AL-MAHDI (A) - PART 1

The Birth of Imam Mahdi (A)

The name of the mother of Imam Mahdi (A) is Bibi Narjis Khatun (A). Her other names were Malika, Sausan and Rayhana. She was the grand-daughter of the Roman Emperor of the time. The history of her arrival into Samarra is narrated by Bashir bin Sulayman as follows:

"Once Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) called for me and said, "Since you are a descendant of our helpers and amongst our friends, I wish to assign to you a responsibility as I place full confidence in you." I asked him to issue his command as I was ready for any service. He said that he desired to purchase a female slave. He asked me to proceed to Baghdad for this purpose and upon my arrival to go to the river bank the next morning. There I would see a number of boats and some female captives for sale. I should approach one Umar bin Yazid who would have for sale a female who would be dressed in two silk clothes. She would disapprove of any buyer and would be speaking in the Roman language. He gave me 120 Dinars and said that the seller would accept only this price. He also gave me a letter written in the Roman language to hand over to the female slave.

I proceeded to Baghdad and in accordance with the signs Imam (A) had given me, I identified the lady and handed the letter to her. Upon reading the letter tears flowed from her eyes and she said to her master that she wanted to be sold only to me and that she would accept no other buyer.



So I returned to my lodging with the lady who placed the letter on her eyes and wept profusely. I asked her why she was kissing the letter and weeping, when she was a visitor from Rome and did not know the author of the letter.

She said, "I am the grand-daughter of Kaiser, the king of Rome, and my name is Malika. My father is Prince Yashua and my mother is Shamunussafa. My grandfather had betrothed me to his nephew. One day he called all the Christian priests, ministers, leaders and courtiers to the palace. He seated his nephew on a throne studded with diamonds and asked the priest to perform my marriage with him.

No sooner had the priest commenced the recitation from the book, when the idols on the walls collapsed and the prince fell off the throne which had broken into pieces. Another attempt met with the same result. My grandfather was deeply distressed by this unexplained occurrence.

The same night Prophet Isa (A) appeared in my dreams. He was present with his companions at the same marriage ceremony. A high throne had been placed exactly where the prince's throne had been, and on it was seated an elderly gentleman with a glowing face. Soon some illuminated personages arrived and Prophet Isa (A) rose to welcome them.

I asked someone in my dream as to their identity. He informed me that they were the Prophet of Islam (S) and the 11 Imams (A) from his progeny, who were his successors.

The Prophet of Islam (S) asked Prophet Isa (A) for the hand of Malika, the daughter of Shamuussafa, for his son, pointing at the shining face of Imam Hasan al-Askari (A). (This request was made to Prophet Isa (A) as Malika was the descendant of Prophet Shamuon (A) who was the successor of Prophet Isa (A).)

Prophet Isa (A) invited the views of Prophet Shamuon (A) who instantly consented as he regarded the request a great honour, and so my marriage was performed with Imam Hasan Askari (A). My eyes abruptly opened and I was full of joy on recalling the dream. However, overcome by fear, I did not narrate this to anyone.

Then, in a dream I saw the daughter of the Prophet of Islam (S) and rose in reverence to her and complained about my condition and my separation from Imam (A). She told me to recite the Kalima to testify to the Unity of Allah and the Prophethood of Muhammad (S) and become a Muslim and then only she would ask Imam (A) to visit me daily in my dream. I became a Muslim and since then, Imam (A) came in my dream and consoled me.

Once he told me that my grandfather would send an army to attack a Muslim country and that I should change my dress and join the army as one of the attendants. The Muslims would win and I would be arrested with the others and taken as a prisoner of war."

Bashir continues, "I was overwhelmed with joy on hearing this narration and brought Bibi Narjis Khatun (A) to Samarra to Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) who welcomed her and handed her into the care of his sister Halima Khatun.

Later he arranged for her to marry his son, Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) and prophesied that they would have a son who would be the Hujjat (Proof) of Allah on earth. When the earth will have been saturated with oppression, evil and dishonesty, he would emerge to spread justice and piety."

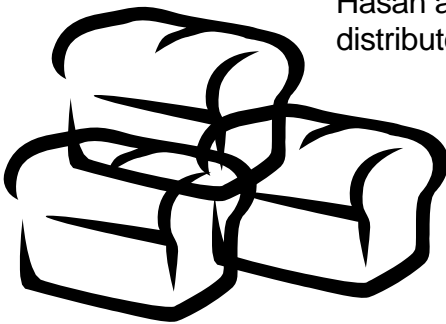
QUESTION BOX

❓ **Most of the signs of the re-appearance of Imam Mahdi (A) have already come about, are we ready and prepared to help him?**

Imam Mahdi (A) was born in Samarra at dawn on Friday, the 15th of Sha'baan 255 A.H. in the house of his father. Such a brightness shone on his face, that it penetrated through the roof of the house towards the sky. Immediately upon his birth, he first prostrated in Sajdah and raised his right index finger towards the sky and recited the Kalima. This was the practice of all our Imams (A)



During the ceremony of shaving the head of the new-born, Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) instructed his attorney Uthman bin Said Umri to distribute meat and loaves of bread to the poor.



Now you know...

- ◆ The mother of Imam Mahdi (A), Bibi Narjis Khatun (A)'s arrival into Samarra was quite strange. Bashir bin Sulayman has narrated this.
- ◆ The 10th Imam (A) asked Bashir to purchase a female slave from Umar bin Yazid. The female slave would be speaking in the Roman language and he gave Bashir a letter to hand over to the female slave.
- ◆ The lady was bought for 120 Dinars and brought to Samarra to Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) who welcomed her and handed her into the care of his sister Halima Khatun.
- ◆ This lady was none other than Bibi Narjis Khatun (A), the grand-daughter of Kaiser, the king of Rome. She had seen a dream in which the Holy Prophet (S) had asked for her hand in marriage to our 11th Imam (A) from Prophet Isa (A).
- ◆ Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) was married to Bibi Narjis Khatun (A). Imam Mahdi (A) was born in Samarra at dawn on Friday, the 15th of Sha'baan 255 A.H. in the house of his father. Immediately upon his birth, he first prostrated in Sajdah and raised his right index finger towards the sky and recited the Kalima. This was the practice of all our Imams (A)

MORAL BOX

- ❖ **When Allah has decreed for something to happen, it will happen, even if others try to stop it. Allah is the Best of Planners.**
- ❖ **We should learn from our Imams (A) to be thankful and remember those who are not as fortunate as us, especially at times of our happiness.**

- ❖ _____

- ❖ _____

LESSON 10: IMAM MUHAMMAD AL- MAHDI (A) - PART 2.

Name:	Muhammad
Title:	al-Mahdi (The Guided One)
Kuniyat:	Abul Qasim
Father:	Imam Hasan al-Askari (A)
Mother:	Bibi Narjis Khatun (A)
Birthdate:	15th Sha'baan 255 A.H. in Samarra
Imamat:	From 260 A.H. till today
Martyrdom:	He is still alive

Imam (A) was born in the time of the Abbaside Caliph Mu'tamad, who had tried to prevent his birth but had been unsuccessful.

Amongst the titles of Imam (A) are Al-Qayim (the Established one), al-Hujjat (the Proof), al-Muntazar (the Awaited one), al-Muntazir (the Waiting one) and Sahib uz-Zaman (the Master of this Age).

Allah granted Imam (A) with wisdom and excellence at birth. Like the Prophets Isa (A) and Yahya (A), he had the ability to speak in infancy and used to recite verses of the Holy Qur'an from the cradle. On the day just following his birth, a servant sneezed near his cradle. Imam (A) immediately said in the usual Muslim tradition, "May Allah have mercy on you" but also added, "Whoever sneezes, his life is assured for at least the next three days."



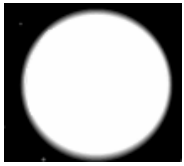
During his childhood, his father never used to let him stay in one place in the house. He used to move him to a different location every so often, so that Mu'tamad would not come to know of his existence. Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) only let a few trusted companions into the secret of his son and advised them that he would be his successor.

At the time of the death of Imam Hasan al-Askari (A), his brother Ja'far was preparing to lead the funeral prayers when Imam (A) suddenly appeared. He was only 5 years old and most people had never seen him.

QUESTION BOX

❓ **Our Imam (A) has been waiting since he became Imam (at 5yrs) to bring justice in the world. How old is he now & are we still not ready for him?**

Imam (A) told his uncle to move aside because only an Imam (A) could lead the funeral prayers for another Imam (A). He led the prayers and then disappeared.



Mu'tamad received the news that the prayers had been led by a young boy, from whose face light shone out like the full moon. He immediately knew that he had failed in his plan and despite all his efforts, the next Imam (A) had been born.

This fact frightened him because he knew of the Hadith of the Holy Prophet (S) that the 12th Imam (A) would be the one who would fill the earth with peace and justice in the same way as it will have been filled with cruelty and injustice. Mu'tamad knew that his own rule was far from just, so he increased his efforts in locating and killing Imam (A) before any harm came to himself. In this he was unsuccessful because Allah protected His Hujjat, who had to serve mankind till the last days.

The Holy Prophet (S) has said that if one dies without knowing the Imam of his time, his death is that of an unbeliever. We must therefore realise our duties to our Imam (A), who is still alive and in Ghaybat (Concealment).

QUESTION BOX

❓ **What are our duties to our Imam (A)? Do we mean it from our heart when we call him to come out of his Ghaybat?**

There have been two periods of Ghaybat. The first is known as Ghaybate Sughra (Minor Concealment) which took place from 260 A.H. to 328 A.H. During this time Imam (A) could not be seen by his followers, but they could communicate with him through his special deputies. In the period of Ghaybate Sughra, Imam (A) nominated four deputies. They were:

1. **Uthman bin Said.** He was the companion and attorney of the 10th and 11th Imams (A) also. He was the deputy of Imam (A) for only one and a half years. Imam (A) told him that he would soon die and to appoint his son Muhammad in his place and inform the people. His grave in Baghdad is still visited today.
2. **Muhammad bin Uthman.** He was extremely pious and served Imam (A) for 50 years. At the time of his death in 305 A.H., he was instructed to appoint Husain bin Rauh. He is also buried in Baghdad.
3. **Husain bin Rauh.** He was a man of cheerful character who got on well with the Sunnis also. He was a scholar of a very high standard. He died in 326 A.H.
4. **Ali bin Muhammad Samry.** He was the last deputy of Imam (A) and his office lasted 3 years. Just before his death, he received a message from Imam (A) that he would soon depart from the world and to announce that the period of Ghaybate Sughra would now end

Imam (A) also told him of the two main signs of his reappearance. The first will be the rising of the army of Sufiani from Syria. The second will be a loud voice that will be heard from the sky announcing the presence of Imam (A). This will be understood by every person on earth, whatever their language may be.



RESEARCH BOX

 **What are the other signs indicating the reappearance of our Imam (A)?**

After 68 years the period of Ghaybate Sughra ended and the period of Ghaybate Kubra (Major Concealment) began. This is the period we are living in today.

MORAL BOX

❖ **We should learn from the Prophet (S) and know the Imam of our time.**

❖ _____

❖ _____

Now you know...

- ◆ The Abbaside Caliph Mu'tamad had tried to prevent Imam (A)'s birth but had been unsuccessful. Imam (A) like the Prophets Isa (A) and Yahya (A), had the ability to speak in infancy and used to recite verses of the Holy Qur'an from the cradle.
- ◆ Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) only let a few trusted companions into the secret of his son and advised them that he would be his successor. At the time of his death, his brother Ja'far was preparing to lead the funeral prayers when Imam (A) told his uncle to move aside because only an Imam (A) could lead the funeral prayers for another Imam (A). He was only 5 years old and most people had never seen him.
- ◆ When Mu'tamad heard that the prayers had been led by a young boy, he knew that he had failed in his plan. He increased his efforts in locating and killing Imam (A) before any harm came to himself. Again he was unsuccessful because Allah protected His Hujjat, who had to serve mankind till the last days.
- ◆ The Holy Prophet (S) has said that if one dies without knowing the Imam of his time, his death is that of an unbeliever.
- ◆ There have been two periods of Ghaybat. The first was Ghaybate Sughra (260 A.H. to 328 A.H). During that time his followers could not see him, but they could communicate with him through his special deputies. They were: Uthman bin Said, Muhammad bin Uthman, Husain bin Rauh, and Ali bin Muhammad Samry.
- ◆ After the last deputy of Imam (A), Ghaybate Sughra came to an end and Ghaybate Kubra (Major Concealment) began. This is the period we are living in today. The two main signs of Imam (A)'s reappearance are: the rising of the army of Sufiani from Syria, and a loud voice will be heard from the sky announcing the presence of Imam (A) and will be understood by every person on earth.

LESSON 11: IMAM MUHAMMAD AL-MAHDI (A) - PART 3

The period of Ghaybate Sughra (Minor Concealment) of the Holy Imam (A) ended with the death of his fourth deputy in the year 328 A.H. During that time he answered the requests and questions of the Shia through his deputies. Then Allah ordered him into Ghaybate Kubra (Major Concealment) and since then he has been concealed from us. In this period there is no public appearance of the Holy Imam (A), nobody can claim to be his deputy and there is no direct way of communication with him.

In place of the special deputies, pious scholars like our Mujtahids, are regarded as representatives of the Holy Imam (A). Indeed he has said:

"Those learned in religion are its defenders. They restrain themselves from temptation and follow their Imam. It is obligatory upon the faithful to follow them because they are our representatives. Those who oppose them have opposed us and those who oppose us have opposed Allah."

Many people wonder what the use of an Imam is who cannot be seen. But just as the earth benefits from the light and heat of the sun even when it is temporarily hidden behind a cloud, so does creation benefit from the Holy Imam (A) even while he is concealed. There are many examples from history where the Holy Imam (A) has guided and assisted his followers.



QUESTION BOX

❓ **What is the role of a Mujtahid, and which Mujtahid are you and your family following at the moment?**

About a hundred miles from Najaf there was a centre of Shia learning called Hilla where one of our greatest Mujtahids, Allama Hilli (R) lived. Once, several people asked him about a ruling regarding a pregnant woman who had died with the child still alive in the womb. They asked whether she should be buried with the child or should the child be removed from her womb.

He advised that the lady be buried in the same condition. When the people were carrying the coffin to the grave, a horseman arrived saying that the Allama had ordered that the child be now removed. The living child was then safely cut away from the dead mother, who was then buried.

A few years later, Allama Hilli (R) was visited by a man with a small child. The man said that this was the same child who had been removed from his mother after the Allama had changed his instructions. The Allama was astonished to hear this because he had not sent any horseman. He immediately realised that it was the Holy Imam (A) who had come to his aid, otherwise he would have been guilty of burying a living child.

From that day he remained in his home and refused to give any rulings on matters of religion in case he made such a mistake again. In a few days he received a letter from the Holy Imam (A) stating that he should not be concerned and continue to guide the people. If by chance he erred, the Holy Imam (A) would himself correct matters.

Allama Hilli (R) went on to become one of the greatest Mujtahids, and today we are indebted to him for his valuable contributions in matters of religious jurisprudence.

QUESTION BOX

 **Our Imam (A) is always there to help us in times of need. What are we doing to prepare ourselves to help him?**

In the time of the British rule in Bahrain, they appointed a Sunni Muslim as governor despite the fact that the majority of the population was Shia. There was also a particular Sunni minister who was an enemy of the Shia.

One day he brought a pomegranate (daaram) to the governor. On the pomegranate, the names of Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Imam Ali (A) were found, together with the inscription that these were the four Rightful Caliphs of the Muslims. The minister claimed that this was a natural miracle and a sign from Allah that the Shia belief was incorrect. He urged that now the Shia should not be regarded as Muslims and be asked to become "true" Sunnis or be killed or made to pay the taxes of non-Muslims.

The governor was delighted at this occurrence and summoned the Shia scholars and put the three alternatives to them. The Shia were amazed when they saw the fruit and asked for three days to return with their reply. This time was granted to them and they went away wondering what to do. Finally, they decided to seek help from the Imam (A).

Three pious scholars were selected and each one was to go out of the city into the forest and pray for the assistance of the Holy Imam (A). On the first two nights the first two scholars spent the whole night in prayers and supplications, but with no success. On the third night, the third scholar saw an impressive personality approach him at dawn.



The man asked him what the problem was. He replied that if he was truly his Imam then he would surely know the problem. The Holy Imam (A) then replied that he was aware of the difficulty and not to worry. He told the scholar to go with the governor to the minister's house the next day, and insist on going to the top terrace. There he would find two moulds with the false inscription printed on them. These moulds had been fitted into the growing fruit so that, as it became larger, the words were embedded in it. He further told him to ask the minister to break open the fruit and witness the power of Allah.

The next morning matters proceeded as the Holy Imam (A) had ordered. When the minister was told to take everybody on to the top terrace he went pale and began to make excuses. At the governor's insistence, he reluctantly led them to the place, where they found the articles as described by the Holy Imam (A).

Eventually the governor asked the minister to break open the fruit. When he did so, black dust flew from it and smeared his eyes and beard. The minister was executed for his treachery while the Shia scholars left with honour and dignity.

These, and numerous other events show that the Holy Imam (A) does come to our aid many times without us even being aware that it is he who has helped us out of a particular difficulty.

MORAL BOX

- ❖ **Even though we may not be able to see our Imam (A), he is always there to help.**
- ❖ **We need to prepare ourselves, so that we may be ready when he calls us to him.**

- ❖ _____

Now you know...

- ◆ The period of Ghaybate Kubra (Major Concealment) began in the year 328 A.H. Since then, Imam (A) has been concealed from us. Nobody can claim to be his deputy and there is no direct way of communication with him. In place of the special deputies, our Mujtahids are regarded as representatives of the Holy Imam (A)
- ◆ We all benefit from the Holy Imam (A) while he is concealed, just as the earth benefits from the light and heat of the sun even when it is temporarily hidden behind a cloud. Following are examples where Imam (A) has guided his followers.
- ◆ Once Allama Hilli (R) advised that a pregnant lady be buried in the same condition. As the people were about to bury her, a horseman came saying that the Allama had ordered that the child be now removed. This was done. A few years later, Allama was visited by the same child who had been removed from his mother. The Allama immediately realised that it was the Holy Imam (A) who had come to his aid, otherwise he would have been guilty of burying a living child
- ◆ One day a Sunni minister who was an enemy of the Shia brought a pomegranate to the governor with the names of Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Imam Ali (A) on it. The minister claimed that this was a sign from Allah that the Shia belief was incorrect and that the Shia should not be regarded as Muslims. Again, our Imam (A) came to help, and told the Shia scholars of the minister's tricks. When the governor found out about the minister's treachery, he was executed, while the Shia scholars left with honour and dignity.

LESSON 12: IMAM MUHAMMAD AL-MAHDI (A) - PART 4

Our Duties During the Period of Ghaybate Kubra

Although the Holy Imam (A) is concealed from us, he is aware of our prayers, deeds, actions and troubles. Any believer who sincerely seeks help from him receives his assistance. During the period of his concealment we are required to perform certain actions to show our true belief in his presence.

QUESTION BOX

❓ **Our Imam (A) is aware of our deeds. Are our deeds pleasing or upsetting for him to see?**

It is the duty of every believer to remember the Holy Imam (A) often, and to recite various du'as for his safety and well-being, such as Du'a-e-Ahad after every morning prayers, Du'a-e-Nudba on Fridays and Ziyarat after every daily prayer. At the same time, we should constantly ask Allah to hasten the re-appearance of the Holy Imam (A) so that he may improve the affairs of the Muslims and fill the world with peace.



While waiting for the Holy Imam (A) to reappear, we should ensure that the religion of Islam is spread far and wide and that the faith of the believers remains strong. We should open and run religious schools and publish religious books and information.

Whenever the name of the Holy Imam (A) is mentioned, one should stand up and put his right hand on his head as a mark of respect. Just as we give charity (Sadqa) for the protection of our family, we should also give charity in the name of the Holy Imam (A) for his safety. To show the Holy Imam (A) that we are his sincere followers, we should frequently recite the Holy Qur'an and perform Haj and Ziyarat on his behalf. We should constantly remember him and send Salawat on him.



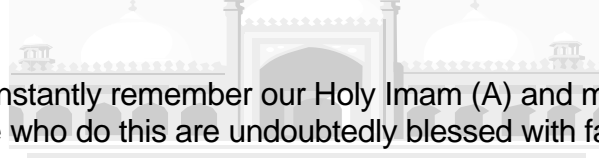
There are many ways to approach the Holy Imam (A) for his help. In times of difficulty, we can write a petition (Arizah) to him stating our needs, and deposit it into a well or river. This can be done at any time (not necessarily the 15th of Shabaan), and provided the person practises Islam, prays, fasts and restrains himself from committing sin, the Holy Imam (A) does come to his aid.

If there is fear of harm from anybody, one can seek the help of the Holy Imam (A) by praying two raka'at Namaaz, followed by a brief Ziyarat, and then reciting:

***"Ya Mawlaya, Ya Sahibuz Zamaan, ana Mustageethun
Bika. Ya Mawlaya,
Ikfini Sharra Man Yu'dhini."***

***("O my Master! O Master of this Age, I need your help. O my Master!
Protect me from the one who wishes to do me harm.")***

One way to meet the Holy Imam (A) directly is to spend 40 Tuesday nights in the mosque of Sahla in Kufa, after which the Holy Imam (A) will approach you himself, Inshaallah.



It is important to constantly remember our Holy Imam (A) and make preparations for his appearance. Those who do this are undoubtedly blessed with faith from Allah.

The Holy Prophet (S) once told his companions:

"During the last days there will be believers whose faith will each be greater than 25 of you."

When his companions protested saying that they were his supporters and had risked their lives in the Holy Wars, he continued, saying:



"Although these Muslims will have never seen me or their Imam, they will remain true to their faith despite being surrounded by calamities and hostilities caused by their enemies."

QUESTION BOX

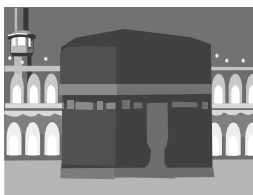
❓ **Would we consider ourselves as being one of the believers the Holy Prophet (S) has described in the above tradition?**

The Signs Indicating the Reappearance of the Holy Imam (A)

Imam Ali (A) has said that there are some definite signs before the Holy Imam (A) will appear. These are:

1. Dajjal will emerge. He is a wicked, one-eyed creature who will invite the people to worship him, claiming to be God.
2. There will be two eclipses in the Holy month of Ramadhan, contrary to normal calculations. There will be a solar eclipse on the 15th day and a lunar eclipse on the last day. 
3. The sun will rise from the west. 
4. An image of a man will appear in the sky opposite the sun.
5. A loud voice will be heard from the sky announcing that the Mahdi has come and inviting the people to pay allegiance to him. This voice will be heard and understood by every human being.
6. Sufiani will rise with his army and will wage a fierce war in his attempt to destroy the Holy Imam (A). His army will be swallowed up by the earth between Makka and Madina.

There are many other signs that have been foretold, and some of them can be seen today. However, it is only when the specific events as listed above occur, that one can be sure that the Holy Imam (A) has truly reappeared.



The Holy Imam (A) will first emerge in Makka next to the Holy Ka`ba. At his invitation, 313 Muslims will proceed to Makka to swear the oath of allegiance to him. Thereafter, more Muslims will follow. Let us pray that when the time comes, we are blessed with the opportunity of being of service to our Holy Imam (A).

Now you know...

- ◆ Imam (A) is aware of our prayers, deeds, actions and troubles. Any believer who sincerely seeks help from him receives his assistance. It is the duty of every believer to remember the Holy Imam (A) and pray for his safety and well-being, and give charity in his name.
- ◆ One can write a petition (Arizah) to Imam (A) stating their needs, and deposit it into a well or river at any time. Provided the person practises Islam, prays, fasts and restrains himself from committing sin, the Imam (A) will come to his aid
- ◆ It is important to constantly remember our Holy Imam (A) and make preparations for his appearance
- ◆ There are some definite signs before the Holy Imam (A) will appear. Some of these are: Dajjal will emerge, there will be two eclipses in the Holy month of Ramadhan, the sun will rise from the west, an image of a man will appear in the sky opposite the sun, a loud voice will be heard from the sky announcing that the Mahdi has come, and Sufiani will rise with his army and will wage a fierce war in his attempt to destroy the Holy Imam (A).
- ◆ The Imam (A) will appear in Makka near the Holy Ka`aba. 313 Muslims will go to Makka to swear the oath of allegiance to him. Later, more Muslims will follow.

MORAL BOX

❖ **We should constantly ask Allah to hasten the re-appearance of the Holy Imam (A).**

❖ **Our actions should be such that when the Imam (A) sees them, he is pleased with them and not upset by them.**

❖ _____

LESSON 13: PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 1

During the reign of Prophet Yusuf (A), he invited his father Prophet Ya'qub (A) and his family to come to live in Egypt. The family settled there and in time grew to a large number and they were called the Bani Israa'il.

After several centuries, a man called Fir'aun came to power in Egypt. He was alarmed to see that the Bani Israa'il had become so many that they might pose a threat to the future security of the state. From that time onwards he made life for the Bani Israa'il difficult. Matters became particularly bad for them when a royal astrologer informed Fir'aun that a boy from the Bani Israa'il would soon be born and at whose hands Fir'aun's kingdom would be destroyed. On hearing this, the cruel king ordered that every male child born to the Bani Israa'il should be killed.



However, Allah had decided that Prophet Musa (A) was to be born in such a dangerous environment and He arranged affairs to ensure the safety of His messenger. When Prophet Musa (A) was born, his mother hid him to protect him from the king's soldiers. There was a great danger that the child would be discovered at any moment. At this time, Allah inspired her to put her baby in a water proof box and cast him into the waters of the Nile. She did this, and then sent her daughter to follow the little "boat" and see where it went.

The box floated towards the palace of Fir'aun, where his men fished it out and brought the baby to him. He wanted to kill it immediately, suspecting that it might be a child of the Bani Israa'il, but his wife Aasiya, who was a pious woman, stopped him. They were childless, so she asked him to adopt the child.

Fir'aun agreed to his wife's request and then summoned some women to breastfeed the crying child. However, the baby refused milk from all the women who came to feed him. In the meantime the sister came forward and offered to introduce a woman who she was certain the child would accept. Fir'aun asked for the woman to be summoned, and the girl brought her mother to the palace. The child immediately went to its real mother and thus Allah reunited mother and child in the very palace of Fir'aun.



As the years passed, Prophet Musa (A) grew up strong and healthy. He had the knowledge, wisdom and manners that Allah grants all His Prophets. Prophet Musa (A) resolved to end the oppression of all people under Fir'aun and he began by trying to help his own people, the Bani Israa'il. They realised that Allah had answered their prayers and their saviour would one day free them from the tyranny of Fir'aun.

Once Prophet Musa (A) saw two men fighting. One was from Bani Israa'il, and shouted for help. Prophet Musa (A) came to his rescue and struck the other man a single blow and unwittingly killed him. Later, he learned that his action had been seen by one of Fir'aun's men and he wondered whether to leave the city. A warning from a friend that he was being hunted strengthened his resolve and he left the city secretly.

Prophet Musa (A) walked for a long time without a fixed destination and finally reached Madyan. Here, he rested next to a well and saw that the shepherds had gathered to water their sheep. Two maidens were standing away from the crowd of men, waiting their turn.

Prophet Musa (A) went forward to help them draw the water. The maidens then departed, their work finished. However, one of them returned, informing Prophet Musa (A) that her father wished to thank him personally for his help, and wanted to compensate him for his trouble. He went with her to her house and discovered that her father was Prophet Shuaib (A).

