



In The Name of Allah. The Most Gracious. The Most Merciful

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Introduction

It is with great pleasure that we present the Teacher's Manual for Al Asr Ramadhan 2015. The verses selected this year portray the Prophet's Du'as with Allah SWT. In simple terms, Du'a can be defined as having conversation with Allah SWT and takes different forms. It could just be a thought; it could be a verbal statement or a continuous calling. Prophets used various ways to talk to Allah (SWT). They shared their joys, their struggles and their pains. At times they were sad, at times happy and at times they just needed Allah's approval in what they were doing. They constantly kept in touch with Allah SWT. Prophets were examples of guidance sent to us. By reflecting on how they struggled and conversed with Allah SWT, we can use these verses to remind us of the great ways of these Prophets and apply it in our lives within our own unique circumstances.

The teacher's role in this process is indeed special and contributes a great part to the success of this program. Teachers have great impact on children's thoughts and lives. Therefore, as educators if we are able to make students understand the role of Du'as, which the Prophets did (as a means), in understanding the value of remembering Allah SWT in good and bad times, while helping students reflect on these verses and getting them to explore ways in which they could apply it in their lives, the objective will be achieved. Being able to inculcate this habit within ourselves and our students has great benefit as:

1. It responds to Allah's message when He states in the Qur'an: "*Ud uni astajib lakum*" meaning "Call on to me and I will respond to you..." Sura Ghafir 40:60
2. It builds a 'connection with the Supreme Creator' – a closeness that is sufficient to solve all our needs.

The format of each lesson offers the context in which the Du'a was used by the Prophets, some aspect of the Prophet's background, stories and application lessons drawn from this. It ends with questions to ponder and activities to engage students in a meaningful reflection.

We ask Allah SWT to grant our teachers and volunteers, the authors of this work and the students who will Insha Allah benefit from it, the guidance to "live the Qur'an."

Al-Asr Committee

Sermon of the Holy Prophet

O People!

Indeed ahead of you is the blessed month of Allah. A month of blessing, mercy and forgiveness; a month which to Allah is the best of months. Its days, the best of days; Its nights, the best of nights; and its hours, the best of hours.

It is the month which invites you to be the guests of Allah and invites you to be one of those near to Him. Each breath you take glorifies Him; your sleep is worship, your deeds are accepted and your Dua's are answered.

So ask Allah, your Lord; to give you a sound body and an enlightened heart so you may be able to fast and recite His book. For only he is unhappy, who is devoid of Allah's forgiveness during this great month.

Remember the hunger and thirst of the day of Qiyamah with your hunger and thirst; Give alms to the needy and the poor. Honour your old, show kindness to the young ones, maintain relations with your blood relations, guard your tongue, close your eyes to that which is not permissible for your sight.

Close your ears to that which is forbidden to hear, show compassion to the orphans of the people so compassion may be shown to your orphans.

Repent to Allah for your sins, and raise your hands in Dua' during these times, for they are the best of times and Allah looks towards His creatures with kindness, replying to them during these hours and granting their needs if He is asked....

O People! One who gives iftar to a fasting person during this month will be like one who has freed someone and his past sins will be forgiven.

Some of the people who were there then asked the prophet (S):

“All of us are not able to invite those who are fasting?”

The Prophet (S) replied:

“Allah gives this reward even if the iftar is a drink of water”.

One who has good morals (Akhlāq) during this month will be able to pass the ‘Siraat’ ...on the day that feet will slip...One who covers the fault of others will benefit as Allah will curb His anger on the Day of Judgment...

As for one who honors an orphan; Allah will honor him on the Day of Judgment. And for the one who spreads his kindness, Allah will spread His mercy over him on the Day of Judgment. As for the one who cuts ties of relation; Allah will cut His mercy from him...

Whosoever performs a mustahab salaah in this month; Allah will keep the fire of hell away from him. Whoever performs a wajib prayer; Allah will reward him with seventy prayers in this month. And whosoever prays a lot during this month will have his load lightened on the Day of Accounting.

He who recites one verse of the Holy Qur'an will be given rewards of reciting the whole Qur'an during other months.

O people! Indeed in this month the doors of Jannah are open, therefore, ask Allah not to close them for you. The doors of Jahannam are closed so ask Allah to keep them closed for you. During this month Shaytan is imprisoned; so ask your Lord not to let him have power over you.

DAILY DU'A: DU'A FOR ACCEPTANCE

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

“Our Lord, accept from us. Surely You are the all-Hearing, the all-Knowing”
(Surah al-Baqarah 2:127).

TAFSIR

This is the Du'a of Prophet Ibrahim ('a) and Prophet Ismael ('a) while building the Ka'aba.

Let's look at this situation: we have two of the best of Allah's creation (Prophet Ibrahim ('a) and Prophet Ismael ('a) – a father and son - building the most holy place on the face of the earth: the Ka'aba in Makkah. What is the thought that is going through their minds? They have a Du'a on their minds: “Oh Allah, accept this act from us!” The Prophets and Imams are so aware of their actions and wanting to please Allah SWT all the time that they pray for their actions to be accepted by Allah SWT and to receive Allah's pleasure. Their intentions are always sincere.

After Nabi Ibrahim ('a) and Nabi Ismail ('a) prayed for acceptance of their service, they continued the Du'a and asked Allah to also make their descendants (progeny or children) obedient to Him, and raise up in them a messenger who would recite to them Allah's revelation, teach them the book and purify them. This Du'a was accepted as Prophet Muhammad (S), our last and final Prophet, the beloved of Allah SWT is from the descendants of Nabi Ibrahim ('a) (see family tree).

This Ayah has two of Allah's 99 Beautiful Names or Attributes (Al-Asma' Al-Husna). Allah is the All-Hearing or As-Samee' which means Allah hears every sound and voice, even if it is hidden from us. He hears the cry of those who are in trouble; He answers the Du'a of those in need; He helps those who are desperate for help; He hears the praise of those who praise Him. He hears the sound of the black ant walking on a solid rock in the darkest night and he hears the leaves when they fall off the trees in autumn. He hears the movement of the grain of sand on Mars. He hears you and me and all creation. Nothing on earth or in the heavens can ever be hidden from Him. As-Samee' comes from the word “sam” in Arabic. It may mean to hear and accept with a favourable answer. That is why in Salaah we also say: "*Sami`a Allahu li-man hamidah*," meaning, “Allah answers favorably to the pleas (prayers or requests) of those who praise Him.”

Al-'Aleem is the name of Allah which means “the All-Knowing.” 'Aleem comes from the word 'Ilm, which means knowledge. "Al-'Aleem," means Allah knows everything. He knows what happened and what will happen. He knows the unknown. He knows what is hidden in our

hearts. He knows the secrets of the universe because He created this universe and He created you and me!