Prophet Musa (A) narrated the account of his trouble in Egypt and Prophet Shuaib (A) assured him that he was safe in Madyan. He then offered him a job as a shepherd on the recommendation of his daughter, Safura. He said that he would allow Prophet Musa (A) to marry Safura as long as he worked for him for 8 years. If he wished to work for longer, it would be his decision.

Prophet Musa (A) thus married Safura and worked for her father for 10 years. At the end of this time, he left for Egypt with his wife and a few sheep that he had received as a gift. It was severe winter time and Prophet Musa (A) lost his way in the night.



Suddenly he saw a fire in the distance. He asked his wife to remain where she was and headed for the fire, thinking to bring some of it back to give them relief from the bitter cold.

When he reached Mount Sinai he saw that the flames were coming from a green tree but there was no one present. While Prophet Musa (A) looked around in surprise, he suddenly heard a voice saying, "O Musa, I am your Lord! Take off your shoes for you have stepped on to the sacred valley of Tuwa."

As Prophet Musa (A) obeyed, he heard the voice ask him to throw his staff onto the ground. At once it changed into a serpent, scaring him. He was then commanded to lift the snake without fear and as he did so, it changed back into a stick.



Next he was commanded to put his hand under his armpit. When he drew it out again, his hand glowed with a dazzling light, brilliant like the sun. The Divine voice said to him, "O Musa! These are the two great Signs of your Lord. Go back to Fir'aun and his people and invite them towards your Lord!"

Prophet Musa (A) requested that his brother, Prophet Haroon (A) accompany him in his mission because he spoke with a fluent voice. This request was granted and thus Prophet Musa (A) came back to Egypt.

LESSON 14: PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 2

When Prophet Musa (A) returned to Egypt from Madyan he first went to meet his mother, brother and sister. He informed his brother Prophet Haroon (A) that their mission had begun and they prepared themselves to go to the court of Fir'aun.

Prophet Musa (A) told Fir'aun that he was a Messenger of Allah and that he had brought clear proofs that he was speaking the truth. Fir'aun rejected this claim and then reminded Prophet Musa (A) of the favours that he bestowed on him in his infancy. He also accused him of having run away after committing a murder.

Prophet Musa (A) argued that he had only been raised away from his own tribe because his mother had been forced to abandon him in fear of his life. He also stated that he had not intentionally killed any man and then reminded Fir'aun of the message he had brought from Allah. Their conversation is recorded in the Holy Qur'an as follows:

[He (Fir'aun) said, "If you will take a lord besides me, I will most certainly imprison you". He (Musa) said, "What! even if I bring to you something manifest". He said, "Bring it then if you are one of the truthful ones". So he cast down his staff and lo! it suddenly become an obvious serpent. And he drew forth his hand, and lo! it appeared white to the onlookers. Shuara, 26 : 29 - 33]



These miracles frightened Fir'aun and he turned to his ministers for advice. They assured him that Prophet Musa (A) and Prophet Haroon (A) were great magicians and that their own magicians could easily perform such tricks. Fir'aun called all the great magicians and tricksters in the land to his court. When they were told what had to be done, they were not worried. They threw pieces of rope on the ground and these cords began to wriggle like snakes. But when Prophet Musa (A) cast his staff down his serpent ate all the pieces of rope. The magicians immediately realised that they were witnessing a miracle.

They were experts in trickery but they knew that Prophet Musa (A) was not demonstrating a trick and immediately threw themselves in prostration saying, "We believe in the faith of Musa".

Their actions enraged Fir'aun who warned, "You have surrendered without my permission while he is only a greater magician than you. If you do not repent I will cut off your feet and hands and then crucify you". However, they were not afraid of the threats and were willing to die for their faith. In the end Fir'aun carried out his cruel threat.

Fir'aun realised that Prophet Musa (A) posed a threat to his authority and decided to kill him. However, from his own court one of his advisers warned him against this action, saying, "If you think that Musa has made a false claim it will not harm you but himself. But if he speaks the truth, his Lord's Wrath will befall you".

This advice did not please Fir'aun and he increased his oppression of the Bani Israa'il and tried to intimidate Prophet Musa (A) and his followers.

In the meantime, Allah commanded Prophet Musa (A) to warn Fir'aun that Divine punishment would descend on him and his people if they continued in their ways. Fir'aun was under the spell of his own power and did not heed this warning. Soon the country was hit by famine. Swarms of locusts ate away the crops. The river Nile flooded its banks causing great destruction. The people were afflicted with lice and tumours.



When these calamities befell the people they rushed to Prophet Musa (A) asking him to pray for their relief and promised to embrace his religion. But when they were cured and the situation improved, they returned to their idol worship.

Finally the grace period that Allah had granted Fir'aun and his people came to an end. The Holy Qur'an says:

[We commanded Musa, "Journey by night with Our creatures, and strike a dry path for them through the sea. Do not fear being overtaken by Fir'aun nor have dread of any thing". Fir'aun followed them with his army, but the sea overpowered and engulfed them. Fir'aun had led his people astray and did not rightly guide them.

Ta Ha, 20 : 77 - 79]



Prophet Musa (A) gathered the people of Bani Israa'il and departed with them for Palestine. Fir'aun learnt of their escape and followed them with a huge army. When the Bani Israa'il reached the Red Sea they saw Fir'aun approaching and were sure they were going to be killed. However, Prophet Musa (A) struck

the waters of the sea with his staff and the waters parted, making a dry path. The people rushed through and crossed safely. When Fir'aun saw the path he entered the sea at the head of his army. But while he was in the middle of the sea the waters suddenly closed around him and his men.

In the final moments of his life Fir'aun recognised the Power and Greatness of Allah and he desperately offered his repentance saying. "I solemnly declare that there is no god but the Lord of Musa, and I am one of the believers". However, it was too little too late because once the Curse of Allah takes its course it is futile to ask for forgiveness.

Fir'aun and his people drowned under the deep sea and Allah caused their dead bodies to be thrown onto the shore. The preserved body of Fir'aun can be seen in the Cairo museum even today, a lasting lesson for mankind.

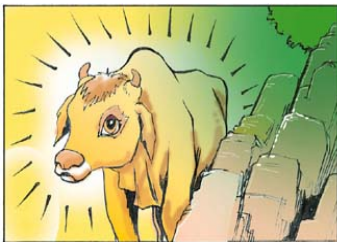
LESSON 15: PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 3

The people of Bani Israa'il had been rescued from Fir'aun by Prophet Musa (A) and now they followed him to their promised homeland in Palestine. When they had come some way from Egypt, they came to a place where the people worshipped idols. This reminded them of their days in Egypt and they asked Prophet Musa (A) if they could also have one idol for themselves.

How soon had the Bani Israa'il forgotten Allah and His favours! They had seen the tragic end of Fir'aun and yet had not learnt from it. Prophet Musa (A) addressed them harshly, reminding them about their covenant with Allah. The people were ashamed of their conduct and promised that they would not make the mistake again.

Prophet Musa (A) had promised the Bani Israa'il that once they left Egypt he would bring to them a Divine Book for their guidance. Now that Fir'aun was dead, Prophet Musa (A) prayed to Allah for that Book. Allah commanded him to come to Mount Sinai and pass thirty nights there. The Holy Qur'an says:

[We made an appointment of thirty nights with Musa to which we added ten more, so the term set by the Lord was completed in forty nights. Musa said to Haroon, his brother, "Deputise for me among my people. Act rightly and do not follow the path of the mischief-makers". A'raaf, 7 : 142]



When Prophet Musa (A) returned to his people he had with him the Tawrat, with the Divine revelations inscribed on tablets of stone. However, a strange sight greeted him. In his absence, a man called Samiri had made a golden calf by collecting gold from the people of Bani Israa'il. Then he had sprinkled into its mouth some dust that he had collected from under the feet of the angel Jibraeel (A), who he had seen on the day that Fir'aun was drowned. After the addition of the dust, the calf used to make a sound and the people began to worship it.



The sight of his people worshipping a calf enraged Prophet Musa (A). He put the Tablets on the ground and furiously caught hold of his brother Prophet Haroon (A) and demanded, **"Why did you let the people of Bani Israa'il go astray and why did you not prevent them from this ignoble act?"** Prophet Haroon (A) explained that the people had ignored his guidance and he had not wanted to use force and cause division amongst them.

Gradually Prophet Musa's (A) anger subsided and he addressed the Bani Israa'il saying, **"O people! Do you not know that Allah promised you that if you remained steadfast in your faith He would bestow upon you happiness and prosperity? Do you wish to incur Allah's displeasure?"**

The people blamed Samiri for misguiding them and repented of their actions. Prophet Musa (A) urged them to devote themselves to the obedience of Allah and sincerely ask for His forgiveness. He then got the golden calf melted and threw every trace of it in the sea. Meanwhile, Samiri was seized with an illness that made him unable to bear the company of people. He passed the rest of his life living in the woods like a wild animal.

After a long journey, the Bani Israa'il finally came near the Holy Land of Baytul Muqaddas in Palestine. The Holy Qur'an says:

[When Musa told his people, "Recall Allah's favours to you. He made Messengers and kings out of your own people and gave you what He had not given others. Enter the Sacred promised land. Do not return to disbelief lest you become losers". They said, "Musa, a strong race of people is living there. We shall never go there unless they leave the land first. Ma'idah, 5 : 20 - 22]

The many years spent under Fir'aun's oppression had robbed the people of Bani Israa'il of their self-respect and courage. They were frightened to approach Palestine and face the forces of the local people. Despite Prophet Musa's (A) attempts to persuade them, they refused to move into Palestine. Instead, they said to him, **"You and your Lord should go there and not we. We will stay away while you fight with the rulers and the people of Palestine. After the land is cleared of people, we will walk onto it".**

Prophet Musa (A) could not convince his people and gave it up, praying to Allah for a solution. As a result of their disobedience, Allah condemned the Bani Israa'il so that for forty years they remained in the wilderness, wandering without a homeland in the woods and deserts.

During these forty years a new generation of stronger and more courageous people replaced the older demoralised one. Prophet Musa (A) and Prophet Haroon (A) passed away, but Yusha' bin Nun, a successor of Prophet Musa (A), led the Bani Israa'il and finally conquered Palestine. However, the faith of most of them was weak and time and time again they disobeyed Allah's commands. As a result Allah has cursed them in the Holy Qur'an as follows:

***[... And they drew on themselves the Wrath from Allah, because they used to reject the signs of Allah and kill His Apostles unjustly; because they disobeyed and transgressed.
Baqarah, 2 : 61 (Part)]***

LESSON 16: PROPHET ISA (A) - PART 1

Prophet Isa (A) was the son of Bibi Maryam (A), daughter of Imran. She was from the descendants of Prophet Dawood (A). Just before Bibi Maryam (A) was born, her mother prayed to Allah to grant her a child whom she would dedicate to the service of the Holy Mosque in Baytul Muqaddas. Her prayer was granted and although she had expected to have a son, she kept her promise and delivered Bibi Maryam (A) to the trustees of Baytul Muqaddas. They decided that Prophet Zakariya (A) would bring up the child. Her story and that of her blessed son Prophet Isa (A) has been recorded in the beautiful and inimitable style of the Holy Qur'an in Suratu Maryam.

When Bibi Maryam (A) came of age, Prophet Zakariya (A) built her a special chamber where she lived and worshipped. When he went to visit her he found that she always had food. Prophet Zakariya (A) asked her where the food came from and she said that it came from the Grace of Allah, Who always provides for the ones He loves.

One day while she was busy in her worship, Bibi Maryam (A) was startled to see a young man suddenly appear before her. She was scared but the man said, "Do not be frightened, I am the angel Jibraeel and have brought to you the glad news that Almighty Allah is soon going to bless you with a son. He will be great in this world and in the hereafter and will speak while still in his cradle." Maryam was dismayed and asked, "How can this be possible when no man has ever touched me?" Jibraeel (A) said, "Allah has Power over all things."

Soon after the angel had left, Bibi Maryam (A) felt the signs of pregnancy. She was puzzled at the unnatural occurrence and also worried about how she would explain the baby to the people. Within nine hours she felt the pain of labour and managed to go out and rest under an old date-palm tree where Prophet Isa (A) was born. Things had happened so quickly and in despair she cried, **"Would that I had died and been forgotten before all this had happened!"**



The Holy Qur'an says:

[Then (a voice) called out to her from beneath her, "Do not grieve, your Lord has caused a stream (to flow) from beneath you. And shake towards you the trunk of the palm-tree, it will drop on you fresh ripe dates. Then eat and drink..... Maryam, 19 : 24 - 26]



Thus consoled, she regained her confidence and returned to Baytul Muqaddas with her baby in her arms. The Jews who saw her were surprised and began to accuse her saying that she had acted in a shameful manner while her parents had not been immoral people. She did not reply, but merely pointed at her baby.

The Holy Qur'an says:

[But she pointed unto him. They said, "How can we speak to one who is a child in the cradle?" He (Isa) said, "Verily I am a servant of Allah. He has given me a Book and made me a Prophet. And He has made me blessed wherever I am and He has enjoined on me prayer and poor-rate (Zakaat) for as long as I live. And (to be) dutiful to my mother and He has not made me insolent ..."

Maryam 19 : 29 - 31]

The miracle of Prophet Isa (A) speaking to them from his cradle silenced the critics and left them astounded. The fame of the baby grew and many came from all over the country to see him and pay tribute to him.

The Jewish emperor, Herodotus, learnt about the birth of Prophet Isa (A) and was immediately concerned about the threat to his power. He thus plotted to kill Prophet Isa (A) to protect himself from any future trouble. However, Bibi Maryam (A) learnt of the danger to her son and she left with him for Egypt.



In Egypt, Prophet Isa (A) lived with his mother until he was 30 years old. Then he received the command of Allah to begin his mission and the Divine Book, Injeel, was revealed to him. Thus Prophet Isa (A) returned to Baytul Muqaddas to invite the Jews to the true religion of Allah.

As proof of his Divine appointment, Prophet Isa (A) possessed certain miracles. He could raise the dead to life, restore the eyesight of the blind and cure the lepers. These remarkable powers attracted the Jews to him and some became believers. The rest of them became his deadly enemies because their religious leaders encouraged them to oppose the Prophet who had brought a message that superseded that of Prophet Musa (A).



From amongst the few who has embraced the faith, Prophet Isa (A) selected twelve as his apostles. These men learnt directly from Prophet Isa (A) and he gave them authority to preach to the people according to the laws laid down in the Injeel.

Thus began the mission of one of the greatest Prophets of Allah. Day by day, his followers increased in number but his popularity made the Jews hate him even more. Despite their efforts to stop people from following the new faith, they were helpless against the Will of Allah.

LESSON 17: PROPHET ISA (A) - PART 2

Prophet Isa (A) and his twelve disciples went from place to place, in towns and villages, inviting people to believe in One God and teaching them the Divine commandments contained in the Injeel.



The disciples were pious and virtuous men, but one day they asked Prophet Isa (A) to show them a Sign of Allah so that they could experience first hand a direct contact with Him. Prophet Isa (A) replied that if they truly had faith they should cultivate in themselves Taqwa, which means being mindful of the commands of Allah and being afraid of His Wrath. However, they insisted, saying that they wanted to reassure themselves and become totally convinced of the existence of Allah and of the truthfulness of Prophet Isa (A).

They said, **"O Isa, does your Lord not possess enough power to send food for us from heaven?"** At last Prophet Isa (A) turned to Allah to ask Him to grant their wish. The Holy Qur'an says:

[When Isa prayed, "Lord, send us a table full of food from the heavens so that it will make a feast for us and for those who are yet to come in this world as an evidence from You. Give us sustenance, for You are the best Provider." Allah replied, "I am sending it to you but if anyone of you turns back to disbelief, I will make him suffer a torment that no one has ever suffered."

Ma'idah, 5 : 114,115]

When the food came, it served to increase the faith of the disciples. Many people who witnessed this miracle embraced the religion immediately. However, the activities of Prophet Isa (A) caused a great stir amongst the Jews, who felt that their own religion was being threatened. They were enraged that his laws were different from those laid down in the Tawrat and that he did not consider Saturday as a holy day. They accused him of causing disruptions in their community with his magic. They refused to recognise him as a Messenger of Allah just like Prophet Musa (A), and they began to plot against him.

The Jews finally decided to kill Prophet Isa (A) and set about trying to find him. They caught and interrogated one of his disciples, whose name was Shamoon as-Safa (Simon Peter), but he gave them no information as to the whereabouts of Prophet Isa (A). Then they came across another disciple, Yahuda (Judas). This man betrayed Prophet Isa (A) after he was bribed with thirty pieces of silver.

The Jews had decided to arrest Prophet Isa (A) and crucify him by nailing his hands and feet onto a wooden cross. This was a very painful and slow way of execution and the victim usually suffered a great deal before he died. When Prophet Isa (A) heard that the Jews planned to arrest him he took shelter in a vacant house. Yahuda knew this and he led the Jews to the house.

Prophet Isa (A) was a great Sign of Allah. His birth had been in remarkable circumstances and his life was also destined to be extraordinary. At the time when his life was in danger, he was raised by Allah to the heavens.

Meanwhile, Yahuda entered the house but found it empty. Allah caused the features of this treacherous disciple to change so that he exactly resembled Prophet Isa (A). He came out of the house to report to the Jews, and was shocked when they seized him and dragged him away. Despite his protests, he was crucified. The Jews and even the Christians thus say that Prophet Isa (A) was killed on the cross but the Holy Qur'an says about the Jews:

[That they said (boastfully), "Verily we killed the Messiah, Isa son of Mary, the Apostle of God."; but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it was made to appear to them (that they had). And those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge. They only pursue a conjecture. They certainly did not kill him. Nay, Allah raised (lifted) him up to Himself; and Allah is Mighty, Wise. Nisa, 4 : 157,158]



According to a prophecy of the Holy Prophet (S), when our 12th Holy Imam (A) will re-appear, Prophet Isa (A) will descend from the heavens and offer prayers behind him. The Christian Era (A.D.) dates from the birth of Prophet Isa (A). He was only 33 years old when he was raised to the heavens.

LESSON 18: PROPHET YA'QUB (A)

Allah says the following about Prophet Ibrahim (A) in the Holy Qur'an:

And We bestowed on him Ishaq, and Ya'qub as an additional gift, and made them righteous. And We made them leaders to guide (the people) by Our command; and We inspired them to perform good deeds and observe their moral obligations and pay Zakaat; and they obeyed Us.

Anbiya, 21:72,73

Prophet Ishaq (A) was the younger son of Prophet Ibrahim (A), by his wife Sarah. Prophet Ishaq (A) married his uncle's daughter Rafqa, and they were blessed with twin sons, Isu and Prophet Ya'qub (A).

Prophet Ya'qub (A) was much loved by his parents and this made his twin brother jealous. To prevent trouble between the brothers, Prophet Ishaq (A) advised Prophet Ya'qub (A) to migrate from their home in Palestine to Fidaan Aram, where his maternal uncle Labaan lived. In Fidaan Aram he went into the service of his uncle. He later married his uncle's daughter Lay'ah.

After the period of service was over, Prophet Ya'qub (A) left with his family and property to return to Palestine. In Palestine, Prophet Ya'qub (A) sent presents to his brother to indicate goodwill, and his brother accepted them and welcomed him warmly. In time, the grudge between the brothers was forgotten.



Prophet Ya'qub (A) decided to make his home in the land of Kanaan and Allah blessed him with twelve sons. His twelve sons became famously known as the "Grandchildren of Ishaq"

His second wife, Raheel died early and therefore Prophet Ya'qub (A) always regarded her sons Binyameen and especially Prophet Yusuf (A) with particular affection. His love for Prophet Yusuf (A) was later to become a source of jealousy for his older sons who determined to do away with their younger brother.



But Allah chose Prophet Yusuf (A) to be His Messenger and protected him from the evil intentions of his brothers.

TAREEKH SYLLABUS - CLASS 10

Lesson Topic

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LESSON 2 - KARBALA (2) IMAM HUSAIN'S (A) DEPARTURE FROM MADINA

LESSON 3 - KARBALA (3) MUSLIM BIN AQEEL IN KUFA

LESSON 4 - KARBALA - 4 THE ARRIVAL IN KARBALA

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LESSON 6 - KARBALA - 6 THE NIGHT OF ASHURA

LESSON 7 - KARBALA - 7 THE DAY OF ASHURA

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LESSON 9 - KARBALA - 9 THE JOURNEY TO DAMASCUS

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LESSON 14 - PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 1

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LESSON 20 - PROPHET YA'QUB (A)

LESSON 1: KERBALA - PART 1

Yazid's Demand for Allegiance

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

Muawiya broke the conditions of the treaty he had signed with Imam Hasan (A) and declared his evil son Yazid as Caliph. In 60 A.H., news was conveyed to Walid, Yazid's



governor in Madina, about the death of Muawiya. At the same time, Yazid sent orders to Walid to demand the oath of allegiance (Bay'at) from Imam Husain (A). The orders stated that if Imam (A) refused, his head should be cut off and sent to Yazid in Damascus.

On receipt of the letter of Yazid, Walid sent his servant to Imam (A), requesting a meeting. It was night time and Imam (A) was in the mosque when Walid's servant found him. When the servant informed him that Walid was calling him, he at once exclaimed that Muawiya was dead. He then sent word to Walid that it was late and he was in the mosque, and that he would visit him the next morning.

When Imam (A) returned home to his family with the news of his invitation by the governor, they were very worried. His sisters Bibi Zainab (A) and Bibi Umme Kulthum (A) asked him to take along the youth of Bani Hashim, especially Abbas (A), for protection. Imam (A) was reluctant to take any one along, saying that he had been invited alone. He finally agreed to allow some of the Hashimite youth, including his brother Abbas (A) and his son Ali Akbar to accompany him.

When they reached the Government House the next morning, Imam (A) asked the men to remain at the door, and only to come in if they heard his voice become unusually loud.

Walid was well aware of the position of Imam (A) and greeted him with respect and offered him a seat beside him. He then read out the letter he had received from Yazid, and when he reached the part about sending the severed head of Imam (A) if he refused to pay allegiance, he was too embarrassed to continue and handed over the letter to Imam (A) to read.

Imam (A) read it and smiled and said: "O Walid, invite the Muslims of Madina tomorrow and ask them if they say I should pay allegiance to Yazid, and then let us decide."

Walid accepted this reply, but Marwan, the old enemy of Islam who the Holy Prophet (S) had expelled from Madina, said, "Do not let Husain out of your grip now. If the fox gets out of the four walls of your court you will not see it again. Cut off his head here and now and do not let this opportunity pass or you will not get it again."

When Imam (A) heard these insulting words of Marwan, he put his hand on his sword and said aloud, "O enemy of Allah, will you or Walid touch my head?" On hearing the raised voice of Imam (A), the young men of Bani Hashim burst into the court room. Abbas (A), who was well known for his skill in combat, had already drawn his sword. Imam (A) managed to calm the boiling blood of his companions and averted a situation which would have certainly resulted in a blood bath. The shaken and cowardly Marwan took advantage of Imam's (A) mercy and quickly ran away from the scene.

Imam (A) flatly refused to pay allegiance to Yazid, well knowing that such an action would leave Islam and the Muslims in ruins. His famous answer to the governor of Yazid was, "A man like me can never give allegiance to a man like him."

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



LESSON 2: KERBALA - PART 2

Imam Husain's (A) Departure from Madina

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

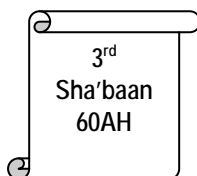
Imam (A) explained that Yazid had demanded his allegiance and that because of his refusal, the tyrant would not hesitate to make Madina a battlefield. Imam (A) did not want bloodshed of innocent Muslims in the city of his grandfather. Therefore, he was going to Makka for pilgrimage and then he would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

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

Imam Husain's (A) sister Bibi Umme Kulthum (A) was a widow and lived with him. His other sister Bibi Zainab (A) was married to Abdullah bin Ja'far, and she begged her husband for permission to accompany her brother, saying that she could not live without him in the city. Abdullah granted her his permission and she returned to Imam (A) and prepared to leave with him.

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

Imam Husain (A) in Makka



Imam (A) arrived in Makka on 3rd Sha'baan 60 A.H. While he waited for the Haj season, he pondered about his future action. He could not have continued to live in Madina after refusing to pay Yazid the allegiance he demanded. Had he stayed on in Madina, he would have undoubtedly been killed and his murder would cause the clash of the loyal people of Madina, especially the Hashimites, with the forces of Yazid.

This would result in the massacre of innocent people and destruction of the city of his beloved grandfather, the Holy Prophet (S). Besides if he had stayed in Madina, the world would always ask why he had not sought shelter elsewhere.

The whole empire was going through terrible times. Yazid's grip on the people was absolute and anyone who dared to say anything against him was harshly dealt with. Yazid favoured those worthless people who flattered him, and he installed them as governors and leaders in the mosques.

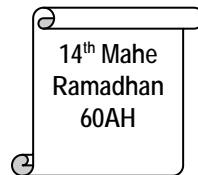
The chastity of women was no longer safe, with their dignity at the mercy of Yazid's brutal soldiers. Marriage lost its sanctity and protection to married women. If a woman was desired by men of the government, deceitful measures were adopted to force the husband to divorce his wife so that she could be made available to these shameless men.

Human rights were deliberately denied and the laws of religion were openly defied by Yazid, who remained in a constant state of intoxication. There was no protection for life or property and looting and persecution was freely practised in the political interests of the state.

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

Many of these desperate messages came from Kufa, begging Imam (A) to come to their urgent aid. When Imam (A) received these calls for help in Makka, he had to respond. However, he could not blindly accept the call from Kufa, because the people of that city were well known for their fickle and unstable character and conduct.

Therefore, he decided to send a deputy to Kufa who would write to him after having studied the sincerity of the invitation.



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

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

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

On the eve of Haj, Imam (A) decided to change his intention to Umrah instead of Haj, and leave Makka immediately. The reason for this was that he did not want bloodshed on the sacred ground of Makka. In response to the call of the people of Kufa, Imam (A) made his way towards that city. By that time however, Muslim was in dreadful trouble in Kufa, where after being welcomed, he was now having to fight for his very life. Although Muslim desperately tried to send a message to Imam Husain (A) to avoid Kufa at all costs, he was not successful.

LESSON 3: KERBALA - PART 3

Muslim bin Aqeel in Kufa

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

When Yazid learnt of Muslim's arrival in Kufa and the reaction of the people, he despatched Ubaidullah ibne Ziyad as his governor to Kufa with instructions to force the people to withdraw their support of Muslim. Soon after his arrival, the new governor had managed to bribe all the leading figures of Kufa to change their allegiance. To the rest of the population a strong threat was issued. At the time of evening prayers, the following message was announced: "The Caliph Yazid will consider anyone who is found associating with Muslim bin Aqeel, the Deputy of Husain bin Ali, to be a rebel. By way of punishment, such people will be hanged, their families put to sword and their property confiscated. If anyone has extended any help to him upto now, no harm will come to him as long as the support is withdrawn immediately".

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

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

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

As Hani prepared to leave, his house was surrounded by armed soldiers. Hani drew out his sword, determined not to give in easily. However, he was hopelessly outnumbered and was overpowered, chained and taken to the governor. Meanwhile, Muslim left the mosque not knowing where to go. At last he rested against a doorway, tired and thirsty. The door opened and an old lady stood there. On learning his identity she quickly pushed him in, warning him that soldiers everywhere were hunting for him.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



As the sword of the executioner fell on his neck, Muslim spoke his last prayer: "O Holy Imam, pardon me for I was misled. O Allah!, let him know what has happened here and not come to Kufa."

LESSON 4: KARBALA - PART 4

The Arrival in Karbala

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

Imam Husain (A) continued on his journey towards Iraq until he neared Kufa. From there he wrote a letter to the people of Kufa and sent it through Qays bin Mashar Saidaawi. In the letter he informed the people of Kufa that he had received Muslim's letter and that he was on his way to Kufa and would arrive soon. Qays took the letter to Kufa but was arrested outside the city and taken to the governor, Ubaidullah ibne Ziyad.

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

The governor told Qays that the only hope he had to save himself was to mount the pulpit and publicly abuse Imam Husain (A). Qays addressed the people by first praising Alláh and then said, "O People, Husain (A) is the best of men living at present and is the son of Fatima (A) the daughter of your Prophet (S). I have been sent by him. All of you should rise and assist him." He then cursed Ubaidullah and his father and praised Imam Ali (A). By this time, the governor had heard enough and ordered that Qays be thrown down from a high roof. Qays did not survive this brutal treatment and was martyred. His broken body was left on the ground where it fell.

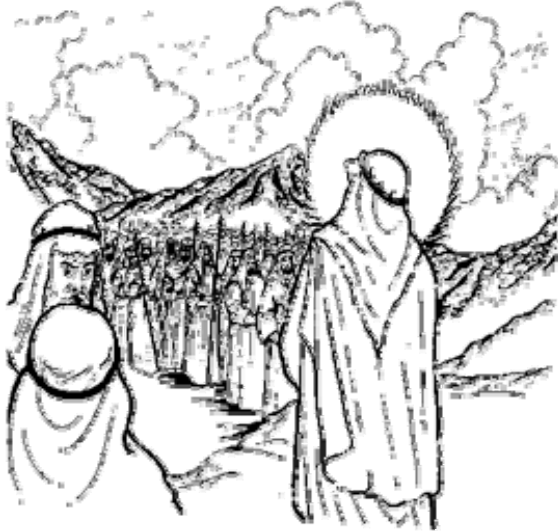
Meanwhile, Imam Husain (A) continued his journey towards Kufa until he reached a place called Zurud. There, he learnt about the martyrdom of Muslim and Hani and said: "We are from Allah and to Him we all will return." He prayed to Allah to bless them.

At the stopping place of Uzaybul Hajanaat, Imam Husain (A) received news about Qays. When the caravan stopped at Zabala, he informed his companions of the deaths of Muslim, Hani and Qays and the state of affairs in Kufa. Thereafter, he said, "Our supporters have withdrawn their support from us. Whoever wishes to leave us and go his own way should do so." At this time most of his companions left and very few remained. These few were his sincere followers and had not come with him for material gains.

In response to the news of Imam Husain's (A) approach, several military parties had been sent out to search the desert and stop his advance. One such party, led by a famous commander, Hur ibne Yazid ar-Riyahi, met the caravan of Imam Husain (A) on the 1st of Muharram 61 A.H.

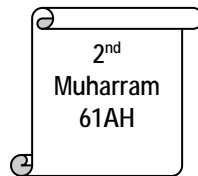


When they met, Hur's army was exhausted and desperately thirsty. Imam Husain (A) instructed that water from their stores be provided to Hur's men and horses.



It was time for noon prayers. Imam Husain (A) led the Jamaat prayers and Hur's army also prayed behind him. After the prayers were over, Imam Husain (A) addressed Hur and his companions. He reminded them that he was only there in response to their written invitations. He also explained that he was the rightful Imam and that he was one of the people mentioned in the Holy Qur'an in the verses relating to Mubahila (3:61) and Purification (33:33). He warned them of the consequences of obeying a man like Yazid, and urged them to refrain from staining their hands with the innocent blood of the family of the Holy Prophet (S).

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



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

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



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

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

LESSON 5: KARBALA - PART 5

Events of the First Days in Karbala

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



The people living in the area were from the tribe of Bani Asad. Imam Husain (A) purchased the land of Karbala from them and then gifted it back to them. He then addressed the men of Bani Asad saying, "On the tenth of this month you will see our dead bodies lying on this plain with our heads severed and taken away. Please bury us, and when our devotees come to visit our graves, treat them with honour and point out to them the places of our burial." He then turned to the women of the tribe and said, "O virtuous ladies! If your husbands, fearing Yazid, do not bury us, then please encourage them to do so or do it yourselves." Finally, he turned to the children of Bani Asad and said, "O innocent ones! If your parents, out of fear of the ruler, do not bury us then, by way of playing, bring some earth and throw it on our bodies to hide them." This heartrending appeal of Imam Husain (A) made all the listeners weep.

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

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



When the enemy threatened to march towards their tents, the lion-hearted Abbas (A) stood firm and drew out his sword shouting, "If anyone dares to advance one more step forward, he shall lay headless on the ground." His bravery was well known and none dared to step closer. However, Imam Husain (A) called to his brother saying, "Brother Abbas, do not let the bloodshed be started by our side. When Allah is with us, it does not matter how far the river is."

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

In the days that followed there were several meetings between Imam Husain (A) and Amr ibne Sa'ad. Amr kept on insisting that the only way to stop war was for Imam Husain (A) to give the oath of allegiance to Yazid. He said that once the allegiance was given, all worldly comforts would be at the disposal of Imam (A). However, Imam (A) remained firm on his stand and replied: "I shall never yield to the one who does not believe in Allah and one who defies Him, both by words and actions. I am willing to meet any calamity but will never surrender Truth to falsehood."



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

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

LESSON 6: KARBALA - PART 6

The Night of Ashura



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

On receipt of these orders, Amr rallied a part of his army and marched towards the camp of Imam Husain (A). Abbas (A) advanced towards the enemy with 20 horsemen and enquired from them the reason for their sudden approach. When he was told of the ultimatum, he said that he would inform Imam Husain (A) of the position and bring back the reply.

When Abbas (A) briefed Imam Husain (A) of the situation, Imam (A) said to his brother, "Go back to them, and if possible, ask for an extension of time till tomorrow morning, so that tonight we may offer prayers to Allah, make Du'as and ask for His forgiveness".

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

Imam Husain (A) gave a speech on the night of Ashura saying in part, **"O Lord! I thank You, because You have honoured us by means of Prophethood and taught us the Qur'an, made us understand the religion and its commandments, granted us eyes, ears and hearts, kept us free from the evils of idol-worship and then enabled us to thank You for Your blessings. I am not aware of any companions more faithful and honest than my companions, and any relatives more righteous and kind than my relatives. May Allah grant you all a good reward. I think the day of our fighting with this army has arrived. I permit you all to go away, because the enemies are after me only. You are free to depart without any restriction and can take advantage of the darkness of night"**.

The people who had come with the wrong intentions had already left before, and the ones who remained were perfect in their faith and loyalty. The listeners all rejected the option of abandoning Imam (A). One said, "Should we go away to live after you? We pray to Allah that the time may not come when you may be killed while we remain alive".

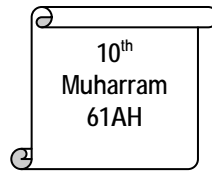
Thereafter the whole camp busied itself in preparation for the events of the next day. The sound of prayers and supplications filled the air like the buzz of hundreds of bees. Some soldiers checked their weapons, while others discussed tactics of warfare that would allow them to cause the most damage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

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

The night eventually came to an end and the morning of the day of great sacrifices arrived. After reciting the dawn prayers, Imam Husain (A) arranged his small army in readiness for the battle. Just about one hundred brave men readied themselves to face the onslaught of thousands.

LESSON 7: KARBALA - PART 7

The Day of Ashura



The 10th of Muharram 61 A.H. is known as the day of Ashura. On this day in Karbala, the army of Yazid fought the army of Imam Husain (A). On this day the household of the Holy Prophet (S) was killed, alongside the faithful companions of Imam (A).

The details of the battle are given in the Appendix, please study these for an overview of the martyrs.

Imam Husain (A) and his companions had spent the entire night in prayer. In the morning Ali Akbar gave the Adhan. He resembled the Holy Prophet (S) greatly and his recital reminded the people of the early days of Islam.

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



It was Asr time when Imam Husain (A) bid the ladies and children farewell and entered the battle-field. He gave his last speech, once more urging the enemy to consider their actions.

When he did not receive any reply, he attacked them bravely, scattering them wherever he turned. The enemy could not stop him. Finally, Imam (A) paused. He was dizzy with the loss of blood. He slid off his horse in a little hollow. Here the enemy found him with his head in Sajdah. The accursed Shimr committed the most terrible of crimes when he beheaded Imam (A).

LESSON 8: KARBALA - PART 8

The Aftermath of Karbala

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

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

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



Not satisfied with this, the enemy set fire to the tents. The terrified ladies gathered their children and rushed from tent to tent, trying to escape the burning flames. One young child was seen rushing out of a tent with her clothes on fire. One of the enemy soldiers, seeing her pitiable condition came forward and put out the flames. The child looked at him, surprised at the unexpected kindness. Tearfully, the little child asked him, "O Shaikh, do me one more kindness and tell me the way to Najaf." The soldier was very surprised at this unusual request, and replied, "Najaf is far away from here. Why do you want to know the way there?"

The child said with heartbreaking innocence, "I want to go to the grave of my grandfather Imam Ali (A) and complain about what your people have done to us - how our men were butchered and how our ladies have been whipped.

I want to tell him how the earrings were snatched from my cousin Sakina's ears, leaving her earlobes torn and bleeding."



Bibi Zainab (A), who had been left in charge of the camp by Imam Husain (A), was at a loss as to what to do. She went to the seriously ill Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A). He lay unconscious on the ground after the enemy had even robbed the mattress on which he lay. She shook him urgently to ask his advice. He was burning with fever but with a great effort he replied that it was compulsory on them to save their lives and he asked her to get everyone out from the burning tents into the open.

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

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

Due to the illness of Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A), Bibi Zainab (A) realised that she would have to take care of the small group of women and children herself. She called her sister Bibi Umme Kulthum (A) to help her and they decided to count all the children to see that none had gone missing in the confusion of the fire. To her horror and dismay Bibi Zaynab (A) found that Bibi Sakina (A), the beloved daughter of Imam Husain (A), was not there.

The two ladies searched everywhere for the young girl but in vain. Finally, in desperation, Bibi Zainab (A) went to the place where the body of her brother Husain (A) lay and cried, "O my brother, Sakina, who you left in my care, is nowhere to be found. Where shall I look for her in this wilderness?" Just then, the moon came out from behind a cloud and Bibi Zainab (A) saw that little Sakina (A) lay on her father, sleeping on his chest like she always used to. She shook the child awake and said, "My child, how did you find your father's beheaded body in this darkness?"

The little girl replied innocently, "I wanted to tell my father about what the people had done to me. I wanted to tell him how Shimr had robbed the earrings that my father had so lovingly given me. I wanted to tell him how he had ripped them from my ears leaving my earlobes torn and bleeding. I wanted to tell him how the beast had mercilessly slapped me when I cried in pain. When I was running aimlessly in the desert I thought I heard my father's voice telling me he was here. I followed the voice and I found him lying here. I told him everything and then I felt like sleeping on his chest the way I always did, for the last time. So I kept my head on his chest and slept till you came."

Bibi Zainab (A) took the little child's hand and led her back to the camp where her mother Bibi Rubab waited anxiously. She had just returned the exhausted child to her mother when she noticed that a group of people were advancing towards the camp carrying flame torches. She thought that some soldiers had returned to loot them and she hurried to stop them from disturbing the children who had finally gone to sleep despite their hunger and thirst.

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

Hur's widow said, "Dear lady, we have been asked to bring food and water for the children and bereaved ladies of your camp." She continued sadly, "I am the widow of Hur who died fighting for your brother. When the soldiers of Amr ibne Sa'ad realised that all of you would perish of hunger and thirst, and that they would not be able to take you back to Yazid according to his command, they sent me to bring food and water to you."

Bibi Zainab (A) offered her condolences at the death of Hur and apologised that they had not been able to offer him much hospitality. This remark prompted Hur's widow to say, "My lady, I do not know how to offer you condolences, because you lost not one, but 18 members of your family."

Bibi Zainab (A) supervised the feeding of all the children and ladies. She then took a broken sword in her hands and began going around the camp ensuring that the small group was safe from any further disturbances during that night.

LESSON 9: KARBALA - PART 9

The Journey to Damascus

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



With these arrangements completed, some soldiers were appointed to bind the ladies and children. They tied ropes and chains round their hands and feet. The ladies were put on camels with no saddles. The hands of some of the ladies were tied behind them and linked to the necks of the young children. Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) was heavily chained and made to walk on foot,

despite his weakened condition. The heartless officers made the captives pass by the place where the bodies of their loved ones lay, headless and without even shrouds over them. Many of the ladies and children threw themselves down from the camels to the bodies of their dead relatives, only to be whipped by the soldiers. Even the innocent children were not spared the lashes.

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

Finally the caravan got underway for Kufa. The pitiful condition of the little children was such that they could not hold on to the camels due to their inexperience and the rapid pace of the march. Many children fell to the ground as a result. Despite the pleading of the mothers, the heartless soldiers would not halt the march to remount a fallen child. Today, the road from Karbala to Kufa has many graves of such children who were left to die in the hot desert.

Within a few hours, the caravan reached the outskirts of Kufa. Shimr decided to send a messenger to inform the governor, Ubaidullah ibne Ziyad, of their arrival. The messenger returned, saying that all preparations had been made, and the captives should be marched through the main streets of the town.

The people of Kufa lined the streets and looked from the balconies of their houses as the captives were paraded in front of them. The announcer was saying, "O people of Kufa, we are bringing you the grand-daughters of the Prophet and other women and children of the family of Husain son of Ali. Husain, who had risen in rebellion against our Caliph Yazid, has been defeated and killed with his companions on the battlefield of Karbala.

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

The people heard all this in astonishment. Not long ago Kufa was the capital of Imam Ali (A), and they all remembered the kindness shown to them by him and his sons and daughters. On seeing the pitiful condition of the captives, many were crying, but none dared to raise their voice against the oppressors, in case a similar fate befell them.

Finally the caravan reached the court of the governor. When he saw the condition of the captives, he mockingly said that it seemed that some slave girls had been brought before him, and not the grand-daughters of the Holy Prophet (S). This remark made Bibi Zainab (A) lose her temper and she addressed Ubaidullah ibne Ziyad with a fiery and eloquent speech.

Bibi Zainab (A) related the status of the Holy Prophet (S) and his Holy Ahlul Bayt (A). She reminded him of the teachings of Islam about the considerations to be given to prisoners, especially women and children. She warned him about the temporary nature of his victory and the doom that he and his evil master Yazid would soon face. She began to tell the assembled people about the inhuman crimes committed against Imam Husain (A) and his companions.

As she spoke, the people were reminded of the eloquence of her father Imam Ali (A). Ubaidullah became worried at the effect the speech of Bibi Zainab (A) was having on the people. He tried to shout her down by threatening the worst possible torture if she did not stop. Undaunted by his threats, the brave lady continued and her words moved many to tears. One of the aged companions of the Holy Prophet (S), Zaid bin Arkan, who was blind, rose up and protested at the cruel treatment of the members of the family of the Holy Prophet (S).

Ubaidullah realised at once that the situation could get out of hand. The speech of Bibi Zainab (A) could cause an uprising against him if he did not act quickly. He ordered his men to get rid of the companion of the Holy Prophet (S) and told Shimr and Khooli to get the captives out of Kufa immediately.

Arrangements were made for departure straight away, and Shimr chose the quietest route to Damascus so that he would not face any surprise attacks from anyone wishing to avenge the martyrs of Karbala. The caravan of the captive families of Imam Husain (A) and his companions was led by Shimr through the deserts of Iraq and Syria, from Kufa to Damascus (Sham).

Throughout the journey people noted with wonder that the lips of the cut head of Imam Husain (A) kept on moving, reciting verses from the Holy Qur'an. Clearly heard was the following verse: ***Do you think that the people of the Cave and of the Inscription were of Our wonderful miracles?***
Kahf, 18 : 9

By reciting this verse, the Holy Imam (A) was calling the attention of the people to the next verses of this chapter of the Holy Qur'an (18 : 9-14), where Allah relates how He increased the guidance and strengthened the hearts of the Companions of the Cave, when they stood up against the evil- doers. Even in death, our Holy Imam (A) was pointing out the similarity of the message of his stand in Karbala to the other event from ancient history.

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

LESSON 10: KARBALA - PART 10

The Court of Yazid

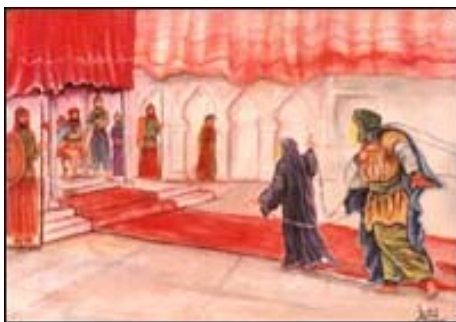
By the time the captive ladies and children of the caravan of Imam Husain (A) reached Damascus, they were in a terrible state. Their bodies were covered in dust, their clothes were in rags and blood oozed from the wounds and cuts inflicted by the tight ropes and whips.

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

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

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

Amr ibne Sa'ad knew that Yazid was more dangerous than normal when he was drunk so he quickly reassured him and began to point out the ladies. He said, "O Commander of the Faithful, your slave has done exactly what you asked. Those are the sisters of Husain, Zainab and Umme Kulthum. The young girls are Sakina and Rukayya, the daughters of Husain. That lady is Rubab, the widow of Husain, while the others are orphans and widows of Husain's friends and relatives. The man before you is Husain's son Ali."



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

calls herself the slave of Fatima and Zainab."

Yazid ordered Shimr, who was guarding the prisoners, to throw Fizza aside so he could have a full view of Bibi Zainab (A). Seeing Shimr advance towards her, Fizza turned to the Abyssinian slaves who stood armed behind Yazid as his bodyguards, and said, "O brothers from my native country, will you watch silently while an aged lady from your land is molested in this manner?"

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

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

Appendix THE MARTYRS OF KARBALA

The Companions of Imam Husain (A)

Hereunder are recorded brief details of the companions of Imam Husain (A), who sacrificed their lives in the cause of Islam on the Day of Ashura in Karbala.

1. Abdullah bin Umayr al-Kalbi.

He was a companion of Imam Ali (A) and a brave and noble resident of Kufa. After the death of Muslim bin Aqeel, Abdullah learnt that troops were being sent to Karbala to fight Imam Husain (A). He decided to fight on the side of Truth and, accompanied by his wife, he went to join Imam Husain (A).

Abdullah was the first of Imam Husain's (A) companions to go to the battlefield on the day of Ashura. In response to the challenge of Yasaar and Saalim, two servants of Ubaidullah ibne Ziyad, this brave soldier went forward. He killed them both, but not before Saalim cut off the fingers of his left hand. Seeing her husband fighting against two men, his wife Umme Wahab rushed into the battlefield. However, she came back at the command of Imam Husain (A), who told her that women were not required to fight. Although he returned to the camp, Abdullah went back to the battle later and killed two soldiers of the enemy. He was then attacked by Thuybath al-Hadhrami and Bukayr bin Hayy and killed, being the second supporter of Imam Husain (A) to be martyred. Hearing about his death, his wife came to his body and started removing the dust and blood from his face, saying, "Accept my congratulations on winning paradise." However, the cruel Shimr saw her and got this defenceless lady put to death. She was the only lady to die on the day of Ashura.

2. Hur bin Yazid ar-Riyaahi.

He was one of the nobles of Kufa, and was a respected officer in the army of Ubaidullah ibne Ziyad. He had been ordered to keep Imam Husain (A) away from Kufa, and it was Hur who had diverted Imam (A) to Karbala.

Hur had never expected that the situation in Karbala would become so serious. He had thought that the people might listen to the message of Imam Husain (A) and had not thought that they would harm him. On the night of Ashura he approached Amr ibne Sa'ad, the commander-in-chief of the forces, and asked him if the battle would definitely go ahead. Amr replied that the governor of Kufa, Ubaidullah, would not listen to any reason and was keen to kill Imam Husain (A).

That night Hur paced in his tent, hearing the sounds of worship from the camp of Imam Husain (A). He was unable to sleep because he realised that by taking part in the killing of Imam (A), he would commit a crime that would surely earn him Hell.

On the morning of Ashura, he waited for the armies to gather. Muhajir bin Aws saw him trembling with emotion and asked, "What is the matter with you, I have never seen you act like this before. If I was asked who is the bravest warrior from the Kufans, I would certainly mention you."

Hur replied, "I see myself between Hell and Heaven. By God, I will not choose anything but Heaven, even if I am cut to pieces and burnt." Saying this, he turned his horse and galloped to the side of Imam Husain's (A) camp.

Hur approached Imam Husain (A) and begged his forgiveness. Such was Imam Husain's (A) character that he said, "I forgive you and God will also forgive you." Hur asked to be allowed to sacrifice himself first since it was he who had first resisted him.

Getting permission, Hur advanced to the battlefield and addressed the enemy saying, "O people of Kufa, may your mothers be deprived of you! You summoned this man to come to you and then handed him over to his enemies. You have prevented him from obtaining water while non-Muslims and animals may drink freely from the river, How wickedly you have treated the offspring left by Muhammad (S)." Hur then attacked the enemy vigorously and his expert swordsmanship had the enemy disorganised.



When Hur had left the army of Amr ibne Sa'ad, a soldier called Yazid bin Sufyan al-Tamimi had remarked that if he had seen Hur deserting, he would have despatched him with a single thrust of his spear. Seeing Hur fighting now, an officer reminded Yazid of his words, so he came and challenged Hur to fight.

Hur killed him immediately and this caused such awe amongst the enemies that none dared to come forward to fight him. Hur then returned to the camp. Later during the day, Hur returned to the battlefield, fighting alongside Zuhayr ibn al-Qayn. This time the infantry succeeded in isolating and surrounding him. They showered him with arrows and killed his horse. Hur dismounted and attacked them on foot. However, there were too many against him and he was struck a terrible blow on the head. Ayyub bin Musarrih and another Kufan horseman shared in finally killing him. When Imam Husain (A) saw the body of Hur he wiped the dust and blood from his face and said, "O Hur, you are Hur (a free man) in this world and the hereafter." Thus Hur secured everlasting peace for himself by realising in time his duty to Imam Husain (A).

3. Muslim bin 'Awsaja al-Asadi.

Muslim was a distinguished supporter of Imam Husain (A) and had even seen the Holy Prophet (S). He was a reliable source of traditions and used to pray the midnight prayers regularly. He was an expert horseman who had fought well in previous wars. He was well known and respected throughout Arabia. At the time of his martyrdom he was a very old man.

After suffering a series of defeats in single combat, the enemies were disheartened. Amr bin Hajjaj warned his men not to engage in single fights because they were facing expert horsemen who were fighting for their lives.

He therefore attacked Imam Husain's (A) forces with the entire right wing of the army under him. This assault was met with such resistance by the small band of Imam Husain (A), that it had to be withdrawn. However, it left Muslim rolling on the ground in his own blood. His last request to Habib ibne Mazahir was to take care of Imam Husain (A).

Thus died the first martyr on the day of Ashura. He was killed by Abdullah ad-Dhubabi and Abdullah Khashkara al-Bai Ali.

4. Burayr bin Hudhayr al-Hamadani.

Burayr came from Kufa and was an old and devout companion of Imam Ali (A). He knew the Holy Qur'an by heart and used to teach it in the mosque of Kufa. On the day of Ashura he was quite light-hearted despite knowing that he could not survive the day. He remarked that he could not wait for swords to strike at him because he knew that his reward would be everlasting bliss.

When Yazid bin Ma'qil came forward from the army of Amr ibne Sa'ad, he called for Burayr by name to come and fight him. The two men had often argued in Kufa about the religious merits of the stands taken by Imam Ali (A) and Muawiya. In Karbala, Yazid raised the question again and they both prayed to Allah to grant victory to the one who was right. When they began to fight, Yazid struck and injured Burayr slightly, but Burayr dealt him a blow that cut through Yazid's iron helmet and penetrated his head, killing him. As Burayr retrieved his sword, he was attacked by Radhi ibne Munqidh. Throwing him to the ground, Burayr sprang to kill him but Radhi shouted for help. Ka'b bin Jaabir came to his aid and attacked Burayr. Although he was warned by a man from his own side not to kill Burayr because he used to teach others how to memorise the Holy Qur'an, Ka'b killed Burayr.

5. Munhij bin Sahm.

He was the son of a slave girl of Imam Husain (A) whose name was Husainiyyah. She married Sahm and was in the service of Imam Ali bin Husain (A), whom she had accompanied with her son to Karbala. Munhij was killed at the very start of the battle.

6. Amr bin Khalid.

He was from the nobles of Kufa and was sincerely devoted to the Holy Prophet's (S) family. He had originally supported Muslim bin Aqeel in Kufa, but when Muslim was arrested, he went into hiding. Later he heard that Imam Husain (A) had reached Hajir on his way to Kufa, so he left with his slave Sa'd, Mujammi' bin Abdullah, his son A'idh and Jaabir bin Harith al-Salmani and joined Imam Husain (A) at Uzaybul Hajanaat.

On the day of Ashura, Amr and his four companions attacked the enemy soldiers together. The enemy surrounded them and separated them from the rest of Imam Husain's (A) men. Imam Husain (A) sent Abbas (A) to rescue and help them. Single-handedly, Abbas (A) drove away the enemy and guided the group out of danger. However, as soon as they saw the enemy pursuing them, the brave men rushed back towards them attacking with all their strength, till every one of them lay dead.

7. Sa'd.

He was the slave of Amr bin Khalid, and was martyred as stated above.

8. Mujammi' bin Abdullah.

He was born at the time of the Holy Prophet (S) and was a companion of Imam Ali (A), on whose side he had fought at Siffin. He informed Imam Husain (A) that the leading men of Kufa had been bribed and although the hearts of the common men were inclined to him, they would raise their swords against him in war due to their weak faith. He was martyred as stated above.

9. A'idh bin Mujammi'.

He was martyred alongside his father as already stated.

10. Jaabir bin Harith al-Salmari.

He was a leading Shia in Kufa and was born during the life time of the Holy Prophet (S). He had fought on the side of Imam Ali (A) at Siffin and had taken the oath of allegiance to Imam Husain (A) at the hands of Muslim bin Aqeel. Although he had helped Muslim in his fight, he was forced to conceal himself. He later reached Karbala and was martyred as stated above.

11. Jundub bin Hujr al-Kindi.

He was a distinguished Shia in Kufa and a companion of Imam Ali (A). In the battle of Siffin, he had commanded two regiments. He joined the group of Imam Husain (A) before Hur intercepted them and travelled with him to Karbala. He died in the early stages of the battle.

12. Yazid bin Ziyad bin Muhaasir al-Kindi.

He was a brave warrior from the Shia of Kufa. He joined Imam Husain (A) before the arrival of Hur and remained with him throughout the rest of his journey. He was an expert archer, and on the day of Ashura he shot 100 arrows, only five of which missed their target. When he ran out of arrows, he entered the battlefield where he was killed in the early part of the fighting.

THE FIRST GENERAL ATTACK

During the first part of the battle the army of Amr ibne Sa'ad were forced to fall back wherever they attacked. The small army of Imam Husain (A), worn out by three days of thirst, not only managed to make effective inroads into the enemy ranks but also caused confusion amongst the cavalry.

Finally the Kufans decided that Husain bin Tamim would advance with his men for a general attack supported by 500 archers.

The companions of Imam Husain (A) met this attack bravely. This great assault, which saw fierce fighting, is called the first general attack and occurred about an hour before noon. Although the supporters of Imam Husain (A) managed to throw back the enemy, they suffered heavy losses. 50 men out of their small number were killed, as were all their horses.

The exact order in which these martyrs met their death is not certain but their names have been given separately or in groups, and are as below.

13. Harith bin Banhaan.

14. Shabib bin Abdullah al-Nahshali.

15. Qarib bin Abdullah.

16. Nasr bin Nayzar.

These four men had accompanied Imam Husain (A) from Madina. Harith had served Imam Ali (A), then Imam Hasan (A) and had kept Imam Husain (A) company on his journey. Shabab had fought on the side of Imam Ali (A) in the battles of Jamal, Siffin and Nahrawan. Qarib's mother, Faakiha, served a wife of Imam Husain (A). Nasr had spent his youth in the company of Imam Ali (A) and had later remained loyal to his sons.

17. Janaada bin Ka'b al-Ansari.

18. Abdar Rahman bin Abd Rabb al- Ansari.

These two men had joined Imam Husain (A) at Makka.

19. Jabir bin Hajjaj al-Taymi.

20. Jabla bin Ali al-Shaybaani.

21. Hubaab bin Amir bin Ka'b al-Taymi.

22. Zarghama bin Maalik al-Taghlabi.

These men had supported Muslim in Kufa, but when Ubaidullah ibne Ziyad managed to turn the people away from him, they went into hiding. They later joined Imam Husain (A) in Karbala.

23. Harith bin Imru' al-Qays bin 'Abis al-Kindi.

24. Juwayn bin Malik bin Qays al-Taymi.

25. Halas bin Amr al-Azdi.

26. his brother Nu'man.

27. Zuhayr bin Salim bin Amr al-Azdi.

28. Mas'ud bin Hajjaj al-Taymi.

29. Abd ar-Rahman bin Mas'ud.

30. Abdullah bin Bishr al-Khath'ami.

31. Amr bin Zabi'a bin Qays al-Taymi.

32. Qasim bin Habib bin Abi Bishr al-Azdi.

These men reached Karbala with the army of Amr ibne Sa'ad. Abd ar-Rahman bin Mas'ud and Mas'ud bin Hajjaj went to Imam Husain (A) on the 7th of Muharram to pay their respects and never returned back to their army. The first five men joined Imam Husain (A) when all offers of peace made by him were rejected and war became unavoidable. The last three also went to him at unspecified points of time.

33. Yazid bin Nubayt.

34. his son Abdullah.

35. his other son Ubaidullah.

36. Adham bin Umayyah.

37. Sayf bin Maalik al-Abdi.

38. 'Aamir bin Muslim al-Abdi al-Basri.

39. Saalim, the slave of 'Aamir bin Muslim.

These men were from the Shia of Basra. When news arrived that Imam Husain (A) intended to depart for Kufa and that all the roads to that city had been sealed by soldiers, they decided to go to his help. They met Imam Husain (A) at Abtah within the boundaries of Makka, and accompanied him to Karbala.

40. Salim.

He was a faithful slave of Imam Hasan (A) who was also martyred in the general assault.

41. **Abd bin Muhajir al-Juhani.**
42. **'Uqba bin Salaat al-Juhani.**
43. **Mujammi' bin Ziyaas bin Amr al-Juhani.**
44. **Qasit bin Zuhayr bin Harith al-Taghlabi.**
45. **Muqsit, the brother of Qasit.**
46. **Kardoos, also brother of Qasit.**

These six men joined Imam Husain (A) in Karbala and were martyred in the main attack. The three brothers Qasit, Muqsit and Kardoos were the companions of Imam Ali (A). Later they kept the company of Imam Hasan (A) till he left for Madina. Thereafter these brothers took up residence in Kufa, from where they came to Karbala.

47. Umayya bin Sa'd bin Zayd al-Taa'i.

He was a veteran who had fought in Siffin on the side of Imam Ali (A). He reached Karbala when Imam Husain (A) was holding peace talks with Amr ibne Sa'ad.

48. Zaahir bin Amr al-Kindi.

He was a companion of the Holy Prophet (S) and had taken part in the battle of Khayber. He was well known for his bravery and was devoted to the family of the Holy Prophet (S). He performed the Haj in 60 A.H. and then met Imam Husain (A) and accompanied him to Karbala.

49. Suwaar bin Abi 'Umayr an-Nahmi.

He was a narrator of traditions who reached Karbala after Imam Husain (A). On the day of Ashura he took part in the battle and was wounded but did not die. He was arrested and taken to Amr ibne Sa'ad who wanted to put him to death. The soldiers from his tribe resisted this and took him away. However, he died of his wounds six months later.

50. Shabib bin AbdAlláh.

He was a slave of Harith bin Sari' al-Hamadani. He came from Kufa and was a companion of the Holy Prophet (S). He knew the Holy Qur'án by heart. He had taken part in the battles of Jamal, Siffin and Nahrawan with Imam Ali (A). He came with Sayf and Maalik, the sons of his master.

51. Abd ar-Rahman bin Abdallah bin Kadan al-Arhabi.

He managed to leave Kufa after the assassination of Muslim bin Aqeel and joined Imam Husain (A) in Karbala.

52. 'Ammar bin Abi Salama al-Dulaani.

He had fought on the side of Imam Ali (A) in the battles of Jamal, Siffin and Nahrawan.

53. 'Ammar bin Hasan al-Taa'i.

He was a distinguished Shia whose father had been killed in the battle of Siffin fighting on the side of Imam Ali (A). He accompanied Imam Husain (A) from Makka to Karbala.

54. Kinaana bin 'Atiq al Taghlabi.

He lived in Kufa and was noted for his bravery. He knew the Holy Qur'an by heart. He joined Imam Husain (A) in Karbala.

55. Muslim bin Qasir al-Azdi.

He was crippled while fighting in the battle of Jamal. He went from Kufa to help Imam Husain (A).

56. Na'im bin 'Ajlan al-Ansari.

He was a companion of Imam Ali (A). When Imam Husain (A) reached Iraq, Na'im managed to join him at Karbala from Kufa.

57. Habsha bin Qays al-Nahmi.

His grandfather had been a companion of the Holy Prophet (S) and he himself was a narrator of traditions.

58. Hajjaaj bin Zayd al-Taymi.

He lived in Basra. When Imam Husain (A) had left Makka he had sent letters to the leading men in Basra. Mas'ud bin Amr al-Azdi wrote a letter of reply and entrusted it to Hajjaaj. The messenger delivered the letter and also sacrificed himself.

59. Habaab bin Harith.

60. Hanzala bin 'Mar al-Shaybaani.

61. Zuhayr bin Busr al-Khath'ami.

62. 'Imran bin Ka'b al-Ashja'i.

63. Maani' bin Ziyaad.

No details of these martyrs are available.

Encouraged by the loss of men in Imam Husain's (A.S) army, Amr ibne Sa'ad decided to launch an attack on the camp of Imam Husain (A). He tried to get round the back of the camp so that he could surround Imam Husain's (A) men. In this he failed because Zuhayr bin Qayn and 10 others repelled the enemy attack and caused much bloodshed. In this offensive, two of Imam Husain's (A) men lost their lives. They were:

64. Bakr bin Hayy al-Taymi.

He had joined Imam Husain (A) after having come to Karbala as part of Yazid's army.

65. Amr bin Janaada bin Ka'b as-Khazraji.

He was a young boy, hardly 10 years of age, whose father had already been martyred in the first general attack. Although Imam Husain (A) did not initially allow him to fight, he insisted that his mother had ordered him to fight and was then permitted to go to the battlefield.

THE OFFENSIVE AT THE TIME OF NOON PRAYERS

When the time of noon prayers approached, Imam Husain (A) sent a request to the enemy for fighting to stop for the duration of the prayers. However, Husain bin Tamim emerged from the enemy ranks and said, "Your prayers will not be accepted." This reply enraged Habib ibne Mazahir and a there was combat between the two. Habib knocked down Husain but the latter was saved by his men. At this time two men were martyred.

66. Habib ibne Mazahir.

He was amongst the select disciples of Imam Ali (A) and a personal childhood friend of Imam Husain (A). He had taken a leading role in inviting Imam Husain (A) to Kufa and came to Karbala after he received Imam's (A) letter asking for his help.

Habib was the commander of the left wing of the army and he fought with great valour. After having killed a number of the enemy, he was knocked off his horse by a soldier with a spear. His once defeated adversary, Husain bin Tamim, returned and killed him with a blow to the head.



67. Abu Thumaama al-Sa'idi.

He was an ace horseman and had fought at the side of Imam Ali (A) in every war. He had actively supported Muslim bin Aqeel in Kufa. On the day of Ashura he had expressed his desire to pray behind Imam Husain (A) one last time.

Imam Husain (A) had blessed him for remembering the prayers at such a dangerous time and had said that, on the Day of Judgement, Abu Thumaama would be in the special group of those who were mindful of their prayers. Abu Thumaama was killed in the fight that broke out when he requested the enemy to give them time to pray.

THE DHOHR (NOON) PRAYERS

Since fighting had not been suspended, Imam Husain (A) and his followers prayed the specially shortened form of the daily prayer called Salaatul Khawf. While he led the prayer, Imam Husain (A) was shielded from the enemy arrows by Sa'id bin Abdallah al-Hanafi and Zuhayr bin Qayn.

68. Sa'id bin Abdallah al-Hanafi.

He was a prominent Shia from Kufa and was known for his bravery and devotion to prayers. On the day of Ashura he stood in front of Imam Husain (A) and his men while they prayed. Just as the prayers finished, he fell down dead with 13 arrows in his body.

69. Zuhayr bin Qayn bin Qays al-Bajali.

He was an experienced warrior who had originally disagreed with the views of Imam Ali (A) regarding the revenge of the murder of Uthman, the third Caliph. But on his way back from Haj, he met Imam Husain (A) at Zarud and their discussion made him convert completely to the cause of Imam Husain (A). He commanded the right wing of the army and fought bravely in the initial stages of the battle. At the time of prayers he also stood as guard and was grievously wounded by arrows. When he saw that the enemy had reached dangerously close, he made his final charge and fell fighting.

70. Salman bin Muzarib bin Qays al-Bajali.

He was a cousin of Zuhayr and was martyred in the afternoon.

71. Amr bin Quraaza bin Ka'b al-Ansari.

He was a Kufan used by Imam Husain (A) as a go-between in his peace talks with Amr ibne Sa'ad. He was also martyred after he used his body to shield the praying soldiers.

72. Naafi bin Hilaal al-Jamali.

He was the chief of his tribe and knew the Holy Qur'an by heart. He had fought at the side of Imam Ali (A) in the battles of Jamal, Siffin and Nahrawan. When the enemy had stopped access to the river, he went with Abbas (A) and 20 others to take water by force. They pushed back the guards on the river and succeeded in bringing water back to the camp. Naafi was an expert bowman and in the afternoon of Ashura he killed 12 men with his arrows and wounded many others. He was captured by the enemy and both his arms were broken. Finally Shimr killed him.

73. Shawdhab bin Abdallah.

He was a slave of 'Abis bin Abi Shabib and had come with his master to Karbala.

74. 'Abis bin Abi Shabib al-Shakri.

He was amongst the leaders of the Shia of Kufa. In the battlefield, 'Abis caused havoc in the enemy ranks before a large number of soldiers surrounded him and killed him.

75. Abdallah, and 76. Abd ar-Rahman bin 'Urwa.

These two brothers reached Karbala together and were martyred in the afternoon of Ashura.

77. Hanzala bin Asad al-Shaybaani.

He knew the Holy Qur'an by heart. In the afternoon of Ashura he entered the battlefield and severely admonished the enemy, telling them to be afraid of Allah's Wrath.

78. Saif bin Harith bin Saari.

79. Malik bin Abd bin Aari bin Jaabir al-Hamadani.

These two men were cousins who had joined Imam Husain (A) in Karbala while peace negotiations were in progress.

80. Jawn bin Huwai.

He was a slave of Abu Zar. After he was martyred, his body gave off a beautiful fragrance.

81. A Turkish slave.

He knew the Holy Qur'an by heart. He killed many soldiers before he was wounded. Imam Husain (A) put his arms around the neck of the dying man, who opened his eyes once, smiled and then died.

82. Qa'nab bin Amr al-Numari.

He was from Basra and was martyred in the afternoon of Ashura.

83. Raafi' bin Abdallah.

He was a slave of Muslim bin Qasir.

84. Anas bin Harith al-Asadi.

He was a Companion of the Holy Prophet (S) and had heard him foretell the events of Karbala. He had prayed that he could be martyred at the side of Imam Husain (A).

85. Hajjaj bin Masruq al-Ju'fi.

He was a respected Shia from Kufa and used to give the Adhaan for the prayers led by Imam Husain (A) after he joined him in Makka. He fought and killed many enemy soldiers before he was martyred.

86. Ziyad bin 'Aarib al-Hamdaani.

He was a pious and brave man and put up a spirited fight before he was martyred.

87. Salim bin Amr bin Abdallah.

He was a slave who had been arrested in Kufa for helping Muslim bin Aqeel. He later managed to reach Karbala.

88. Sa'ad bin al-Harith.

He was a slave of Imam Ali (A) who had accompanied Imam Husain (A) right from Madina to Karbala, where he was martyred.

89. Umar bin Jundab al-Hadrami.

He was one of the Shia of Kufa who had been a companion of Imam Ali (A). He came to Karbala after Muslim bin Aqeel had been killed in Kufa.

90. Yazid bin Mughfil al-Ju'fi.

He had been a companion of Imam Ali (A) and a commander in his army. He was martyred in the afternoon on Ashura.

91. Bishr bin Amr al-Hadrami al-Kindi.

He was a Kufan who was martyred in the afternoon of Ashura.

92. Suwayd bin Abi al-Mata' al-Khath'ami.

He was an old warrior who was so badly injured on the battlefield that he was given up for dead. However when he heard that Imam Husain (A) had been martyred, he raised himself with uncontrollable emotion and tried to attack the enemy with a big knife. He was then martyred.

THE FAMILY OF IMAM HUSAIN (A)

The companions of Imam Husain (A) had not let a single member of the Bani Hashim come to the battlefield while they lived. Imam Husain (A) had allowed them to sacrifice their lives first because he knew that those who remained alive longer would have to endure more thirst and greater mental agony as they watched their friends die, and he wanted to spare his companions from that additional suffering. When the companions of Imam Husain (A) had all been martyred, it was the turn of his family to sacrifice themselves for his mission. Hereunder we record brief details of the martyrs from Bani Hashim, who were all from the descendants of Abu Talib.

1. Ali Akbar bin Husain bin Ali (A).

He was the son of Imam Husain (A) and the first martyr from the Bani Hashim. His mother was Laila binte Abu Murra. Although she had died by the time the tragedy of Karbala took place, she was actually the first cousin of Yazid.

Ali Akbar was only 19 years old on the day of Ashura. He was a handsome and graceful youth and especially dear to Imam Husain (A) because he bore a great resemblance to the Holy Prophet (S) in his features and voice. Ali Akbar knew of his father's attachment to him and, when he approached him for permission to go to the battlefield, he was worried that his father would refuse. However, Imam Husain (A) turned to his son and said, "O son, if my grandfather, the Holy Prophet (S) would be here today, I would be the first to go out to fight." Ali Akbar understood immediately that his father was encouraging him to go and he eagerly began his preparations to fight the enemy. Imam Husain (A) gently retrained him and told him to first visit Bibi Zainab (A), and seek her blessings also. She had lovingly brought up Ali Akbar since his mother had died and he was very dear to her.

After bidding the womenfolk his farewell, Ali Akbar proceeded to the battlefield. Watching him go, Imam Husain (A) raised his hands and said, "O Lord, be my witness of the cruel oppression of these men towards whom I am sending that handsome youth who most of all resembles Your Prophet in looks and nature. When we longed to see Your Prophet, we used to look at his face." This brief prayer gives us an indication of the anguish of Imam Husain (A) at the parting of his beloved son. Ali Akbar entered the battlefield and attacked the enemy reciting his war poem: "I am Ali, son of Husain and grandson of Ali. By the Lord of Ka`ba, we have the best claim to succeed His Prophet. By God! the progeny of one of illegitimate birth cannot decide matters about us. I will strike you with the blow of a Hashimi, a Quraishi!"

He then attacked the army of Yazid, reciting these words repeatedly and the Kufans could not match him in single combat. Having killed many of the enemy Ali Akbar then returned to see his father one last time.

He said, "O Father, my armour weighs heavily on me and thirst is killing me. If I had a drop of water I could make the enemy retreat to the walls of Kufa!"

Perhaps Ali Akbar remembered his childhood days when his father had once plucked a fruit from the walls of the mosque of Madina and fed it to him. But this was a day of tests and Imam Husain (A) would not use his miraculous powers. He responded by asking his son to place his tongue onto his own and perhaps find some moisture. Ali Akbar obeyed but immediately withdrew his tongue saying, "O Father, your tongue is drier than mine!" He then returned to the battlefield and resumed his attack on the enemy. At last, Murra bin Munqidh managed to stop him by plunging a lance deep into the chest of Ali Akbar. As he fell, the enemies surrounded him, cutting him with their swords. Ali Akbar managed to send one last Salaam to his father. Imam Husain (A) saw the plight of his son, and stumbled towards him. At the body of his brave son, he wept "My son, my son, there will only be dust on the world after you."

2. Abdallah bin Muslim bin Aqeel.

The news of the death of Ali Akbar caused great lamentation in the camp of Imam Husain (A). Some young boys, including Abdallah, rushed out in sorrow. This gave a chance to an enemy, Amr bin Subayh, to shoot arrows at them. Abdallah put up his hand to guard his brow but the arrow struck his hand and pinned it to his head. A heartless enemy then came and thrust a spear into the young boy's heart and killed him.

3. Muhammad bin Muslim bin Aqeel.

4. Ja'far bin Aqeel.

5. Abdar Rahman bin Aqeel.

6. Ja'far bin Muhammad bin Aqeel.

7. Muhammad bin Abi Sa'id bin Aqeel.

After the death of Abdallah, these men from the progeny of Aqeel bin Abu Talib made a grouped attack on the enemy. Imam Husain (A) called out to them, "O sons of my uncle, go and triumph over death!" The men went out and bravely attacked the enemy who preferred not to fight them in combat but resorted to cutting each of them down with their expert archers.

8. Muhammad bin Abdallah bin Ja'far.

9. Awn bin Abdallah bin Ja'far.

These two young brothers were the sons of Abdallah, the cousin of Imam Husain (A) and the husband of Bibi Zainab (A). Muhammad's mother was Khawsa while Awn's mother was Bibi Zainab (A). She had prepared her two sons and instructed them to sacrifice themselves for her brother Imam Husain (A). The two boys entered the battlefield together and managed to penetrate deep into the ranks of the enemy. They were finally brought down by arrows. Abdallah bin Qutba al-Ta'i killed Awn and Amir bin Nashhal al-Tamimi killed Muhammad.

10. Qasim bin Hasan bin Ali (A).

Qasim was the son of Imam Hasan (A) and only 13 years old when he came to Karbala. His mother was Umme Farwa. He was very keen to sacrifice himself for the cause of Islam and once when Imam Husain (A) asked him what he thought of death, he remarked that to him death was sweeter than honey.

On the day of Ashura when Qasim came to ask for permission to fight, Imam Husain (A) embraced him and wept for a long time. Then he told the disappointed youth that he could not allow him to go because he was the last sign of Imam Hasan (A). Qasim returned to his mother, dejected beyond words.

Umme Farwa urged him to ask for his uncle's permission again, saying, "When your father was close to his death he said that he would not be present at Karbala but that you, who were then a baby in the cradle, would serve in his stead." Qasim returned to Imam Husain (A) and reminded him of his father's last words. Imam Husain (A) agreed that that was indeed what his brother had said, and with a heavy heart he prepared his nephew to go to the battlefield. He dressed Qasim in a white shirt and white waistcloth. He then wound a white turban on his head and let the cloth trail over the boy's shoulders. It was as if he was shrouding his living nephew in the Kafan of death. Then he bid Qasim farewell and allowed him to enter the battlefield.

The enemy saw a young man come towards them, whose face shone like the first splinter of the new moon. He was dressed all in white and had no armour and carried only a sword. They wondered at the beauty of this youth and none ventured towards him. Qasim was well trained in the art of warfare despite his tender years, and he challenged them to combat. An enemy by the name of Azraq Shaami sent his son to fight Qasim, but he was soon despatched to hell. Then he sent the rest of his sons but Qasim killed them all. When all four of his sons had been killed by Qasim, Azraq himself came to fight, vowing to destroy the young man. Soon, he too lay dead.

Then Umar bin Sa'ad bin Nufayl al-Azdi rushed at Qasim and stuck him a terrible blow on the head which brought Qasim to the ground. He called his uncle for help, and Imam Husain (A) launched into the battlefield like a raging lion and struck Umar, cutting off his arm in a single stroke. Umar shouted for help but when the horsemen rushed in to save him, their horses trampled on him instead and killed him. However, the body of Qasim also came under the hooves of the horses.

Imam Husain (A) came to the broken body of his dear nephew and wept bitterly to see its condition, saying, "May the people who have caused your death perish. By God! it is hard on your uncle that he arrived too late to help you. But those who kill his relatives are many while those who help him are few."

11. Abu Bakr bin Hasan bin Ali (A).

12. Muhammad bin Ali (A).

Abu Bakr was the nephew of Imam Husain (A) while Muhammad was his brother. Both men participated in the battle but were killed by arrows.

13. Abdallah bin Ali (A).

14. Uthman bin Ali (A).

15. Ja'far bin Ali (A).

These men were three of the four sons of Imam Ali (A) by his wife Ummul-Baneen Fatima. The fourth and eldest son was Abbas (A), the standard bearer of Imam Husain's (A) army. Their mother came from a tribe noted for its bravery.

When Abbas (A) saw that their family members were being killed he urged his brothers forward, saying, "Go forth so I may see that you have remained true to Allah and His Apostle." Abdallah was the first to go and was killed by Hani bin Shabib al-Hadhrami after a brave fight. Uthman followed him into the battlefield. He had been named after Uthman bin Maz'un, a pious companion of the Holy Prophet (S) and a personal friend of Imam Ali (A). Uthman fought bravely but was then struck with an arrow by Khawali bin Yazid al-Asbahi. When he fell a man came and beheaded him. Ja'far went next and he was also killed by Hani bin Shabib al-Hadhrami.

16. Abdallah bin Hasan bin Hasan (A).

He was a grandson of Imam Hasan (A) and too young to fight at Karbala. Near the end of the battle, when the enemy had brought Imam Husain (A) to the ground, Bahr bin Ka'b bin Ubaidullah al-Taymi tried to attack Imam Husain (A) with a sword. As Bahr brought his sword towards Imam Husain (A), Abdallah ran out of the camp to stop him and Bahr cut off one of his arms and then killed him.

17. Abbas bin Ali (A).

Abul Fadhl Abbas (A) was born in 24 A.H. and spent his life in the service of his brother Imam Husain (A). He was noted for his beauty, grace, strength and knowledge, but especially feared and respected for his awesome ability in war. As a teenager he had fought at Siffin and his skill in combat was known to all. He was called "Qamare bani Hashim" which means "The full moon of the Hashimites."

In Karbala, Abbas (A) was 34 years old and in the prime of his life. He was the standard bearer of Imam Husain's (A) small army. On the day of Ashura he repeatedly asked for permission to fight but Imam Husain (A) refused, saying that he wanted the two of them to face the enemy together when nobody else remained. Even so, Abbas (A) killed many of the enemy during the day when he came to the rescue of his fellow soldiers and at the times when he went to bring their bodies back to the camp.

Finally, when nobody was left on the side of Imam Husain (A), Abbas (A) approached him and asked for permission to go to the battlefield. Imam Husain (A) turned to him and said, "O Abbas, how can I let you go, you are the standard bearer of my army." Abbas (A) replied, "O Master, where is that army now?" As the brothers talked the sounds of "Al-Atash, al-Atash" came from the thirsty children. Imam Husain (A) turned to Abbas (A) and said, "These children have not had anything to drink for three days. Go to the river and get some water and then we will fight the enemy together."

Abbas (A) then departed for the river. In one hand he carried the green standard (Alam) of Islam and in the other he carried a lance. The waterskin was slung over his shoulder. The passage to the river was blocked by Yazid's men, who had strict instructions not to let a single drop of water get back to the camp of Imam Husain (A). Abbas (A) fought his way furiously through the enemy ranks and broke through to reach the bank of the river. He filled the waterskin.

He was very thirsty but was too mindful of the thirst of the children in the camp to drink any water himself.

Abbas (A) emerged from the river bank but the enemy had regrouped and were desperate to stop him. They surrounded and attacked him from all sides. Abbas (A) was handicapped by the waterskin which he was protecting and the standard which he carried in his right hand. Even so, he made vigorous attacks, attempting to split the enemy and disentangle himself from them. However, he was outnumbered too heavily and suddenly Hukaym bin Tufayl severed his right arm with his sword. Abbas (A) immediately held the standard between his thigh and his horse but then Zayn bin Waqa al-Juhni severed his left arm.

Someone shot an arrow which pierced the waterskin and the water began to leak. Abbas (A) desperately urged his horse towards the camp, his hopes draining away with the water.

Now that the lion-hearted warrior was defenceless, the enemy swarmed around him. An arrow struck and pierced his eye and finally he was struck a terrible blow on the head with a mace. Abbas (A) could not balance on his horse and came crashing down to the ground.

From the camp, Imam Husain (A) saw the standard fall and rushed to his brother's aid. When he reached him, Abbas (A) was in his last moments. Imam Husain (A) removed the arrow from his eye and cleared the blood from his face and lay the head of Abbas (A) on his lap. With his dying breath Abbas (A) requested Imam Husain (A) to leave his body where it was and not to take it to the camp, because he did not want Bibi Sakina (A) to see him.

The standard flag was rolled up, never to fly again, and Imam Husain (A) returned to the camp. His back was bowed over with the emotional strain of having sacrificed those who were dearest to his heart. In respect of his last wishes, the grave of Abbas (A) is near the banks of the river, while all the rest of the martyrs are buried at the site of the battlefield.

18. Ali Asghar bin Husain bin Ali (A).

When no one remained from his men, Imam Husain (A) returned to the camp to say his last farewell. As he prepared to depart for the battlefield, his wife Rubab brought him his infant son Ali Asghar. The six-month old baby was suffering terribly with thirst and his mother asked Imam Husain (A) if he could take the baby to the enemy and request them to give it some water. Surely they could not refuse water to an innocent baby.

Imam Husain (A) bundled up Ali Asghar and approached the army of Yazid. They thought that he had brought the Holy Qur'an to try to discuss peace and were surprised when Imam Husain (A) revealed his son. He said to them, "If you think that I should not have any water, what harm has this innocent baby done? Its mother's milk has dried up and the baby is dying of thirst." When the enemy saw the baby move its tiny tongue over its parched lips, they openly wept with shame.

Amr ibne Sa'ad saw the effect that the words of Imam Husain (A) were having on his army and was worried that they would lose their resolve. He urgently instructed his master archer, Harmala bin Khalil al-Asadi, saying, "Cut off the words of Husain!"

The heartless Harmala fitted an arrow to his bow but, as he shot, he saw from a distance that a lady stood at the camp anxiously watching. He realised that it must be the baby's mother. He felt a twinge of shame and this upset his aim and he missed. Harmala had never missed his target before and Amr ibne Sa'ad uneasily ordered him to shoot again. This time Harmala selected a special armour-piercing arrow and shot out the throat of Ali Asghar. Imam Husain (A) sadly took his child's blood in the palm of his hand and smeared it into his beard, vowing that he would come on the Day of Judgement in the same manner to seek justice.

Imam Husain (A) - the Prince of the Martyrs

After he had buried Ali Asghar, Imam Husain (A) was left all alone. The time had come for him to join his brave companions in martyrdom. He came back to the camp for the last time. After bidding farewell to the ladies and children, he spent a moment with his beloved sister Bibi Zainab (A). He had put on old, torn clothes so that the enemy would not be tempted to tear his garments away after his death.

Bibi Zainab (A) looked at her brother with tears in her eyes and then kissed his neck. When Imam Husain (A) asked her why, she said that their dear mother Bibi Fatima (A) had told her that a day would come when her brother would meet her for the last time before going to his death. On that day she should kiss him on the neck because that same neck would be cut by the enemies of Islam. Imam Husain (A) then leaned forward and kissed his sister on the arms and explained that their mother had also told him to do that because Bibi Zainab (A) would be dragged from Karbala to Kufa, and then to Damascus, with tight ropes binding her arms.

Afterwards, Imam Husain (A) went to see his son Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A), who was still weak with fever. On seeing his father he tried to struggle to his feet, but was too ill to rise. Imam Husain (A) made him comfortable and then informed him that there was nobody left alive and that he was soon going for his last battle. After passing over the duty of Imamat to his son, Imam Husain (A) finally left the camp.

Imam Husain (A) mounted on his faithful horse Zuljanah and rode to the battlefield. He was exhausted from the heat and thirst and he was wounded all over. However, the blood of the Lion of Allah flowed in his veins and he was not going to meekly allow the enemy to overcome him. He called out one last time, "Hal min Naasirin Yansuruna? Hal min Mughheesin Fa Yugheesuna? - Is there any helper to come and help us? Is there anyone to come to our aid?"

Imam Husain (A) knew fully well that all his helpers had been martyred but he made this call for two reasons. Firstly, he gave a last chance to the men in Yazid's army to change their minds and save themselves from Hell.

Secondly, his cry was to us, to never let his sacrifice be in vain and to carry forward the religion for which he gave up everything he had.

Then Imam Husain (A) charged at the enemy alone, sword in hand. Such was his skill, that the enemy began to die all around him and they retreated in terror. Shimr saw that Imam Husain (A) could not be fought hand to hand despite his weakened condition, so he gave orders to shower him with arrows.

So many arrows rained towards Imam Husain (A) that his body was pierced all over. Shimr then shouted to his men to kill Imam Husain (A). Soldiers attacked Imam Husain (A) with spears, swords and stones, determined to bring him down.

Somehow, he managed to drive them away and gained access to the river. Thinking that he might drink some water to quench his thirst, Husain bin Tamim shot an arrow which hit Imam Husain (A) in the mouth, filling it with blood. Imam Husain (A) took a handful of the blood and threw it up towards the sky, thanking Allah.

In the meantime, Imam Husain (A) saw Shimr advance with a group of men towards the tents where the ladies were, wishing to rob and plunder. He admonished them, asking them to behave like men and not animals. Shimr withdrew, ashamed of his action. Shimr then surrounded Imam Husain (A) with his foot soldiers but they just could not stop him.

One soldier said later, "I have never seen a man who has been so badly wounded and who has seen his children, friends and relatives killed, fight with such courage. Although men surrounded him from all sides, he scattered them like sheep wherever he turned."

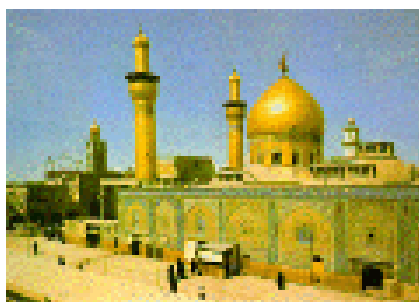
Meanwhile Imam Husain (A) kept on repeating words of guidance to the enemy. He asked them, "Why do you kill me? Had I made any alteration to the laws of Islam? Had I shed anybody's blood?" Then he said, "If the religion of Muhammad cannot survive except by my being killed, then O swords! Come and get me."

Then, Imam Husain (A) was repeatedly and powerfully attacked. At last he could no longer stay steady on his horse. He turned his face to the sky and said, "O my Lord! I have given up all without exception in my love for You. And I have left all my family and accepted that my children become orphans in order to meet You. If, out of love for You, my body is chopped into pieces, even then my heart will not bend before anyone but You."

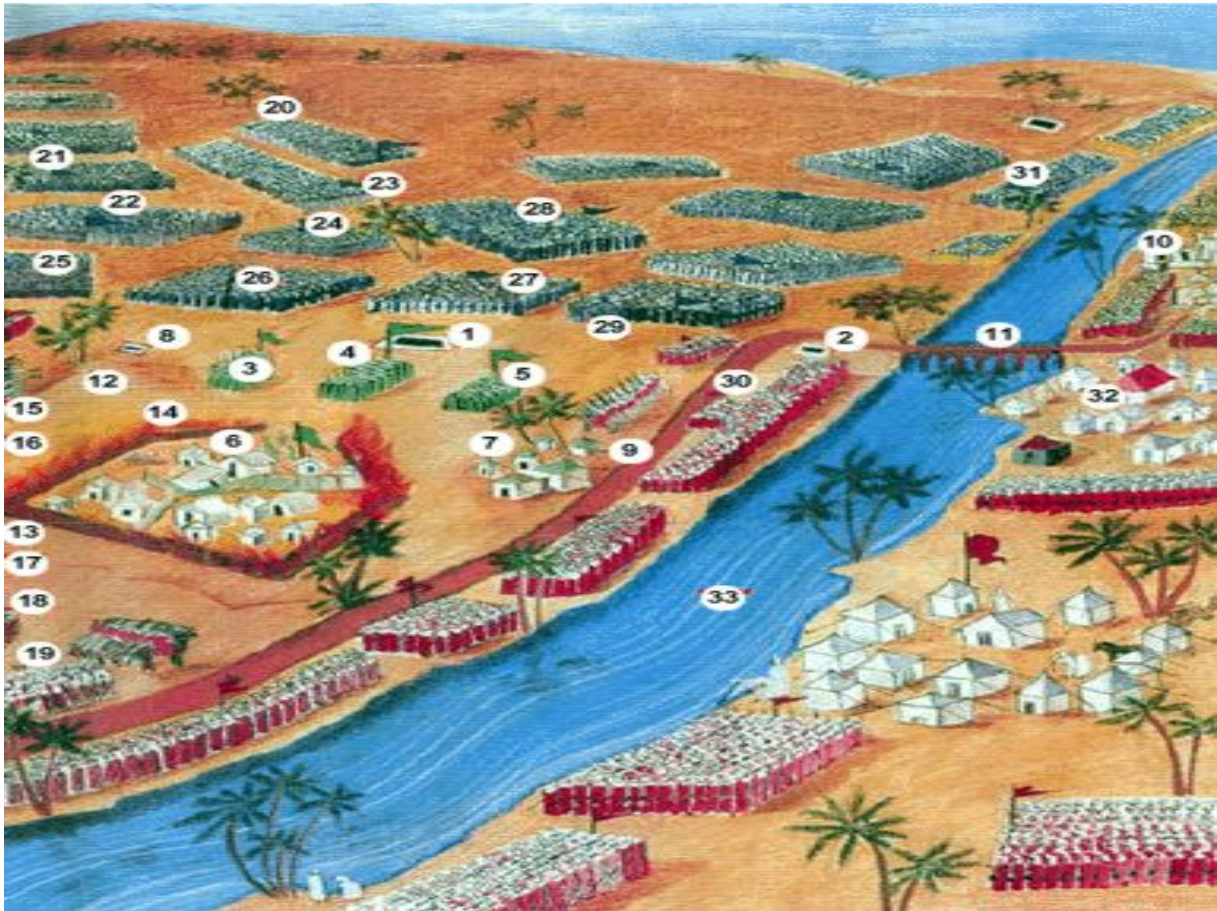
Imam Husain (A) urged his horse to carry him to a valley so that his family would not witness his death. In the valley he fell from the horse, too weak to support himself. The enemy cautiously neared him, and saw that he had put his forehead on the ground in prostration. Nobody dared to go forward, because none of them wanted to be responsible for the inhuman crime of killing the grandson of the Holy Prophet (S).

Shimr called out to his men, "What are you waiting for?" At these words, Maalik bin Nasr al-Baddi advanced and struck Imam Husain (A) on the head with a sword that pierced his scalp. Then Zur'a bin Sharik's sword, Sinan bin Anas's spear and the dagger of Shimr killed Imam Husain (A). As his holy head was raised on a spear, the earth of Karbala trembled violently and Jibraeel's (A) voice was heard crying, "Alaa Qad Qutilal Husainu bi Karbala, Alaa Qad Zubihal Husainu bi Karbala - Alas! Husain has been killed in Karbala, alas! Husain has been slaughtered in Karbala."

May Allah curse forever those who killed Imam Husain (A), the Prince of the Martyrs, and his companions - Ameen.



THE BATTLEFIELD



1. The grave of Imam Hussain (A)
2. The grave of Abbas (A)
3. Habib bin Mazahir - Left Flank
4. Bani Hashim - Centre of Army
5. Zuhair bin Qayn - Right Flank
6. The tents of Ahlul-bayt (A)
7. The place of Hur bin Yazid al-Riyahi
8. The grave of Hur bin Yazid al-Riyahi
9. The road Kerbala - Kufa - Damascus
10. The Village of Ghadhiriyya
11. Bridge leading to Kufa
12. The hillock of Zainabiyya
13. The well dug by Abbas (A)
14. The trench surrounding the camp
- 15-19. The army of 'Umr bin Sa'd
- 20-28. The reserves of the army of Yazid
29. Shimr bin Dhil Jawshan with his army
30. The tent of (the accursed) Shimr
31. Hajjar bin Abjad with a large army
32. The tent of 'Umr bin Sa'd
33. The River Euphrates

LESSON 11: THE PEOPLE OF THE CAVE

In their attempts to discredit the Holy Prophet (S), the Quraish of Mecca sent three men to the Jewish scholars in Najran. They were sent to learn some difficult problems from the ancient scriptures of the Jews and bring them back to test the Holy Prophet (S). The Jews gave the Quraish some questions about the Seven Sleepers of the Cave, whose account was known to only a few special scholars. The men returned to Mecca and posed these questions to the Holy Prophet (S) and the whole story was revealed to him in Surae Kahf. The Holy Qur'an says:

[Do you not think that the people of the Cave and of the Inscription (Raqeem) were of Our wonderful signs? When the youths sought refuge in the cave they prayed, "Lord grant us mercy and help us to get out of this trouble in a righteous way." We sealed their ears for a number of years. Then We roused them to see which of the party had the correct account of the duration of their sleep. We tell you this story for a genuine purpose. They were young people who believed in their Lord and We gave them further guidance. We strengthened their hearts when they stood up (against the idol-worshippers) and said, "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. We shall never worship anyone other than Him, lest we commit blasphemy.

Kahf, 18 : 9 - 14]

Afsoos was a famous city that once flourished on the West Coast of Asia Minor. It was part of the Roman Empire and the king was a kind and just ruler. During his reign, there was peace and prosperity. When he died, there was a division amongst the people as to who should rule. While they had no leader, Dacius, a neighbouring king, invaded their land and annexed it to his kingdom. He ruled them from 249 A.D. to 251 A.D. Dacius was a heathen and a violent persecutor of the faithful Christians who lived at the time.



Six (or seven) young men stood up for their beliefs and had to leave the town to escape the cruel king. On their way, they met a shepherd who gave them some water to drink.

When they told him about their intention of finding a secluded place to worship Allah in peace, he joined them with his dog, Qitmir.

The shepherd led them to a fertile valley, through which they came upon a mountain and entered a cave called Kahf. Meanwhile, Dacius followed the fugitives, determined to make an example of them. When they heard the sounds of pursuit get closer, the men

prayed to Allah to rescue them from the merciless king.



Soon afterwards the young men were overcome with a deep sleep and the dog sat outside the cave. The king reached the spot and sent in his minister to bring the men out. The minister was a faithful believer in Prophet Isa (A). When he saw the young men sleeping, he came out and reported that they



had all died of fright. This news pleased the king, who ordered that the cave be shut.

A stone tablet, with the name of the men and the date of the event inscribed on it, was put at the entrance of the cave.

This is why these people have been referred to as those of the Cave and the Inscription in the Holy Qur'an, which says:

[They will say, "They were three, the fourth of them was their dog", and (others) say, "Five, the sixth of them was their dog", guessing about the unknown; and (others) say, "Seven and the eighth of them was their dog." Say (O Muhammad), "My Lord knows best their number... Kahf, 18 : 22(Part)]

Allah caused the young men to sleep for about 180 years before they woke up. When they consulted one another it seemed to them that they had slept for a day or even less. They were all starving so they decided that one of them would go into town and secretly purchase some food and bring it back. They prayed to Allah to first open the entrance to the cave. This prayer was granted and they emerged from the cave. The sight that greeted them amazed them. The entire landscape had changed. Little did they know that Dacius was long dead and this was the time of the reign of the kind Christian king Theodosius I, who ruled from 408 A.D. to 450 A.D.

The man who went to the town to get food saw that everything was different. The houses did not look right and people were dressed in strange clothes. He looked about in amazement, wondering if he was dreaming. At length, he approached a baker and asked for some bread. The baker was surprised to see the oddly dressed young man who spoke an ancient dialect and was offering him outdated money.

He asked him whether he had discovered the coins in some treasure. The young man replied, "No, this is the money I made after selling my dates the day before yesterday."

The baker did not believe this tale and took the man to the king. When the young man told his story, the king informed him that Dacius was long dead and he then asked to be shown the cave and its inhabitants. Just before they reached the mountain, the young men told the king and his courtiers, "Let me inform my comrades of the situation so that they are not alarmed by your presence."

When he entered the cave and told the rest about his experiences, they were worried that it might be a trick and that they would be arrested. Therefore, they prayed to Allah to restore them to their original condition. Their prayer was granted and they were again overcome with a deep sleep. After a while the king approached the cave and found the men and their dog asleep. The sight made him believe their story and he decided to build a mosque at the spot in respect of the miracle that had occurred at this place. The Holy Qur'an says:

[And they stayed in the Cave three hundred years and add nine (more).



Kahf, 18 : 25]

LESSON 12: THE PEOPLE OF RAS

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LESSON 13: THE PEOPLE OF SABT

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

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

A'raf, 7 :

163,164]

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

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

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

Baqarah, 2 : 65,66]

LESSON 14: PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 1

During the reign of Prophet Yusuf (A), he invited his father Prophet Ya'qub (A) and his family to come to live in Egypt. The family settled there and in time grew to a large number and they were called the Bani Israa'il.

After several centuries, a man called Fir'aun came to power in Egypt. He was alarmed to see that the Bani Israa'il had become so many that they might pose a threat to the future security of the state. From that time onwards he made life for the Bani Israa'il difficult. Matters became particularly bad for them when a royal astrologer informed Fir'aun that a boy from the Bani Israa'il would soon be born and at whose hands Fir'aun's kingdom would be destroyed. On hearing this, the cruel king ordered that every male child born to the Bani Israa'il should be killed.



However, Allah had decided that Prophet Musa (A) was to be born in such a dangerous environment and He arranged affairs to ensure the safety of His messenger. When Prophet Musa (A) was born, his mother hid him to protect him from the king's soldiers. There was a great danger that the child would be discovered at any moment. At this time, Allah inspired her to put her baby in a water proof box and cast him into the waters of the Nile. She did this, and then sent her daughter to follow the little "boat" and see where it went.

The box floated towards the palace of Fir'aun, where his men fished it out and brought the baby to him. He wanted to kill it immediately, suspecting that it might be a child of the Bani Israa'il, but his wife Aasiya, who was a pious woman, stopped him. They were childless, so she asked him to adopt the child.

Fir'aun agreed to his wife's request and then summoned some women to breastfeed the crying child. However, the baby refused milk from all the women who came to feed him. In the meantime the sister came forward and offered to introduce a woman who she was certain the child would accept. Fir'aun asked for the woman to be summoned, and the girl brought her mother to the palace. The child immediately went to its real mother and thus Allah reunited mother and child in the very palace of Fir'aun.



As the years passed, Prophet Musa (A) grew up strong and healthy. He had the knowledge, wisdom and manners that Allah grants all His Prophets. Prophet Musa (A) resolved to end the oppression of all people under Fir'aun and he began by trying to help his own people, the Bani Israa'il. They realised that Allah had answered their prayers and their saviour would one day free them from the tyranny of Fir'aun.

Once Prophet Musa (A) saw two men fighting. One was from Bani Israa'il, and shouted for help. Prophet Musa (A) came to his rescue and struck the other man a single blow and unwittingly killed him. Later, he learned that his action had been seen by one of Fir'aun's men and he wondered whether to leave the city. A warning from a friend that he was being hunted strengthened his resolve and he left the city secretly.

Prophet Musa (A) walked for a long time without a fixed destination and finally reached Madyan. Here, he rested next to a well and saw that the shepherds had gathered to water their sheep. Two maidens were standing away from the crowd of men, waiting their turn.

Prophet Musa (A) went forward to help them draw the water. The maidens then departed, their work finished. However, one of them returned, informing Prophet Musa (A) that her father wished to thank him personally for his help, and wanted to compensate him for his trouble. He went with her to her house and discovered that her father was Prophet Shuaib (A).

Prophet Musa (A) narrated the account of his trouble in Egypt and Prophet Shuaib (A) assured him that he was safe in Madyan. He then offered him a job as a shepherd on the recommendation of his daughter, Safura. He said that he would allow Prophet Musa (A) to marry Safura as long as he worked for him for 8 years. If he wished to work for longer, it would be his decision.

Prophet Musa (A) thus married Safura and worked for her father for 10 years. At the end of this time, he left for Egypt with his wife and a few sheep that he had received as a gift. It was severe winter time and Prophet Musa (A) lost his way in the night.



Suddenly he saw a fire in the distance. He asked his wife to remain where she was and headed for the fire, thinking to bring some of it back to give them relief from the bitter cold.

When he reached Mount Sinai he saw that the flames were coming from a green tree but there was no one present. While Prophet Musa (A) looked around in surprise, he suddenly heard a voice saying, "O Musa, I am your Lord! Take off your shoes for you have stepped on to the sacred valley of Tuwa."

As Prophet Musa (A) obeyed, he heard the voice ask him to throw his staff onto the ground. At once it changed into a serpent, scaring him. He was then commanded to lift the snake without fear and as he did so, it changed back into a stick.



Next he was commanded to put his hand under his armpit. When he drew it out again, his hand glowed with a dazzling light, brilliant like the sun. The Divine voice said to him, "O Musa! These are the two great Signs of your Lord. Go back to Fir'aun and his people and invite them towards your Lord!"

Prophet Musa (A) requested that his brother, Prophet Haroon (A) accompany him in his mission because he spoke with a fluent voice. This request was granted and thus Prophet Musa (A) came back to Egypt.

LESSON 15: PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 2

When Prophet Musa (A) returned to Egypt from Madyan he first went to meet his mother, brother and sister. He informed his brother Prophet Haroon (A) that their mission had begun and they prepared themselves to go to the court of Fir'aun.

Prophet Musa (A) told Fir'aun that he was a Messenger of Allah and that he had brought clear proofs that he was speaking the truth. Fir'aun rejected this claim and then reminded Prophet Musa (A) of the favours that he bestowed on him in his infancy. He also accused him of having run away after committing a murder.

Prophet Musa (A) argued that he had only been raised away from his own tribe because his mother had been forced to abandon him in fear of his life. He also stated that he had not intentionally killed any man and then reminded Fir'aun of the message he had brought from Allah. Their conversation is recorded in the Holy Qur'an as follows:

[He (Fir'aun) said, "If you will take a lord besides me, I will most certainly imprison you". He (Musa) said, "What! even if I bring to you something manifest". He said, "Bring it then if you are one of the truthful ones". So he cast down his staff and lo! it suddenly become an obvious serpent. And he drew forth his hand, and lo! it appeared white to the onlookers. Shuara, 26 : 29 - 33]



These miracles frightened Fir'aun and he turned to his ministers for advice. They assured him that Prophet Musa (A) and Prophet Haroon (A) were great magicians and that their own magicians could easily perform such tricks. Fir'aun called all the great magicians and tricksters in the land to his court. When they were told what had to be done, they were not worried. They threw pieces of rope on the ground and these cords began to wriggle like snakes. But when Prophet Musa (A) cast his staff down his serpent ate all the pieces of rope. The magicians immediately realised that they were witnessing a miracle.

They were experts in trickery but they knew that Prophet Musa (A) was not demonstrating a trick and immediately threw themselves in prostration saying, "We believe in the faith of Musa".

Their actions enraged Fir'aun who warned, "You have surrendered without my permission while he is only a greater magician than you. If you do not repent I will cut off your feet and hands and then crucify you". However, they were not afraid of the threats and were willing to die for their faith. In the end Fir'aun carried out his cruel threat.

Fir'aun realised that Prophet Musa (A) posed a threat to his authority and decided to kill him. However, from his own court one of his advisers warned him against this action, saying, "If you think that Musa has made a false claim it will not harm you but himself. But if he speaks the truth, his Lord's Wrath will befall you".

This advice did not please Fir'aun and he increased his oppression of the Bani Israa'il and tried to intimidate Prophet Musa (A) and his followers.

In the meantime, Allah commanded Prophet Musa (A) to warn Fir'aun that Divine punishment would descend on him and his people if they continued in their ways. Fir'aun was under the spell of his own power and did not heed this warning. Soon the country was hit by famine. Swarms of locusts ate away the crops. The river Nile flooded its banks causing great destruction. The people were afflicted with lice and tumours.



When these calamities befell the people they rushed to Prophet Musa (A) asking him to pray for their relief and promised to embrace his religion. But when they were cured and the situation improved, they returned to their idol worship.

Finally the grace period that Allah had granted Fir'aun and his people came to an end. The Holy Qur'an says:

[We commanded Musa, "Journey by night with Our creatures, and strike a dry path for them through the sea. Do not fear being overtaken by Fir'aun nor have dread of any thing". Fir'aun followed them with his army, but the sea overpowered and engulfed them. Fir'aun had led his people astray and did not rightly guide them.

Ta Ha, 20 : 77 - 79]



Prophet Musa (A) gathered the people of Bani Israa'il and departed with them for Palestine. Fir'aun learnt of their escape and followed them with a huge army. When the Bani Israa'il reached the Red Sea they saw Fir'aun approaching and were sure they were going to be killed. However, Prophet Musa (A) struck the

waters of the sea with his staff and the waters parted, making a dry path. The people rushed through and crossed safely. When Fir'aun saw the path he entered the sea at the head of his army. But while he was in the middle of the sea the waters suddenly closed around him and his men.

In the final moments of his life Fir'aun recognised the Power and Greatness of Allah and he desperately offered his repentance saying. "I solemnly declare that there is no god but the Lord of Musa, and I am one of the believers". However, it was too little too late because once the Curse of Allah takes its course it is futile to ask for forgiveness.

Fir'aun and his people drowned under the deep sea and Allah caused their dead bodies to be thrown onto the shore. The preserved body of Fir'aun can be seen in the Cairo museum even today, a lasting lesson for mankind.

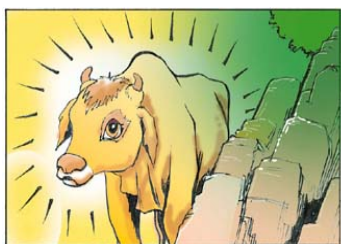
LESSON 16: PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 3

The people of Bani Israa'il had been rescued from Fir'aun by Prophet Musa (A) and now they followed him to their promised homeland in Palestine. When they had come some way from Egypt, they came to a place where the people worshipped idols. This reminded them of their days in Egypt and they asked Prophet Musa (A) if they could also have one idol for themselves.

How soon had the Bani Israa'il forgotten Allah and His favours! They had seen the tragic end of Fir'aun and yet had not learnt from it. Prophet Musa (A) addressed them harshly, reminding them about their covenant with Allah. The people were ashamed of their conduct and promised that they would not make the mistake again.

Prophet Musa (A) had promised the Bani Israa'il that once they left Egypt he would bring to them a Divine Book for their guidance. Now that Fir'aun was dead, Prophet Musa (A) prayed to Allah for that Book. Allah commanded him to come to Mount Sinai and pass thirty nights there. The Holy Qur'an says:

[We made an appointment of thirty nights with Musa to which we added ten more, so the term set by the Lord was completed in forty nights. Musa said to Haroon, his brother, "Deputise for me among my people. Act rightly and do not follow the path of the mischief-makers". A'raaf, 7 : 142]



When Prophet Musa (A) returned to his people he had with him the Tawrat, with the Divine revelations inscribed on tablets of stone. However, a strange sight greeted him. In his absence, a man called Samiri had made a golden calf by collecting gold from the people of Bani Israa'il. Then he had sprinkled

into its mouth some dust that he had collected from under the feet of the angel Jibraeel (A), who he had seen on the day that Fir'aun was drowned. After the addition of the dust, the calf used to make a sound and the people began to worship it.



The sight of his people worshipping a calf enraged Prophet Musa (A). He put the Tablets on the ground and furiously caught hold of his brother Prophet Haroon (A) and demanded, **"Why did you let the people of Bani Israa'il go astray and why did you not prevent them from this ignoble act?"** Prophet Haroon (A) explained that the people had ignored his guidance and he had not wanted to use force and cause division amongst them.

Gradually Prophet Musa's (A) anger subsided and he addressed the Bani Israa'il saying, **"O people! Do you not know that Allah promised you that if you remained steadfast in your faith He would bestow upon you happiness and prosperity? Do you wish to incur Allah's displeasure?"**

The people blamed Samiri for misguiding them and repented of their actions. Prophet Musa (A) urged them to devote themselves to the obedience of Allah and sincerely ask for His forgiveness. He then got the golden calf melted and threw every trace of it in the sea. Meanwhile, Samiri was seized with an illness that made him unable to bear the company of people. He passed the rest of his life living in the woods like a wild animal.

After a long journey, the Bani Israa'il finally came near the Holy Land of Baytul Muqaddas in Palestine. The Holy Qur'an says:

[When Musa told his people, "Recall Allah's favours to you. He made Messengers and kings out of your own people and gave you what He had not given others. Enter the Sacred promised land. Do not return to disbelief lest you become losers". They said, "Musa, a strong race of people is living there. We shall never go there unless they leave the land first. Ma'idah, 5 : 20 - 22]

The many years spent under Fir'aun's oppression had robbed the people of Bani Israa'il of their self-respect and courage. They were frightened to approach Palestine and face the forces of the local people. Despite Prophet Musa's (A) attempts to persuade them, they refused to move into Palestine. Instead, they said to him, **"You and your Lord should go there and not we. We will stay away while you fight with the rulers and the people of Palestine. After the land is cleared of people, we will walk onto it".**

Prophet Musa (A) could not convince his people and gave it up, praying to Allah for a solution. As a result of their disobedience, Allah condemned the Bani Israa'il so that for forty years they remained in the wilderness, wandering without a homeland in the woods and deserts.

During these forty years a new generation of stronger and more courageous people replaced the older demoralised one. Prophet Musa (A) and Prophet Haroon (A) passed away, but Yusha' bin Nun, a successor of Prophet Musa (A), led the Bani Israa'il and finally conquered Palestine. However, the faith of most of them was weak and time and time again they disobeyed Allah's commands. As a result Allah has cursed them in the Holy Qur'an as follows:

***[... And they drew on themselves the Wrath from Allah, because they used to reject the signs of Allah and kill His Apostles unjustly; because they disobeyed and transgressed.
Baqarah, 2 : 61 (Part)]***

LESSON 17: PROPHET ISA (A) - PART 1

Prophet Isa (A) was the son of Bibi Maryam (A), daughter of Imran. She was from the descendants of Prophet Dawood (A). Just before Bibi Maryam (A) was born, her mother prayed to Allah to grant her a child whom she would dedicate to the service of the Holy Mosque in Baytul Muqaddas. Her prayer was granted and although she had expected to have a son, she kept her promise and delivered Bibi Maryam (A) to the trustees of Baytul Muqaddas. They decided that Prophet Zakariya (A) would bring up the child. Her story and that of her blessed son Prophet Isa (A) has been recorded in the beautiful and inimitable style of the Holy Qur'an in Suratu Maryam.

When Bibi Maryam (A) came of age, Prophet Zakariya (A) built her a special chamber where she lived and worshipped. When he went to visit her he found that she always had food. Prophet Zakariya (A) asked her where the food came from and she said that it came from the Grace of Allah, Who always provides for the ones He loves.

One day while she was busy in her worship, Bibi Maryam (A) was startled to see a young man suddenly appear before her. She was scared but the man said, "Do not be frightened, I am the angel Jibraeel and have brought to you the glad news that Almighty Allah is soon going to bless you with a son. He will be great in this world and in the hereafter and will speak while still in his cradle." Maryam was dismayed and asked, "How can this be possible when no man has ever touched me?" Jibraeel (A) said, "Allah has Power over all things."

Soon after the angel had left, Bibi Maryam (A) felt the signs of pregnancy. She was puzzled at the unnatural occurrence and also worried about how she would explain the baby to the people. Within nine hours she felt the pain of labour and managed to go out and rest under an old date-palm tree where Prophet Isa (A) was born. Things had happened so quickly and despair she cried, "**Would that I had died and been forgotten before all this had happened!**"

The Holy Qur'an says:

[Then (a voice) called out to her from beneath her, "Do not grieve, your Lord has caused a stream (to flow) from beneath you. And shake towards you the trunk of the palm-tree, it will drop on you fresh ripe dates. Then eat and drink..... Maryam, 19 : 24 - 26]



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Thus consoled, she regained her confidence and returned to Baytul Muqaddas with her baby in her arms. The Jews who saw her were surprised and began to accuse her saying that she had acted in a shameful manner while her parents had not been immoral people. She did not reply, but merely pointed at her baby.

The Holy Qur'an says:

[But she pointed unto him. They said, "How can we speak to one who is a child in the cradle?" He (Isa) said, "Verily I am a servant of Allah. He has given me a Book and made me a Prophet. And He has made me blessed wherever I am and He has enjoined on me prayer and poor-rate (Zakaat) for as long as I live. And (to be) dutiful to my mother and He has not made me insolent ..."

Maryam 19 : 29 - 31]

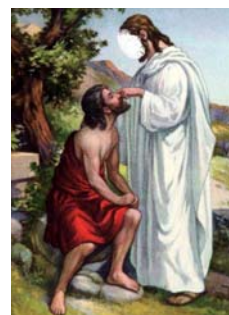
The miracle of Prophet Isa (A) speaking to them from his cradle silenced the critics and left them astounded. The fame of the baby grew and many came from all over the country to see him and pay tribute to him.

The Jewish emperor, Herodotus, learnt about the birth of Prophet Isa (A) and was immediately concerned about the threat to his power. He thus plotted to kill Prophet Isa (A) to protect himself from any future trouble. However, Bibi Maryam (A) learnt of the danger to her son and she left with him for Egypt.



In Egypt, Prophet Isa (A) lived with his mother until he was 30 years old. Then he received the command of Allah to begin his mission and the Divine Book, Injeel, was revealed to him. Thus Prophet Isa (A) returned to Baytul Muqaddas to invite the Jews to the true religion of Allah.

As proof of his Divine appointment, Prophet Isa (A) possessed certain miracles. He could raise the dead to life, restore the eyesight of the blind and cure the lepers. These remarkable powers attracted the Jews to him and some became believers. The rest of them became his deadly enemies because their religious leaders encouraged them to oppose the Prophet who had brought message that superseded that of Prophet Musa (A).



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(A)

From amongst the few who has embraced the faith, Prophet Isa selected twelve as his apostles. These men learnt directly from Prophet Isa (A) and he gave them authority to preach to the people according to the laws laid down in the Injeel.

Thus began the mission of one of the greatest Prophets of Allah. Day by day, his followers increased in number but his popularity made the Jews hate him even more. Despite their efforts to stop people from following the new faith, they were helpless against the Will of Allah.

LESSON 18: PROPHET ISA (A) - PART 2

Prophet Isa (A) and his twelve disciples went from place to place, in towns and villages, inviting people to believe in One God and teaching them the Divine commandments contained in the Injeel.



The disciples were pious and virtuous men, but one day they asked Prophet Isa (A) to show them a Sign of Allah so that they could experience first hand a direct contact with Him. Prophet Isa (A) replied that if they truly had faith they should cultivate in themselves Taqwa, which means being mindful of the commands of Allah and being afraid of His Wrath. However, they insisted, saying that they wanted to reassure themselves and become totally convinced of the existence of Allah and of the truthfulness of Prophet Isa (A).

They said, "**O Isa, does your Lord not possess enough power to send food for us from heaven?**" At last Prophet Isa (A) turned to Allah to ask Him to grant their wish. The Holy Qur'an says:

[When Isa prayed, "Lord, send us a table full of food from the heavens so that it will make a feast for us and for those who are yet to come in this world as an evidence from You. Give us sustenance, for You are the best Provider." Allah replied, "I am sending it to you but if anyone of you turns back to disbelief, I will make him suffer a torment that no one has ever suffered." Ma'idah, 5 : 114,115]

When the food came, it served to increase the faith of the disciples. Many people who witnessed this miracle embraced the religion immediately. However, the activities of Prophet Isa (A) caused a great stir amongst the Jews, who felt that their own religion was being threatened. They were enraged that his laws were different from those laid down in the Tawrat and that he did not consider Saturday as a holy day. They accused him of causing disruptions in their community with his magic. They refused to recognise him as a Messenger of Allah just like Prophet Musa (A), and they began to plot against him.

The Jews finally decided to kill Prophet Isa (A) and set about trying to find him. They caught and interrogated one of his disciples, whose name was Shamoon as-Safa (Simon Peter), but he gave them no information as to the whereabouts of Prophet Isa (A). Then they came across another disciple, Yahuda (Judas). This man betrayed Prophet Isa (A) after he was bribed with thirty pieces of silver.

The Jews had decided to arrest Prophet Isa (A) and crucify him by nailing his hands and feet onto a wooden cross. This was a very painful and slow way of execution and the victim usually suffered a great deal before he died. When Prophet Isa (A) heard that the Jews planned to arrest him he took shelter in a vacant house. Yahuda knew this and he led the Jews to the house.

Prophet Isa (A) was a great Sign of Allah. His birth had been in remarkable circumstances and his life was also destined to be extraordinary. At the time when his life was in danger, he was raised by Allah to the heavens.

Meanwhile, Yahuda entered the house but found it empty. Allah caused the features of this treacherous disciple to change so that he exactly resembled Prophet Isa (A). He came out of the house to report to the Jews, and was shocked when they seized him and dragged him away. Despite his protests, he was crucified. The Jews and even the Christians thus say that Prophet Isa (A) was killed on the cross but the Holy Qur'an says about the Jews:

[That they said (boastfully), "Verily we killed the Messiah, Isa son of Mary, the Apostle of God."; but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it was made to appear to them (that they had). And those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge. They only pursue a conjecture. They certainly did not kill him. Nay, Allah raised (lifted) him up to Himself; and Allah is Mighty, Wise.
Nisa, 4 : 157,158]



According to a prophecy of the Holy Prophet (S), when our 12th Holy Imam (A) will re-appear, Prophet Isa (A) will descend from the heavens and offer prayers behind him. The Christian Era (A.D.) dates from the birth of Prophet Isa (A). He was only 33 years old when he was raised to the heavens.

LESSON 19 : PROPHET LUT (A)

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

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

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

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

Surah al-A'raaf, 7:80-82

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

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

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

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

However, they did not touch their meals and their strange behaviour frightened Prophet Ibrahim (A). At this point, the angels introduced themselves and said that they were on their way to punish the people of Lut. However, they also informed him of the good news that he would soon be blessed them with a son, (Prophet) Ishaq (A), and a grandson, (Prophet) Ya'qub (A).

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

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

Hud, 11:74-76

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

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

Ankabut, 29:33-35

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

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

Hud, 11:78,79



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

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

Hijr, 15:73-75

LESSON 20: PROPHET YA'QUB (A)

Allah says the following about Prophet Ibrahim (A) in the Holy Qur'an:

And We bestowed on him Ishaq, and Ya'qub as an additional gift, and made them righteous. And We made them leaders to guide (the people) by Our command; and We inspired them to perform good deeds and observe their moral obligations and pay Zakaat; and they obeyed Us.

Anbiya, 21:72,73

Prophet Ishaq (A) was the younger son of Prophet Ibrahim (A), by his wife Sarah. Prophet Ishaq (A) married his uncle's daughter Rafqa, and they were blessed with twin sons, Isu and Prophet Ya'qub (A).

Prophet Ya'qub (A) was much loved by his parents and this made his twin brother jealous. To prevent trouble between the brothers, Prophet Ishaq (A) advised Prophet Ya'qub (A) to migrate from their home in Palestine to Fidaan Aram, where his maternal uncle Labaan lived. In Fidaan Aram he went into the service of his uncle. He later married his uncle's daughter Lay'ah.

After the period of service was over, Prophet Ya'qub (A) left with family and property to return to Palestine. In Palestine, Prophet Ya'qub (A) sent presents to his brother to indicate good-will, and brother accepted them and welcomed him warmly. In time, the grudge between the brothers was forgotten.



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Prophet Ya'qub (A) decided to make his home in the land of Kanaan and Allah blessed him with twelve sons. His twelve sons became famously known as the "Grandchildren of Ishaq"

His second wife, Raheel died early and therefore Prophet Ya'qub (A) always regarded her sons Binyameen and especially Prophet Yusuf (A) with particular affection. His love for Prophet Yusuf (A) was later to become a source of jealousy for his older sons who determined to do away with their younger brother.



But Allah chose Prophet Yusuf (A) to be His Messenger and protected him from the evil intentions of his brothers.

TAREEKH SYLLABUS - CLASS 11

Lesson Topic

- LESSON 1 PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 1**
- LESSON 2 PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 2**
- LESSON 3 PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 3**
- LESSON 4 PROPHET ISA (A) - PART 1**
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- LESSON 6 EUROPE'S DEBT TO ISLAM**
- LESSON 7 THE BANI UMAYYAH - PART 1**
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LESSON 1: PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 1

During the reign of Prophet Yusuf (A), he invited his father Prophet Ya'qub (A) and his family to come to live in Egypt. The family settled there and in time grew to a large number and they were called the Bani Israa'il.

After several centuries, a man called Fir'aun came to power in Egypt. He was alarmed to see that the Bani Israa'il had become so many that they might pose a threat to the future security of the state. From that time onwards he made life for the Bani Israa'il difficult. Matters became particularly bad for them when a royal astrologer informed Fir'aun that a boy from the Bani Israa'il would soon be born and at whose hands Fir'aun's kingdom would be destroyed. On hearing this, the cruel king ordered that every male child born to the Bani Israa'il should be killed.



However, Allah had decided that Prophet Musa (A) was to be born in such a dangerous environment and He arranged affairs to ensure the safety of His messenger. When Prophet Musa (A) was born, his mother hid him to protect him from the king's soldiers. There was a great danger that the child would be discovered at any moment. At this time, Allah inspired her to put her baby in a water proof box and cast him into the waters of the Nile. She did this, and then sent her daughter to follow the little "boat" and see where it went.

The box floated towards the palace of Fir'aun, where his men fished it out and brought the baby to him. He wanted to kill it immediately, suspecting that it might be a child of the Bani Israa'il, but his wife Aasiya, who was a pious woman, stopped him. They were childless, so she asked him to adopt the child.

Fir'aun agreed to his wife's request and then summoned some women to breastfeed the crying child. However, the baby refused milk from all the women who came to feed him. In the meantime the sister came forward and offered to introduce a woman who she was certain the child would accept. Fir'aun asked for the woman to be summoned, and the girl brought her mother to the palace. The child immediately went to its real mother and thus Allah reunited mother and child in the very palace of Fir'aun.



As the years passed, Prophet Musa (A) grew up strong and healthy. He had the knowledge, wisdom and manners that Allah grants all His Prophets. Prophet Musa (A) resolved to end the oppression of all people under Fir'aun and he began by trying to help his own people, the Bani Israa'il. They realised that Allah had answered their prayers and their saviour would one day free them from the tyranny of Fir'aun.

Once Prophet Musa (A) saw two men fighting. One was from Bani Israa'il, and shouted for help. Prophet Musa (A) came to his rescue and struck the other man a single blow and unwittingly killed him. Later, he learned that his action had been seen by one of Fir'aun's men and he wondered whether to leave the city. A warning from a friend that he was being hunted strengthened his resolve and he left the city secretly.

Prophet Musa (A) walked for a long time without a fixed destination and finally reached Madyan. Here, he rested next to a well and saw that the shepherds had gathered to water their sheep. Two maidens were standing away from the crowd of men, waiting their turn.

Prophet Musa (A) went forward to help them draw the water. The maidens then departed, their work finished. However, one of them returned, informing Prophet Musa (A) that her father wished to thank him personally for his help, and wanted to compensate him for his trouble. He went with her to her house and discovered that her father was Prophet Shuaib (A).

Prophet Musa (A) narrated the account of his trouble in Egypt and Prophet Shuaib (A) assured him that he was safe in Madyan. He then offered him a job as a shepherd on the recommendation of his daughter, Safura. He said that he would allow Prophet Musa (A) to marry Safura as long as he worked for him for 8 years. If he wished to work for longer, it would be his decision.

Prophet Musa (A) thus married Safura and worked for her father for 10 years. At the end of this time, he left for Egypt with his wife and a few sheep that he had received as a gift. It was severe winter time and Prophet Musa (A) lost his way in the night.



Suddenly he saw a fire in the distance. He asked his wife to remain where she was and headed for the fire, thinking to bring some of it back to give them relief from the bitter cold.

When he reached Mount Sinai he saw that the flames were coming from a green tree but there was no one present. While Prophet Musa (A) looked around in surprise, he suddenly heard a voice saying, "O Musa, I am your Lord! Take off your shoes for you have stepped on to the sacred valley of Tuwa."

As Prophet Musa (A) obeyed, he heard the voice ask him to throw his staff onto the ground. At once it changed into a serpent, scaring him. He was then commanded to lift the snake without fear and as he did so, it changed back into a stick.



Next he was commanded to put his hand under his armpit. When he drew it out again, his hand glowed with a dazzling light, brilliant like the sun. The Divine voice said to him, "O Musa! These are the two great Signs of your Lord. Go back to Fir'aun and his people and invite them towards your Lord!"

Prophet Musa (A) requested that his brother, Prophet Haroon (A) accompany him in his mission because he spoke with a fluent voice. This request was granted and thus Prophet Musa (A) came back to Egypt.

LESSON 2: PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 2

When Prophet Musa (A) returned to Egypt from Madyan he first went to meet his mother, brother and sister. He informed his brother Prophet Haroon (A) that their mission had begun and they prepared themselves to go to the court of Fir'aun.

Prophet Musa (A) told Fir'aun that he was a Messenger of Allah and that he had brought clear proofs that he was speaking the truth. Fir'aun rejected this claim and then reminded Prophet Musa (A) of the favours that he bestowed on him in his infancy. He also accused him of having run away after committing a murder.

Prophet Musa (A) argued that he had only been raised away from his own tribe because his mother had been forced to abandon him in fear of his life. He also stated that he had not intentionally killed any man and then reminded Fir'aun of the message he had brought from Allah. Their conversation is recorded in the Holy Qur'an as follows:

[He (Fir'aun) said, "If you will take a lord besides me, I will most certainly imprison you". He (Musa) said, "What! even if I bring to you something manifest". He said, "Bring it then if you are one of the truthful ones". So he cast down his staff and lo! it suddenly become an obvious serpent. And he drew forth his hand, and lo! it appeared white to the onlookers. Shuara, 26 : 29 - 33]



These miracles frightened Fir'aun and he turned to his ministers for advice. They assured him that Prophet Musa (A) and Prophet Haroon (A) were great magicians and that their own magicians could easily perform such tricks. Fir'aun called all the great magicians and tricksters in the land to his court. When they were told what had to be done, they were not worried. They threw pieces of rope on the ground and these cords began to wriggle like snakes. But when Prophet Musa (A) cast his staff down his serpent ate all the pieces of rope. The magicians immediately realised that they were witnessing a miracle.

They were experts in trickery but they knew that Prophet Musa (A) was not demonstrating a trick and immediately threw themselves in prostration saying, "We believe in the faith of Musa".

Their actions enraged Fir'aun who warned, "You have surrendered without my permission while he is only a greater magician than you. If you do not repent I will cut off your feet and hands and then crucify you". However, they were not afraid of the threats and were willing to die for their faith. In the end Fir'aun carried out his cruel threat.

Fir'aun realised that Prophet Musa (A) posed a threat to his authority and decided to kill him. However, from his own court one of his advisers warned him against this action, saying, "If you think that Musa has made a false claim it will not harm you but himself. But if he speaks the truth, his Lord's Wrath will befall you".

This advice did not please Fir'aun and he increased his oppression of the Bani Israa'il

and tried to intimidate Prophet Musa (A) and his followers. In the meantime, Allah commanded Prophet Musa (A) to warn Fir'aun that Divine punishment would descend on him and his people if they continued in their ways. Fir'aun was under the spell of his own power and did not heed this warning. Soon the country was hit by famine. Swarms of locusts ate away the crops. The river Nile flooded its banks causing great destruction. The people were afflicted with lice and tumours.



When these calamities befell the people they rushed to Prophet Musa (A) asking him to pray for their relief and promised to embrace his religion. But when they were cured and the situation improved, they returned to their idol worship.

Finally the grace period that Allah had granted Fir'aun and his people came to an end. The Holy Qur'an says:

[We commanded Musa, "Journey by night with Our creatures, and strike a dry path for them through the sea. Do not fear being overtaken by Fir'aun nor have dread of any thing". Fir'aun followed them with his army, but the sea overpowered and engulfed them. Fir'aun had led his people astray and did not rightly guide them.

Ta Ha, 20 : 77 - 79]



Prophet Musa (A) gathered the people of Bani Israa'il and departed with them for Palestine. Fir'aun learnt of their escape and followed them with a huge army. When the Bani Israa'il reached the Red Sea they saw Fir'aun approaching and were sure they were going to be killed. However, Prophet

Musa (A) struck the waters of the sea with his staff and the waters parted, making a dry path. The people rushed through and crossed safely. When Fir'aun saw the path he entered the sea at the head of his army. But while he was in the middle of the sea the waters suddenly closed around him and his men.

In the final moments of his life Fir'aun recognised the Power and Greatness of Allah and he desperately offered his repentance saying. "I solemnly declare that there is no god but the Lord of Musa, and I am one of the believers". However, it was too little too late because once the Curse of Allah takes its course it is futile to ask for forgiveness.

Fir'aun and his people drowned under the deep sea and Allah caused their dead bodies to be thrown onto the shore. The preserved body of Fir'aun can be seen in the Cairo museum even today, a lasting lesson for mankind.

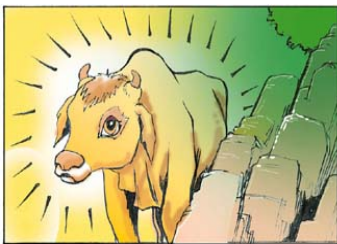
LESSON 3: PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 3

The people of Bani Israa'il had been rescued from Fir'aun by Prophet Musa (A) and now they followed him to their promised homeland in Palestine. When they had come some way from Egypt, they came to a place where the people worshipped idols. This reminded them of their days in Egypt and they asked Prophet Musa (A) if they could also have one idol for themselves.

How soon had the Bani Israa'il forgotten Allah and His favours! They had seen the tragic end of Fir'aun and yet had not learnt from it. Prophet Musa (A) addressed them harshly, reminding them about their covenant with Allah. The people were ashamed of their conduct and promised that they would not make the mistake again.

Prophet Musa (A) had promised the Bani Israa'il that once they left Egypt he would bring to them a Divine Book for their guidance. Now that Fir'aun was dead, Prophet Musa (A) prayed to Allah for that Book. Allah commanded him to come to Mount Sinai and pass thirty nights there. The Holy Qur'an says:

[We made an appointment of thirty nights with Musa to which we added ten more, so the term set by the Lord was completed in forty nights. Musa said to Haroon, his brother, "Deputise for me among my people. Act rightly and do not follow the path of the mischief-makers". A'raaf, 7 : 142]



When Prophet Musa (A) returned to his people he had with him the Tawrat, with the Divine revelations inscribed on tablets of stone. However, a strange sight greeted him. In his absence, a man called Samiri had made a golden calf by collecting gold from the people of Bani Israa'il. Then he

had sprinkled into its mouth some dust that he had collected from under the feet of the angel Jibraeel (A), who he had seen on the day that Fir'aun was drowned. After the addition of the dust, the calf used to make a sound and the people began to worship it.



The sight of his people worshipping a calf enraged Prophet Musa (A). He put the Tablets on the ground and furiously caught hold of his brother Prophet Haroon (A) and demanded, **"Why did you let the people of Bani Israa'il go astray and why did you not prevent them from this ignoble act?"** Prophet Haroon (A) explained that the people had ignored his guidance and he had not wanted to use force and cause division amongst them.

Gradually Prophet Musa's (A) anger subsided and he addressed the Bani Israa'il saying, **"O people! Do you not know that Allah promised you that if you remained steadfast in your faith He would bestow upon you happiness and prosperity? Do you wish to incur Allah's displeasure?"**

The people blamed Samiri for misguiding them and repented of their actions. Prophet Musa (A) urged them to devote themselves to the obedience of Allah and sincerely ask for His forgiveness. He then got the golden calf melted and threw every trace of it in the sea. Meanwhile, Samiri was seized with an illness that made him unable to bear the company of people. He passed the rest of his life living in the woods like a wild animal.

After a long journey, the Bani Israa'il finally came near the Holy Land of Baytul Muqaddas in Palestine. The Holy Qur'an says:

[When Musa told his people, "Recall Allah's favours to you. He made Messengers and kings out of your own people and gave you what He had not given others. Enter the Sacred promised land. Do not return to disbelief lest you become losers". They said, "Musa, a strong race of people is living there. We shall never go there unless they leave the land first. Ma'idah, 5 : 20 - 22]

The many years spent under Fir'aun's oppression had robbed the people of Bani Israa'il of their self-respect and courage. They were frightened to approach Palestine and face the forces of the local people. Despite Prophet Musa's (A) attempts to persuade them, they refused to move into Palestine. Instead, they said to him, **"You and your Lord should go there and not we. We will stay away while you fight with the rulers and the people of Palestine. After the land is cleared of people, we will walk onto it".**

Prophet Musa (A) could not convince his people and gave it up, praying to Allah for a solution. As a result of their disobedience, Allah condemned the Bani Israa'il so that for forty years they remained in the wilderness, wandering without a homeland in the woods and deserts.

During these forty years a new generation of stronger and more courageous people replaced the older demoralised one. Prophet Musa (A) and Prophet Haroon (A) passed away, but Yusha' bin Nun, a successor of Prophet Musa (A), led the Bani Israa'il and finally conquered Palestine. However, the faith of most of them was weak and time and time again they disobeyed Allah's commands. As a result Allah has cursed them in the Holy Qur'an as follows:

***[... And they drew on themselves the Wrath from Allah, because they used to reject the signs of Allah and kill His Apostles unjustly; because they disobeyed and transgressed.
Baqarah, 2 : 61 (Part)]***

LESSON 4: PROPHET ISA (A) - PART 1

Prophet Isa (A) was the son of Bibi Maryam (A), daughter of Imran. She was from the descendants of Prophet Dawood (A). Just before Bibi Maryam (A) was born, her mother prayed to Allah to grant her a child whom she would dedicate to the service of the Holy Mosque in Baytul Muqaddas. Her prayer was granted and although she had expected to have a son, she kept her promise and delivered Bibi Maryam (A) to the trustees of Baytul Muqaddas. They decided that Prophet Zakariya (A) would bring up the child. Her story and that of her blessed son Prophet Isa (A) has been recorded in the beautiful and inimitable style of the Holy Qur'an in Suratu Maryam.

When Bibi Maryam (A) came of age, Prophet Zakariya (A) built her a special chamber where she lived and worshipped. When he went to visit her he found that she always had food. Prophet Zakariya (A) asked her where the food came from and she said that it came from the Grace of Allah, Who always provides for the ones He loves.

One day while she was busy in her worship, Bibi Maryam (A) was startled to see a young man suddenly appear before her. She was scared but the man said, "Do not be frightened, I am the angel Jibraeel and have brought to you the glad news that Almighty Allah is soon going to bless you with a son. He will be great in this world and in the hereafter and will speak while still in his cradle." Maryam was dismayed and asked, "How can this be possible when no man has ever touched me?" Jibraeel (A) said, "Allah has Power over all things."

Soon after the angel had left, Bibi Maryam (A) felt the signs of pregnancy. She was puzzled at the unnatural occurrence and also worried about how she would explain the baby to the people. Within nine hours she felt the pain of labour and managed to go out and rest under an old date-palm tree where Prophet Isa (A) was born. Things had happened so quickly and in despair she cried, "**Would that I had died and been forgotten before all this had happened!**"



The Holy Qur'an says:

[Then (a voice) called out to her from beneath her, "Do not grieve, your Lord has caused a stream (to flow) from beneath you. And shake towards you the trunk of the palm-tree, it will drop on you fresh ripe dates. Then eat and drink..... Maryam, 19 : 24 - 26]



Thus consoled, she regained her confidence and returned to Baytul Muqaddas with her baby in her arms. The Jews who saw her were surprised and began to accuse her saying that she had acted in a shameful manner while her parents had not been immoral people. She did not reply, but merely pointed at her baby.

The Holy Qur'an says:

[But she pointed unto him. They said, "How can we speak to one who is a child in the cradle?" He (Isa) said, "Verily I am a servant of Allah. He has given me a Book and made me a Prophet. And He has made me blessed wherever I am and He has enjoined on me prayer and poor-rate (Zakaat) for as long as I live. And (to be) dutiful to my mother and He has not made me insolent ..."

Maryam 19 : 29 - 31]

The miracle of Prophet Isa (A) speaking to them from his cradle silenced the critics and left them astounded. The fame of the baby grew and many came from all over the country to see him and pay tribute to him.

The Jewish emperor, Herodotus, learnt about the birth of Prophet Isa (A) and was immediately concerned about the threat to his power. He thus plotted to kill Prophet Isa (A) to protect himself from any future trouble. However, Bibi Maryam (A) learnt of the danger to her son and she left with him for Egypt.



In Egypt, Prophet Isa (A) lived with his mother until he was 30 years old. Then he received the command of Allah to begin his mission and the Divine Book, Injeel, was revealed to him. Thus Prophet Isa (A) returned to Baytul Muqaddas to invite the Jews to the true religion of Allah.

As proof of his Divine appointment, Prophet Isa (A) possessed certain miracles. He could raise the dead to life, restore the eyesight of the blind and cure the lepers. These remarkable powers attracted the Jews to him and some became believers. The rest of them became his deadly enemies because their religious leaders encouraged them to oppose the Prophet who had brought a message that superseded that of Prophet Musa (A).



From amongst the few who has embraced the faith, Prophet Isa (A) selected twelve as his apostles. These men learnt directly from Prophet Isa (A) and he gave them authority to preach to the people according to the laws laid down in the Injeel.

Thus began the mission of one of the greatest Prophets of Allah. Day by day, his followers increased in number but his popularity made the Jews hate him even more. Despite their efforts to stop people from following the new faith, they were helpless against the Will of Allah.

LESSON 5: PROPHET ISA (A) - PART 2

Prophet Isa (A) and his twelve disciples went from place to place, in towns and villages, inviting people to believe in One God and teaching them the Divine commandments contained in the Injeel.



The disciples were pious and virtuous men, but one day they asked Prophet Isa (A) to show them a Sign of Allah so that they could experience first hand a direct contact with Him. Prophet Isa (A) replied that if they truly had faith they should cultivate in themselves Taqwa, which means being mindful of the commands of Allah and being afraid of His Wrath. However, they insisted, saying that they wanted to reassure themselves and become totally convinced of the existence of Allah and of the truthfulness of Prophet Isa (A).

They said, "**O Isa, does your Lord not possess enough power to send food for us from heaven?**" At last Prophet Isa (A) turned to Allah to ask Him to grant their wish. The Holy Qur'an says:

[When Isa prayed, "Lord, send us a table full of food from the heavens so that it will make a feast for us and for those who are yet to come in this world as an evidence from You. Give us sustenance, for You are the best Provider." Allah replied, "I am sending it to you but if anyone of you turns back to disbelief, I will make him suffer a torment that no one has ever suffered."
Ma'idah, 5 : 114,115]

When the food came, it served to increase the faith of the disciples. Many people who witnessed this miracle embraced the religion immediately. However, the activities of Prophet Isa (A) caused a great stir amongst the Jews, who felt that their own religion was being threatened. They were enraged that his laws were different from those laid down in the Tawrat and that he did not consider Saturday as a holy day. They accused him of causing disruptions in their community with his magic. They refused to recognise him as a Messenger of Allah just like Prophet Musa (A), and they began to plot against him.

The Jews finally decided to kill Prophet Isa (A) and set about trying to find him. They caught and interrogated one of his disciples, whose name was Shamoon as-Safa (Simon Peter), but he gave them no information as to the whereabouts of Prophet Isa (A). Then they came across another disciple, Yahuda (Judas). This man betrayed Prophet Isa (A) after he was bribed with thirty pieces of silver.

The Jews had decided to arrest Prophet Isa (A) and crucify him by nailing his hands and feet onto a wooden cross. This was a very painful and slow way of execution and the victim usually suffered a great deal before he died. When Prophet Isa (A) heard that the Jews planned to arrest him he took shelter in a vacant house. Yahuda knew this and he led the Jews to the house.

Prophet Isa (A) was a great Sign of Allah. His birth had been in remarkable circumstances and his life was also destined to be extraordinary. At the time when his life was in danger, he was raised by Allah to the heavens.

Meanwhile, Yahuda entered the house but found it empty. Allah caused the features of this treacherous disciple to change so that he exactly resembled Prophet Isa (A). He came out of the house to report to the Jews, and was shocked when they seized him and dragged him away. Despite his protests, he was crucified. The Jews and even the Christians thus say that Prophet Isa (A) was killed on the cross but the Holy Qur'an says about the Jews:

[That they said (boastfully), "Verily we killed the Messiah, Isa son of Mary, the Apostle of God."; but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it was made to appear to them (that they had). And those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge. They only pursue a conjecture. They certainly did not kill him. Nay, Allah raised (lifted) him up to Himself; and Allah is Mighty, Wise. Nisa, 4 : 157,158]



According to a prophecy of the Holy Prophet (S), when our 12th Holy Imam (A) will re-appear, Prophet Isa (A) will descend from the heavens and offer prayers behind him. The Christian Era (A.D.) dates from the birth of Prophet Isa (A). He was only 33 years old when he was raised to the heavens.

LESSON 6: EUROPE'S DEBT TO ISLAM

During the Middle Ages the Muslims were the leaders of the intellectual world. They were the pioneers in the various fields of knowledge and learning. Later when Europe embarked on its quest for learning, all its knowledge was derived from Islamic sources.

The Muslims Contribution to Knowledge.

The Muslims made a two fold contribution to knowledge. They preserved all learning of the ancient world in Arabic translation. They also made their own contributions. Islam produced the greatest scientists, the greatest physicians, the greatest philosophers, the greatest geographers and the greatest historians of the middle ages. Examples are, Jabir, Jahiz and Baytar in science; Omar Khayyam and Nasir-ud-Din Tusi in mathematics and astronomy.

In the Middle Ages, the Universities in the Muslim lands were the greatest centres of learning. These Universities, particularly those in Spain were attended by scholars in Europe.

Geography

The study of Geography began with the Prophet (S) himself. The Holy Qur'an enjoined the believers to travel on the earth and see the signs of Allah. This gave rise to the study of geography. Indeed, in the course of his travels, many of the observations that the Prophet (S) made, had been of considerable geographical interest.



History

The Holy Qur'an presented a new vision of history. It referred to history as a Sign of Allah, and wanted the faithful to learn from the history of the previous people. Right from the beginning, the Muslims developed a sense of history, and as they grew in power and made history, the discipline came to be developed by them as a science.

Philosophy

Islam revolutionised human thought and as such there is much in the Holy Qur'an and Hadith, which is the source material for philosophy. The Prophet (S) always encouraged the believers to make full use of their intellect in understanding the things around them.

Science

The Holy Qur'an says:

[... Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the differences of night and day are signs for men of understanding. (Ale Imran 3: 190)]



That awakened a spirit of enquiry among the Muslims. Indeed, during the Middle Ages, the Muslims were the leaders of the world in the matter of science. Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, and various scientific inventions, such as the Mariner's compass, the telescope etc., all came from the Muslims.

Astronomy

Under Islam, Allah was acknowledged as the sovereign of the earth, as well as of the entire universe.

That created among the Muslims an interest in astronomy. The Prophet (S) is credited with the miracle of splitting up the moon in two parts. That created in the Muslims the urge to promote the study of astronomy.



Medicine

Medicine began with the Prophet (S) himself. Islam enjoined cleanliness, and as such there is much in the Holy Qur'an which forms the basis of hygiene. The Prophet (S) said that to visit the sick was an act of piety. Medical care was thus promoted by the Muslims as a matter of religious obligation.



The Prophet (S) himself had considerable medical knowledge; in fact certain medical teachings are attributed to him which have been collected and annotated in a book entitled al Tibb al Nabawi (The Medicine of the Prophet).

Mathematics

Islam believed in the Day of Reckoning. Islam encouraged its believers to maintain proper accounts. Islam propounded the doctrine of Tauhid -unity of Allah in the midst of diversity. These factors were responsible for the promotion of mathematics among the Muslims.

$$3+2=5$$

ISLAM AND TRADE



The Holy Qur'an talked about trade in favourable terms. The Prophet (S) himself was a trader. Indeed, as the Muslim empire grew, the scope for trade increased accordingly. Foreign conquests brought more wealth to the Muslims; a lot of which was invested in trade. As the empire expanded, new cities were set up which consequently became important centres of trade and commerce.

Commercial Activities of the State

The Islamic states undertook commercial activities on a large scale. Caravan routes were improved; halting places were provided at convenient places along the caravan routes; there was free movement of goods within the empire from one region to another; and there were no inland levies. The Muslim cities had very well stocked markets and State regulation ensured stability in prices.

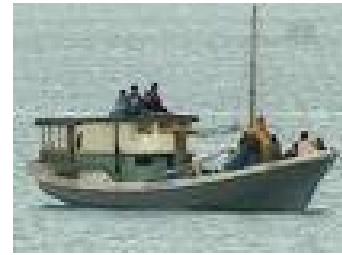


Muslim countries executed commercial treaties with non-Muslim states, which resulted in the Muslim traders dominating world trade.

An inland route led to Central Asia and China; known as the Silk Route. Another inland route led to Russia. A third route led to Constantinople and then to Eastern Europe. A route led to Afghanistan and then to India. Another route led from Egypt to Sudan. A route from Morocco led to Ghana and other countries of West Africa. From Spain a route led to France and the states of the Danube Valley.

Communications by Sea

The Mediterranean Sea was surrounded by Muslim countries on three sides, namely Syria, Africa and Spain. The Muslims went as far as China, Korea and Japan.



They established a colony at Canton in China. During the tenth century, an Arab colony sprang up near Bombay in India. The Muslim merchants had colonies on the east coast of Africa and they had commercial contacts with Madagascar and Zanzibar.

Imports/Exports



In the Middle Ages, the Muslim countries were the leading industrial and manufacturing countries of the world. They made paper, textiles, silk, glassware, carpets, tapestries, handicrafts, leather goods etc. All such goods were exported to the various countries in the east and the west. The Muslim merchants brought silk from China and spices from India. They



imported furs and timber from Europe, as well as slaves. These also came from Central Asia and Africa.

In Muslim society, merchants enjoyed a high social status; they had international contacts and commanded respect in foreign courts. They were also very popular throughout the world for their fair dealings.

Education

During the Middle Ages, the Muslims were the most advanced people in the world. While in Europe even the Kings could not read or write, in the Muslim countries, the common man could read and write. Educational institutions and libraries were to be found all over the Muslim empire. This thirst for knowledge then spread to the non-Muslim countries, who also began to set up various educational institutions and libraries etc.



LESSON 7: THE BANU UMAYYAH - PART 1

I. Introduction

The Banu Umayyah had been sworn enemies of the Banu Hashim since the time when Hashim, the forefather of our Prophet (S), had succeeded in banishing his evil half-brother Umayyah from Makkah.

The Banu Umayyah started tormenting the Prophet (S) immediately he began to spread Islam. Abu Sufyan was their leader. He led the wars of Badr and Uhud against the Muslims. During the battle of Uhud his wife Hind hired an assassin to kill Hamza, the uncle of the Prophet (S). After the murder, she located the body of Hamza, mutilated it, and chewed his liver. The children of this accursed couple were no less evil. After the death of the Prophet (S), Abu Sufyan tried to attain power by encouraging Imam Ali (A) to regain his right to Caliphate by spilling blood. Imam Ali (A), well aware of the hidden intent of Abu Sufyan, rejected his offer.



It was left to those who had stolen the rights of Imam Ali (A), namely Abu Bakr and Umar, to prepare the ground for the Banu Umayyah to come to power. Umar appointed Yazid, son of Abu Sufyan, as governor of Palestine and later, of Syria. When Yazid died, his younger brother, Mu'awiya became the ruler of Syria. Umar further strengthened the power base of the Banu Umayyah by arranging for Uthman to succeed him as Caliph. Uthman made sure that all the key posts in the Muslim empire were in the hands of his Banu Umayyah clan. Since then, the Banu Umayyah became the ultimate power throughout the Muslim lands and began to torture and harass the family and Shia of Imam Ali (A)

II. The Banu Umayyah Kings

1. Mu'awiya son of Abu Sufyan

When Imam Ali (A) was asked by all the Muslims to become Caliph in 35 A.H., one of the first things he did was to ask Mu'awiya to forego his governorship of Syria and give an account of his actions. Mu'awiya, however, wanted the Caliphate himself, and claimed that he was an independent authority and not under the Muslim state.

This led to the battle of Siffin, which came to an unsatisfactory conclusion in 37 A.H. Some of the factors leading to the success of Mu'awiya in Syria were the following:

- i) The excuse of revenge for the murder of Uthman.
- ii) The battle of Jamal led by Ayesha.
- iii) The uncompromising nature of Imam Ali's (A) faith.
- iv) The murder of Imam Ali (A) by Abdur Rahman ibne Muljam.
- v) The cunning and treacherous nature of Muawiya himself.

After the death of Imam Ali (A), Mu'awiya turned his attention to Imam Hasan (A). Just as his father had done, Imam Hasan (A) wrote to Mu'awiya telling him that the crimes he was committing against innocent Muslims were unacceptable. Imam Hasan (A) asked the Kufans to assist him in battle against Mu'awiya.

However, the Kufans were either bribed or threatened by Mu'awiya, and being very fickle people, they deserted Imam Hasan (A). At the gathering ground of Nukhayla, only 4,000 men turned out to fight and Imam Hasan (A) was forced to return to Kufa disappointed. To save the lives of the few sincere Muslims, Imam Hasan (A) had to sign a treaty with Mu'awiya.

Mu'awiya arranged the murder of Imam Hasan (A). He promised Ju'da binte Ash'ath, a wife of Imam Hasan (A), 100,000 dirhams and the hand of his son Yazid in marriage if she poisoned her husband. The cursed woman carried out the evil task and Imam Hasan (A) breathed his last on 7th Safar 50 A.H.

Muawiya, may Allah's Curse be on him always, finally died in Rajab of 60 A.H.

LESSON 8: THE BANI UMAYYAH - PART 2

The Bani Umayyah Kings - Cont'd

2. Yazid son of Muawiya

In 60 A.H. this devil declared himself ruler of all Muslims. Yazid was a man of extremely evil habits. He was a drunkard, gambler, womaniser and murderer. He only ruled for 3 years. In the first year he killed Imam Husain (A) and his companions in Karbala and made their women and children prisoners. During the second year he ordered his soldiers to enter Madina and do what they liked. As a result, 1,000 people were killed, including 700 close Companions of the Prophet (S). In addition 1,000 women were assaulted and forced to surrender their dignity to Yazid's men. In the third year, Yazid mounted an attack on the Ka'ba, aiming to destroy it with giant catapults.



Not content with committing crimes in Kerbala, Makka and Madina, Yazid appointed Ubaidullah ibne Ziyad as governor of Kufa with specific orders to hunt out and kill the Shia of Imam Ali (A). Ubaidullah carried out the orders of his master by imprisoning, exiling, hanging or amputating the limbs of the Shia. Yazid's rule ended with his death in 64 A.H. Before his death, he appointed his son Mu'awiya as his heir.

3. Mu'awiya the Second, son of Yazid.

Mu'awiya the Second was aware of the rights of the family of the Prophet (S) and of the terrible crimes committed by his own father and grandfather. He therefore told Imam Zainul Abideen (A) that he was transferring authority to him. His decision disgusted his mother so much that she told Muawiya, "I wish that I had discharged you as a miscarriage and never given birth to you." To this he replied, "I too, wish that that had been the case so that I would not be associated with Yazid, Muawiya and Abu Sufyan." Because of his refusal to continue in the way of his forefathers, Mu'awiya was soon poisoned and died only 4 months after coming to the throne.

4. Marwan bin Hakam

In 64 A.H. the line of kings of the Umayyad dynasty moved from the descendants of Abu Sufyan to those of Marwan. He ruled for only 9 months and during this time he was occupied in war against the group of Abu Sufyan on one hand and Abdullah ibne Zubayr on the other. As a result, he did not get much opportunity to persecute the Shia.

However, he continued the policy of cursing Imam Ali (A) from the pulpits. He also gave shelter to the killers of Imam Husain (A) who were being hunted now that Yazid was dead.

5. Abdul Malik bin Marwan

Abdul Malik succeeded his father in 65 A.H. and ruled for 21 years. He became the ruler of Syria while Abdullah ibne Zubayr took over Arabia. Between the two of them they managed to kill the two groups of people who had risen to take revenge for the murder of Imam Husain (A). The "Penitents" led by Shia like Sulayman bin Sard Khuzai'i were killed by Abdul Malik while the group led by Mukhtar was killed by ibne Zubayr. Abdul Malik finally managed to kill ibne Zubayr and take control of the whole Muslim Empire. One of the worst crimes he committed was to turn a blind eye to the activities of his governor, Hajjaj bin Yusuf. Hajjaj was the worst tyrant in the whole history of the Bani Umayyah. He was responsible for the deaths of 120,000 innocent people. He tortured and killed such notable companions of Imam Ali (A) like Qambar, Kumail bin Ziyad and Sa'id bin Jubayr. During this time it was safer for the Muslims to call themselves the enemies of Islam rather than the Shia of Imam Ali (A). Abdul Malik was so grateful for the services of Hajjaj that he gave him full control of Iraq and Arabia to do as he liked. When Hajjaj died, his prison contained 50,000 men and 30,000 women.

6. Walid bin Abdul Malik.

In 86 A.H. Walid succeeded his father Abdul Malik. Walid was a cruel tyrant who continued to favour Hajjaj and give him free rein. He dismissed the popular governor in Madina, Umar bin Abdul Aziz and put Khalid bin Abdullah in his place. Khalid was an unbeliever whose mother was a Christian. This man built a church for his mother behind the Ka'ba. He allowed Christians to keep Muslim slaves.

7. Sulayman bin Abdul Malik

Walid died in 96 A.H. after ruling for 10 years and was succeeded by his brother Sulayman. Sulayman was a glutton and fond of women. Sulayman was an intensely jealous man and killed the great Arab conqueror, Musa bin Nasir who had brought Spain and Portugal under Muslim control. Sulayman killed him because Musa had sent all the spoils of war to Walid and had not kept it till Sulayman came to the throne. He also killed Waqtiba bin Muslim who had conquered territories from Fars to China for the Muslim Empire. His reason for killing Waqtiba was that the man had encouraged Walid to remove Sulayman from the office of crown prince. Sulayman used to shower blessings on Mu'awiya, saying that he had never come across anyone more bold than him in matters of cruelty, crime and oppression. He called Mu'awiya the True Spirit of the Bani Umayyah. Sulayman died in 99 A.H. after ruling for 2 years and a few months and was succeeded by Umar bin Abdul Aziz.

LESSON 9: THE BANI UMAYYAH - PART 3

The Bani Umayyah Kings - Cont'd

8. Umar bin Abdul Aziz

After the death of Sulayman bin Abdul Malik in 99 A.H., the reins of power were taken up by Umar bin Abdul Aziz. He was the one king in this dynasty whose actions were worthwhile.

One of the greatest deeds of Umar bin Abdul Aziz was that he stopped the abusing of Imam Ali (A) from the pulpits at the time of Friday prayers. Because of the influence of his childhood teachers, he had grown up with love and respect for the Ahlul Bayt (A). Instead of the customary curses, he ordered that the following verse be recited:

Verily, Allah commands to maintain justice, kindness and proper relations with relatives; and He forbids indecency, sin and rebellion. He gives you advice so that perhaps you will take heed.
Nahl, 16:90

This verse is recited by all the Muslims in their Friday addresses upto today. The other noteworthy action of Umar bin Abdul Aziz was that he returned the garden of Fadak to a descendant of Bibi Fatima (A), who at the time was Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A). This garden had been usurped by Abu Bakr after the death of the Prophet (S).

The favour with which Umar bin Abdul Aziz regarded the Ahlul Bayt (A) and the Shia made him unpopular amongst the Bani Umayyah themselves and led to his poisoning on 25th of Rajab 101 A.H. His grave in Dayr Sam'aan is still visited today.

9. Yazid bin Abdul Malik.

Yazid was the next king and he did his best to overturn all the good actions of his predecessor. Under his rule, the old harsh ways of terrorisation and unfair taxation were revived. Yazid also seized Fadak back.

Like his maternal grandfather, Yazid the First, this Yazid was also fond of easy living, drinking and women. His rule came to an end after 4 years.

10. Hisham bin Abdul Malik

Hisham came to power at a time when the crimes of Bani Umayyah were finally causing widespread resentment. Hisham did not take heed of these feelings, and instead of attempting to reform the evils of his forefathers, he added to the misery of the people. His policies towards the Shia were especially harsh.

He ordered that they should be got rid off, their blood be shed and their rights be taken away.

During the time of Hisham a revolution was led by Zayd son of Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A). 15,000 Shia supported him but they deserted him when the fighting started. At the end Zayd was left with only 300 men and after a brave fight, he was killed. The body of Zayd was treated very badly by Hisham who refused to allow it to be buried and hung it at Kufa.

11. Walid bin Yazid bin Abdul Malik.

Hisham died after ruling for 19 years and was succeeded by Walid. Walid was a shameless and foolish man, and he was fond of a pleasurable life, wasting it on wine, adultery and hunting. He was the first ruler to introduce professional singers into his court.

He is famous for having publicly shot arrows at the Qur'an. By this time, the days of the Bani Umayyah were numbered and the voice of outrage against these useless rulers rang everywhere.

To add to this, the Bani Abbas began a campaign to topple the Bani Umayyah. After Walid's death, three more rulers came to power briefly, but they ruled for only a short time before the sun set on this cruel dynasty forever. These rulers were:

12. Yazid bin Walid (6 months).

13. Ibrahim bin Walid (4 months).

14. Marwan bin Muhammad bin Marwan (5 years 10 months).

LESSON 10: THE BANI ABBAS - PART 1

I. Introduction

At the time of the reign of Marwan bin Muhammad, revolts began to take place all over the Muslim Empire. The simultaneous rising of various sections proved too difficult to overcome and Marwan was forced to abandon his throne and flee for his life. He ran from city to city, but everywhere the people turned away from him. Wherever he went, he was relentlessly pursued by the army of the Bani Abbas, who finally killed him in Egypt in 132 A.H. With the death of Marwan the reign of the Bani Umayyah finally came to an end and a bloody chapter of history was closed.

The first people to begin the struggle against the Bani Umayyah were the Shia and the descendants of Imam Ali (A), who were also the first to sacrifice their lives and property in their efforts to overthrow the cruel regime.

The Bani Abbas were descendants of Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet (S). They were quick to capitalise on the general feeling that the Caliphate should be restored to the members of the family of the Prophet (S), the Ahlul Bayt (A). Their slogan was "Ar-Riza min Aale Muhammad". Their slogan meant that they were fighting to restore the rights of the Ahlul Bayt (A) and thus they gained widespread support. Their leader, Saffah, sent his commanders to all the strongholds of the Bani Umayyah to hunt and destroy them. In the process, much blood was spilt. Having subdued most of the followers of the Bani Umayyah, they took over the reins of power and Saffah became the first ruler of the Bani Abbas in 132 A.H.

II The Bani Abbas Kings.

1. Abul Abbas Saffah.

Saffah spent the four years of his rule in destroying the last traces of the Bani Umayyah. He captured their friends from far and near and subjected them to torture and persecution. He was determined not to rest until he ensured that any threat from the former ruling family was eliminated. In his paranoia he began to kill even those people whose loyalty he was unsure about. Thus all over the empire people were killed on flimsy excuses. The people now began to realise that these new rulers were no less blood-thirsty than their predecessors.

Abul Abbas was given the title "Saffah" because of having shed excessive blood. He once invited 80 members of the Bani Umayyah family for a meal, saying that he wished to talk about peace. On their arrival, he ordered them to be killed, and carpets were then spread on their half-dead bodies. Saffah then began to have his meal while the people lay dying under the carpets. He declared that he had never enjoyed such a delicious meal.

There is no doubt that the Bani Umayyah deserved to be killed, but this behaviour of Saffah was not justified. It indicated the presence of a criminal and deranged mind no less evil than the Bani Umayyah.

Although the Shia and the descendants of Imam Ali (A) had suffered the most under the rule of the Bani Umayyah, they did not think in terms of revenge and turned away from this sort of behaviour. In an ironic twist of circumstances, some Shia spoke up in defence of the Bani Umayyah in order to save them from the painful death that the Bani Abbas would inflict upon them.

Saffah did not kill or harm any Shia during his rule. This was not due to any love he had for them, because the Bani Abbas proved to be worse enemies of the Shia in later years than Bani Umayyah had ever been.

The reasons he did not touch the Shia were:

1. His attention was concentrated on his real enemies, the Bani Umayyah, and he was determined to annihilate all of them.
2. The Shia had recently fought jointly with the Bani Abbas to topple the Bani Umayyah and had been instrumental in securing his throne.
3. The capital of Saffah was Kufa, where the residents were the followers of Imam Ali (A) and he did not yet possess the strength to fight them.

In any case, during the bloody days of the transition of power from the Bani Umayyah to the Bani Abbas, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) and Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) were left in relative peace. They took advantage of this opportunity to set up schools to propagate the teachings of Islam according to the Ahlul Bayt (A). As a result we have a wealth of material today on matters of religious law, philosophy, morals and commentary of the Qur'an etc., from that period.

Saffah died in 136 A.H. and was succeeded by his brother Mansoor.

LESSON 11: THE BANI ABBAS - PART 2

The Bani Abbas Kings - Cont'd

2. Mansoor Dawanaqi

Although Saffah was the first ruler of the Bani Abbas, it is Mansoor who is considered to have laid the foundations of the Abbaside Dynasty. He was the first person to create trouble between the Bani Abbas and the descendants of Imam Ali (A).

The descendants of Imam Hasan (A) were dealt with terribly. Mansoor gathered many of them and imprisoned them in chains. He never asked about them again and they perished of starvation. During the reign of Mansoor, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) advised the Shia to remain silent and obey, because of the deceitful nature of the king. This time was used by the Imam (A) to spread the teachings of Islam to a large number of students.

Mansoor was not satisfied with the silence of the Imam (A) and once remarked, "Although I have killed more than a thousand descendants of the daughter of Muhammad, I have not yet killed their leader and chief". He finally succeeded in his evil intentions and got the Imam (A) poisoned in 148 A.H.

Mansoor killed an untold number of Shia and enjoyed cruelty, inventing different ways to kill people. He struck whips on the eyes of people so they went blind, pulled down houses on the heads of the owners and placed them in walls and buried them alive. He finally died in 158 A.H. after having ruled for 22 years.

3. Mahdi.

After the death of Mansoor, his son Mahdi came to power. He was no less brutal than his father. During his rule the descendants of Imam Ali (A) became almost non-existent, such was the persecution against them.

By now the people realised that they had replaced the Bani Umayyah with people who were no better and possibly worse in their love for bloodshed. Mahdi died in 169 A.H. and was succeeded by his brother Haadi.

4. Haadi

Haadi only ruled for 15 months, and was a cruel and ill-mannered man. He appointed Abdul Aziz as his governor in Madina. The governor accused the descendants of Imam Ali (A) of drinking wine and he whipped them publicly and displayed them in the market place to humiliate them.

Although Haadi's life was short, he performed enough notorious acts to have his name recorded in the register of the inhuman criminals of the Muslim nation.

5. Haroon ar-Rashid

Haadi was succeeded by his brother Haroon ar-Rashid, who ruled from 170 A.H. to 193 A.H. Haroon became the most famous of the Bani Abbas kings, and anecdotes from his life have been recorded in the stories of the "Arabian Nights". He acquired his reputation due to the great advancement of learning, art and culture during his time.

Haroon administered the affairs of the state well and built mosques, schools, hospitals, houses, bridges, roads and canals throughout the empire. Much of the famous architecture of this period was due to the skills of the Bermecids, who served Haroon for 17 years. In the end, their own merits caused their downfall at the hands of the jealous Haroon.

In spite of his contribution towards improving the general standard of life of the Muslims, the policy of Haroon towards the descendants of Imam Ali (A) showed his great hatred for them. His outward appearance was one of a considerate king, while behind the scenes he set about destroying all traces of the descendants of Imam Ali (A).

The Bani Abbas had recently begun to claim that they were nearer relatives of the Prophet (S), because their link was through a male, while the Ahlul Bayt (A) were related through a female.

Once Haroon asked a descendant of Imam Hasan (A), "Which of us is more closely related to the Prophet (S)?" The man said, "If the Prophet (S) asked for your daughter's hand in marriage would you accept the proposal?" Haroon replied, "By Allah! I would." Then he asked, "And if he asked for my daughter in marriage, is it permissible for me to accept the proposal?" Haroon admitted that such a marriage would be unlawful.

The man then said, "This answers your question, because while I am a descendant of the Prophet (S), you are not." Haroon was very angry at having been thus defeated and left the gathering in a rage.

Haroon also caused the imprisonment of Imam Musa al-Kazim (A). He transferred him from one prison to another and finally poisoned him through Sindi bin Shahak in Baghdad. Haroon's rule finally ended after 23 years and he died in Toos after ordering that allegiance be given to his son Amin.



LESSON 12: THE BANI ABBAS - PART 3

The Bani Abbas Kings - Cont'd

6. Amin

Amin ruled for 4 years during which he was too busy leading a life of pleasure to cause much trouble to the descendants of Imam Ali (A). However, he could not resist the ambitious plans of his younger brother Ma'mun. A war broke out between the two brothers and Amin was killed.

7. Ma'mun.

During the rule of Ma'mun, the Shia faith became firmly rooted in most of the Islamic cities and many of his own ministers were Shia. Ma'mun realised that the former persecution of the Shia had not wiped them out but had instead resulted in the increased determination of the Shia to preserve their faith.

Ma'mun recognised that the Shia were a powerful force and in order to keep them quiet, he deceitfully declared himself to be a Shia. Ma'mun knew that Imam Ali ar-Riza (A) was held in the greatest esteem by the Shia, so he ordered the Imam (A) to come to Baghdad and forced him to accept the position of heir to the throne.

Although the descendants of Imam Ali (A) were safe from persecution during the time of Ma'mun, it was not due to any love that he had for them. Ma'mun had learnt from the mistakes of his father and wanted to ensure that his rule was not endangered by a Shia uprising. Ma'mun was no less evil than his father, because he ultimately managed to kill Imam Ali ar-Riza (A).

Ma'mun died in 210 A.H., and after him the oath of allegiance was taken for Mu'tasim Billah.

8. Mu'tasim Billah

Mu'tasim ruled for 8 years. He imprisoned Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) but then released him and allowed him to go to Madina. However, a few years later he had him recalled to Baghdad where he got the Imam's (A) wife Ummul Fazl, daughter of Ma'mun, to poison him.

9. Wathiq.

After the death of Mu'tasim, Wathiq came to power and he ruled for 5 years. It has been said that Wathiq honoured the descendants of Imam Ali (A), behaved kindly towards them and gave them wealth. Wathiq died in 232 A.H.

10. Mutawakkil.

After the death of Wathiq the oath of allegiance was given to his brother Mutawakkil who ruled for 14 years. Mutawakkil was a cruel man who became notorious for his free living, immodesty and intoxication. He threw parties of pleasure, drink and vain talk.

During the rule of Mutawakkil the state of the Islamic Empire began to deteriorate, as corruption and evil behaviour became widespread.

Mutawakkil did not content himself with torturing those who were alive but also showed disrespect to the dead. He demolished the tomb of Imam Husain (A) and the extension around it, and restrained people from performing Ziyarat. Whoever attempted to do so was either imprisoned or killed.

Mutawakkil was finally killed by his own son Muntasir who could not stand and watch the evil acts of his father. The main reason he killed Mutawakkil was because the man used to abuse Bibi Fatima (A).

The power of the Abbaside Dynasty began to decline after Mutawakkil, who was the last king of any influence. Other factions then rose in the world of Islam, amongst them the Buwayyad, the Hamadani and the Fatimid Dynasties.

As a consequence of this development, the Shia were able to breathe in peace. During these later periods many great Shia scholars were able to contribute to our present day knowledge of Islam.

In all there were 37 kings of Bani Abbas, and their reign lasted till 656 A.H. The kings who ruled after Mutawakkil upto the time of Ghaybat (Concealment) of our 12th Imam (A) are:

11. Muntasir. Till 247 A.H. (9 months).

12. Mustain. Till 252 A.H. (5 years).

13. Mu'taz. Till 255 A.H. (3 years).

Mu'taz caused the death of our 10th Imam (A.S).

14. Mu'tadi. Till 256 A.H. (1 year).

15. Mu'tamad. Till 279 A.H. (21 years).

Mu'tamad caused the death of our 11th Imam (A).

16. Mu'tazid. Till 289 A.H. (10 years).

LESSON 13: THE FIRST CRUSADE

Introduction

The Crusades represent a chapter in the history of confrontation between the East and the West. The East came to be dominated by Islam, and Christianity got a foothold in the West. The conflict between the East and the West thus took over a religious colour. During the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth centuries the Muslims dominated the world political stage, and the Christians had to lie low. During this period the Caliphate was a strong centralised state, and the Christians were beaten by the Muslims on all fronts. However, a remarkable change in the balance of power occurred between the Christians and the Muslims in the eleventh century. Around 1000 CE the barbarian Vikings and the Magyars who had been raiding and ravaging Europe were converted to Christianity, and that brought in an era of peace and progress for the West. New towns and markets sprang up, and trade and commerce came to flourish.

The Muslim World During The Eleventh Century.

While the eleventh century marked the rise to power of the Christians, it marked the reverse for the Muslim world. By this time the Abbasid caliphate lost its hold and power and their empire stood fragmented.

In Spain the Ummayyad caliphate collapsed in 1031; and then followed half a century of chaos and anarchy which provided opportunity to the Christian powers of the north to gather strength. Up until the tenth century, the Mediterranean Sea was practically a Muslim lake. By the eleventh century however, the Muslims had lost their naval supremacy in the Mediterranean.

Origins of the First Crusade.

The successes of the Christians in Spain and the Mediterranean encouraged them to open a third front against the Muslims in the East.

The Byzantines who were still seeking revenge for the loss of a greater part of their empire to the Muslims since the rise of Islam, appealed to the Pope for help. At this time there was a lot of conflict between the Church and the State, which had brought misery to a lot of people. As a result, the Pope felt that it was the opportune time to launch the crusading movement against the Muslims in order to divert from the civil conflict between the Pope and the princes in feudal Europe. Therefore in 1095, Pope Urban II proclaimed a crusade and called the Christian world to arms in a bid for power against the Muslims.

It was declared that he who participated in the crusade would get the blessings of the Church, and the full remission of all his sins. The cry rose from every pulpit in the Christian world that the Land should be rescued from the Muslims. The cry was taken up in all parts of Europe, and about one hundred and fifty thousand men, responded to the call.

The First Crusade: 1095 - 1099

With each warrior wearing the cross as a badge, the crusaders marched to Asia Minor. Their first confrontation was with the Seljuk Sultan Qilij, who was defeated. He lost his capital Nicaea, and after annexing this city, the crusaders advanced to Armenia. The Norman Crusaders took the whole of Armenia, where they set up a Christian principality in Edessa. By 1098, Antioch in Northern Syria, had also fallen to the crusaders, and shortly after that, they marched south along the coast and captured the coastal town of Tripoli.

From Tripoli, the crusaders advanced towards Jerusalem. They reached Jerusalem in 1099 and laid siege to the city. The city fell after a month and then the entire Muslim population of over 10000 was killed. Jerusalem was created an independent principality.

Consequences of the First Crusade

The first crusade ended in considerable success for the Christians. The Muslims were not united enough to have put up a strong front against them. There was betrayal among the Muslims as the followers of Hasan Sabah, known as the "Assassins", openly helped the Crusaders.

As a result of the first crusade, the Christians were able to set up five strongholds in the heart of the Muslim world.

LESSON 14: THE SECOND CRUSADE: 1144 - 1155

Political Situation After The First Crusade

After the first crusade, a state of stalemate continued for some fifty years. The Christians had set up five principalities and occupied an area across the Mediterranean coast about fifty miles wide. The rest of the country remained under Muslim control. The Christian powers however, were now beginning to fight among themselves and were unable to forge a united front. As a result, they were not able to extend their conquests. Furthermore, there was no strong power among the Muslims, which could expel the Christians from their principalities

Imad-ud-Din Zangi



Towards the middle of the twelfth century, a strong ruler Imad-ud-Din Zangi rose in Mosul. He took up the fight among the Muslims and spearheaded the movement of Jihad against the Christians. In 1144, he invaded Armenia, and after a brief siege, he recovered Edessa. This was an important victory for the Muslims, and this spread a lot of anxiousness and dismay among the Christians. Imad-ud-Din did not survive for very long after this victory; he was assassinated in 1146 CE.

Nur-ud-Din Zangi.

Imad-ud-Din was succeeded by his son Nur-ud Din, who was even more determined to fight for the Muslim cause. After his father's death, Edessa was reconquered by the Christians. As a result, Nur-ud Din led his forces into Armenia and managed to get back Edessa again.

The news of the fall of Edessa was received in Europe with great concern, and Pope Eugene III, proclaimed another crusade. The second crusade was led by Louis VII of France, and Conrad III of Germany. However, a greater part of the forces of Conrad was defeated in Asia Minor, and the forces of Louis was largely destroyed while crossing the Admus river. In a confrontation with the forces of Nur-ud Din Zangi near Antioch, the crusaders suffered a defeat, and as a result, part of the principality of Antioch was occupied by Nur-ud Din Zangi.

The Siege Of Damscus

The object of the second crusade was the recapture of Edessa. With the destruction of a greater part of the crusaders army in Asia Minor and their subsequent defeat near Antioch, the crusaders altered their plan, and instead of proceeding to Edessa, they went to Jerusalem instead. After getting reinforcement from Jerusalem, the crusaders decided to invade Damascus as a diversion.

The crusaders laid siege to the city of Damascus. The siege lasted for some time, until the inhabitants of Damascus managed to send a message to Nur-ud-Din Zangi for help. Immediately Nur-ud-Din and his forces advanced towards Damascus. However, upon hearing of this advance, the crusaders quarrelled among themselves, lifted the siege and withdrew from Damascus. Damascus was now back under the control of the Muslims.

Consequences of the Second Crusade

With the occupation of Damascus by Nur-ud -Din Zangi, the balance of power changed in favour of the Muslims. The Christians had hoped that with the occupation of Damascus, they would have a strong base from where they could extend their conquests further inland. They had failed in securing this strategy. On the other hand, with the occupation of Damascus by Nur-ud Din Zangi, a strong Muslim state came to be established next door to the Christian strongholds. The Christian states were disunited and quarrelled among themselves.

The establishment of a strong Muslim state under Nur-ud Din Zangi did not merely block their way to extend, but it also posed a threat to their very existence.

Hostilities ceased in 1155 and the second crusade was over. The Christians had failed to achieve the object for which the second crusade had been organised. The second crusade ended as a setback for the crusaders. They failed to recapture Edessa; they lost part of Antioch.

After the second crusade the Latin states were weaker and more disunited than they were before the crusades.

LESSON 15: THE THIRD CRUSADE: 1187 - 1192

Rise of Salah-ud-Din

After the second crusade, the situation was calm for a generation. In the seventies of the twelfth century, Salah-ud Din Ayyubi rose to power in Egypt. In 1171, he put an end to the Fatimid rule in Egypt and by 1174, he had captured Damascus.

Fall of Jerusalem

During this time, the principality of Jerusalem faced a lot of trouble. Taking advantage of the chaos in Jerusalem, Salah-ud Din led his forces against the Christians in 1187. He and his forces marched against Jerusalem, where a battle took place at Hittin, overlooking the sea of Galilee. Here the Christian army of 20,000 was destroyed and the city re-conquered by the Muslims.



The fall of Jerusalem was a serious blow to the Christians, and the Pope consequently raised the call for another crusade. Richard of England, Barbarossa of Germany and Philip of France led the crusaders.



Barbarossa who came by land, was drowned crossing a river. The crusaders under Richard and Philip came by sea. The crusade began with a siege of the port of Accra by crusaders. Accra fell to the crusaders; and thereafter they advanced to Jaffa and Ascalon, which also fell to them. From there, the crusaders under Richard advanced to Jerusalem.

In the battle outside Jerusalem, the crusaders suffered a heavy defeat. As a result, Salah-ud-Din recaptured Jaffa and Ascalon. The crusaders now fell back on Accra, where Richard fell sick and was forced to ask for terms. Peace was eventually concluded in November 1192; the peace was for a period of three years, three months and three days. According to the terms of the treaty the Muslims retained Jerusalem, but the Christians were allowed free access to the city for pilgrimage.

Consequences of the Third Crusade

The third crusade ended in failure for the Christians. The crusade was organised with a view to recovering Jerusalem from the occupation of the Muslims. However, the crusaders could not dislodge the Muslims from Jerusalem. The crusade also cost the crusaders a heavy loss of life. In spite of the hostilities there was a good deal of exchange of courtesies on the two sides. In this crusade, Salah-ud-Din emerged as the hero and the champion of Islam.

The Last Five Crusades

After the third crusade, there were a further five crusades that took place between 1194 and 1218; all of which ended in complete failure for the Christians. In the beginning the Christians had succeeded in setting up five principalities. Thereafter their advance was held up and the scales gradually tilted in favour of the Muslims leading to the ultimate expulsion of the Christians from the Muslim lands towards the close of the thirteenth century.

LESSON 16: PRINCIPAL DYNASTIES IN ISLAMIC HISTORY

Many dynasties ruled in various parts of the Muslim world. What is interesting is that, like a human person, dynasties too have a span of life. They rise to importance, grow in strength, dominate the political stage for some time, suffer from decline and then disappear from history.

The Mongol II - Khans: 1258 CE - 1353 CE

After the fall of the Abbasside caliphate in 1258 CE, Halaku became the ruler of Iraq and Iran, and founded the rule of Mongol II Khan dynasty. He invaded Syria in 1269 CE, but was later defeated. Halaku died soon after and was succeeded by his son Abaqa. Abaqa invaded Syria in 1280 CE, but the Mongols were defeated by the Mamluks at the battle of Hims. Abaqa was succeeded by Takudar who became a Muslim; and shortly after, was overthrown. Ghazan who came to power in 1295 CE was also a Muslim, and thereafter all the Khan rulers were Muslim. In 1299 CE, Ghazan defeated the Mamluks and occupied Syria. The Mamluks however, recovered Syria in 1303 CE. The last of the Mongol rulers, Abu Said, was involved in haram scandals and was poisoned to death in 1335 CE. After him, there was anarchy. The Mongol II-Khan rule was finally extinguished in 1353 CE.

The Golden Horde Khanate: 1256 CE - 1554 CE. Russia/Eastern Europe.

The Chughtayids: 1252 CE - 1462 CE.

The Safavids: 1501 CE - 1736 CE. Persia.

The Mamluks: 1254 CE - 1517 CE. Egypt.

The Ottoman Turks: 1360 CE - 1890 CE. Turkey.



The Ottoman Turks dynasty was founded by Othman in the later part of the thirteenth century. They expanded a great deal and indeed, became a very powerful dynasty. They annexed, occupied and lost a considerable number of towns, cities countries. For centuries, they dominated the scene.

By 1817 however, the Turks were forced to withdraw from Serbia and recognise its independence. Greece revolted, and by the Treaty of Adrianople, Turkey had to recognise the independence of Greece. Furthermore with France occupying Tunis in 1881 CE and Great Britain occupying Egypt in 1882 CE, by the close of the nineteenth century, Turkey had become a ghost of its former self and victim to disintegration.

The Hafsids: 1228 CE - 1277 CE. Tunisia.

The Nasrids: 1272 CE - 1492 CE. Spain.

The Khediv 1801 CE - 1892 CE. Egypt.

The Delhi Sultanate 1286 CE - 1526 CE. India

The Afghans 1747 CE - 1879 CE. Afghanistan



All these dynasties fought and ruled throughout various parts of the Muslim world. They were respected and feared, supported and opposed, but eventually, each was doomed to disintegration and decline.

LESSON 17: ISLAM AND THE SWORD

When the Muslims embarked on their spectacular career of conquests, they had to contend against the mighty empires of the Persians and the Byzantines. The sword lay with these empires and not the Arabs, the dwellers of the desert. If the Muslims won the day against the non-Muslims, such victory was as a result of the strength of their faith; not the sword. The people of these countries accepted Islam, of their own free will. The people of these conquered countries were given the option of either accepting Islam or paying a nominal tax and continue with their old religion.

When Syria was conquered by the Muslims, the Christians had the choice to migrate to other Christian territories. They however, chose to remain in Syria. This shows there was no compulsion on them to accept Islam. Similarly after the conquests of Egypt, the Muslims allowed the non-Muslims complete liberty in the profession of their religion. Indeed, the conversions to Islam in the conquered territories of Syria, Egypt and Persia was spread over more than a century. If Islam had spread through the sword, the conversions to Islam should have followed immediately after the conquests.

Islam In Spain

The Muslims ruled over Spain for some several hundred years. If the sword had been used to spread Islam, all the people of Spain would have been converted Muslims; this was not the case. Furthermore, the Muslims were eventually expelled from Spain. Therefore, if they would have used the sword for the spread of Islam, then they would have remained the masters of Spain.

Islam In Russia

The Muslims were the dominant power in Russia for over two hundred years. If they had used the sword to convert the people to Islam, there would be no non-Muslim in Russia today. The very fact that the Muslims lost Russia, shows that no attempt was made to spread Islam through the sword.

Islam In Eastern Europe

The Ottoman Turks were the masters for the eastern part of Europe for more than a century. If the Muslims had employed the sword for the conversion of the people to Islam, there would be no Christians in Eastern Europe today.

Islam In The Lands Under The Occupation Of The Non Muslims

During the course of history, the Muslims had to withdraw from many lands. If Islam had been spread through the sword, the people of such lands, if they would have accepted Islam under any compulsion, would have reverted to their original religions after the withdrawal of the Muslims from such lands. This however, did not happen, which shows that Islam with such converts was a matter of conviction and not a matter of compulsion or force.

Conversion Of The Mongols To Islam

When the Mongols dismantled the Abbaside Caliphate and occupied the Muslim lands, they held the swords over the heads of the Muslims. Although Christianity tried its best to convert the Mongols, they failed and the Mongols accepted Islam. Their original aim had been to destroy Islam; so their conversion to it instead, showed that they accepted it not out of any compulsion, but because they were convinced Islam was a superior faith.

Islam In Indonesia And Malaya

No Muslim power ever led any Muslim force to these lands in South east Asia. Islam was carried to these lands by Muslim traders and preachers.



LESSON 18: ISLAM'S ROLE IN HISTORY

The Holy Qur'an is not a book in of history, but many historical events are referred to in it, and we have been required to learn from history. In the opening chapter of the Holy Qur'an, we are required to pray to Allah to show us the right way - not the way of those on whom His wrath has fallen. There are references to the old nations who deviated and were punished by Allah. We have also been told that the Holy Prophet (S) of Islam is the seal of the prophets and that there would be no more prophets after him. Thus with Islam, mankind has come of age, and that thereafter there would be no need of any further guidance. Indeed, history begins with Islam. All accounts previous to the advent of Islam are mere legends. Islam has made history.

According to Islam the people are required to establish Allah's rule on earth and to act on behalf of Allah in accordance with His commands. As such according to the Islamic point of view, all that happens in history is a manifestation of the Will of God.

Apart from the punishment that is to be awarded in the Hereafter, Allah punishes the people for their sins in this world as well. Allah may punish people through natural calamities such as floods, fires, famines, epidemics, earthquakes etc. He may also choose one set of people to punish another set of people. Allah gives ample opportunity to the people to reform themselves and follow the straight way, but when they persist in following the wrong way, they cannot escape the wrath of Allah.

Many instances in Islamic History show that a higher power is at work to make history. For instance, no one could imagine that the Arabs, the dwellers of the desert, would overthrow the mighty empires of the Persian and the Byzantines. When Baghdad fell, and the Abbaside Caliph was trampled to death under the hoofs of the Mongol horses, no one could ever dream that these people, so hostile to Islam would be converted to Islam. When the Umayyads were the masters of Spain, who could foretell that after eight hundred years of rule, the Muslims were to be expelled from Spain. Who could imagine that the Turks would establish one of the largest empires in history.

Indeed there are many events in history which cannot be predicted. Therefore, it is obvious that there is some mysterious power which shapes the course of history; this power is Allah.

The western historian seeks to interpret the events of history according to the law of cause and effect; whereas a Muslim historian is to interpret history according to the will of Allah. Therefore, while secular history is man oriented; Islamic history is God oriented.



LESSON 19: THE WISDOM OF LUQMAN

Luqman is not generally believed to be a Prophet, but he was a man who had been specially endowed with wisdom by Allah . He was the nephew of Prophet Ayyub (A) and lived at the time of Prophet Dawood (A). He was an extremely pious man and used to mostly remain silent while he pondered about the nature of life. Sometimes he would come to Prophet Dawood (A) to discuss problems.

One of Luqman's wives and some of his sons were disbelievers and so he preached to them about faith in Allah till they embraced Islam. His words of wisdom were worthy of being quoted in the Holy Qur'an, which says:

[And indeed We gave to Luqman wisdom, saying, "Be grateful to Allah; for whoever is grateful, verily he is only grateful for his own self; and whoever is ungrateful, (it is to the discredit of his own self) then verily Allah is Self-Sufficient, the Most Praised." And when Luqman said to his son while he counselled him, "O my son! Do not associate anything (in authority) with Allah, for verily associating (anything) with Allah is the greatest sin."

And We enjoined man concerning his parents; his mother bears him in weakness upon weakness and his weaning takes two years. Be grateful to Me and unto your parents, (and remember that) unto me is the ultimate return.

"O my son! verily if it is even the very weight of the grain of a mustard seed (closed) in (even) a rock, or (be it high) in the heavens or (buried deep) in the earth, Allah will bring it to light; Allah is All-Subtle (Lateef), All-Aware. O my son! Establish prayer and enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and be patient against what befalls you; verily this is the task of steadfastness. And do not turn your face to people (in scorn) and do not walk proudly in the earth; verily Allah does not like any self-conceited boaster. And be moderate (modest) and lower your voice; verily the most unpleasant of voices is the braying of the donkeys."

Luqman, 31 : 12 - 14, 16 - 19]

Luqman lived for 1,000 years from the time of Prophet Dawood (A) to that of Prophet Yunus (A). His life and words are a great lesson in Akhlaq (morals) for mankind.



LESSON 20: THE STORY OF BIBI FIZZA

Bibi Fizza had come from Abyssinia to Arabia as a slave. She was freed by the Holy Prophet (S) and afterwards served Bibi Fatimah (A) as her maid-servant. Bibi Fatimah (A) divided her house work equally between herself and Bibi Fizza and they would take turns to do the chores. She remained faithful to the household of Ahlul Bayt (A) and even accompanied them to Kerbala and the prison of Sham. She also had the honour of taking part in the "Three Days Fast". Once, when Imam Hasan (A) and Imam Husain (A) fell sick, the Holy Prophet (S) suggested that Imam Ali (A) make a vow (Nazr) to fast for three days when the children recovered. When they were better, Imam Ali (A), Bibi Fatimah (A), Imam Hasan (A), Imam Husain (A) and Bibi Fizza all fasted to fulfil the vow.

However, on each of the three days, when they sat to break their fast, a hungry person called at their door. The first said he was poor, the second said he was an orphan and the third said he was a freed captive. Each time, the big-hearted members of the house, including Bibi Fizza, gave away their food and broke their fast with water. In praise of this selfless action Allah revealed the 76th Chapter of the Holy Qur'an. The incident is described as follows:

[They who fulfil their vows, and fear the day, the woe of which stretches far and wide. And they give away food, out of love for Him, to the poor and the orphan and the captive, (saying), "We feed you only for the sake of Allah, we do not want anything from you, not even thanks. Verily we fear from our Lord a stern day of distress." So Allah will guard them from the evil of that day and give them freshness and pleasure.

Dahr (Insaan), 76 : 7 - 11]

Abdullah Mubarak has related a very interesting dialogue between himself and Bibi Fizza. He states, "I saw a woman passing through the desert who had fallen behind the caravan and asked her, "Who are you and where are you from?" She replied:

[And say, "Salaam" for they shall soon know!

Zukhruf, 43 : 89]

I learned that she expected me to greet her and say "Assalaamu Alaykum" first, before any question. I did as she reminded, and then enquired why she was in the desert. She answered:

[And whomsoever Allah guides, there can be none to lead astray!

Zumar, 39 : 37]

On hearing her reply, I asked her, "Are you from mankind or from the jinn?" She replied:

[O Children of Adam! be adorned at every time of prostration.

A'raaf, 7: 31]

I understood that she was human and then asked her, "Where are you coming from?" She replied:

[Those who are called to from a place far off.

Ha Mim 41:44]

I asked her, "Where are you intending to go?" She said:

[And (purely) for Allah, is incumbent upon mankind, the Pilgrimage of the House.

Ale Imran, 3 : 97]

I asked her how many days she had been travelling. She told me:

[And indeed We (Allah) created the heavens and the earth and what is between them two, in six days.

Qaaf, 50: 38]

I asked her, "Do you feel hungry?" She replied:

[We (Allah) did not make them such bodies that ate no food.

Anbiya, 21 : 8]

I gave her food and asked her to hurry up to catch the caravan but she replied:

[Allah does not task any soul beyond its ability.

Baqarah, 2: 286]

I suggested that she sit on the camel behind me, but she said:

[Had there been gods therein besides Allah, there would have been disorder in both (the heavens and the earth).

Anbiya, 21: 22]

I realised that, because we were not husband and wife, it was Haraam for both of us to ride the camel. So I got off and mounted her on it. As she sat on the camel, she said:

[Glory to Him Who subjected this to us.

Zukhruf 43: 13]

When we reached the caravan, I asked her, "Do you know anyone among them?" She called out in reply:

[O Dawood, Verily, We have appointed you a vicegerent in the earth.

Saad, 38: 26]

[And Muhammad is not but a Messenger."

Aale Imran, 3 : 144]

[O Yahya! Hold the book with firmness!"

Maryam, 19 : 12]

[O Musa! Verily I am Allah, the All-Mighty.

Naml, 27: 9]

I began to call out these four names at which four youths came out of the caravan and ran towards Bibi Fizza. I asked her who they were and she replied:

[Wealth and children are the adornment of the world.

Kahf, 18: 46]

I realised that they were her sons. The woman turned to the youth and said:

[O my Father, employ him, verily the best of those who you can employ is the strong man and the trusted one.

Qasas, 28 : 26]

She thus made them understand that I had helped her. Then she told them:

[And verily God increases manifold to whosoever He wills.

Baqarah, 2: 261]

The sons understood their mother's hint and paid me well. I asked them who this noble lady was, and they replied, "She is our mother, Fizza, the maid-servant of Lady Fatima (A). She has conversed in nothing but the Holy Qur'an for the last 20 years."

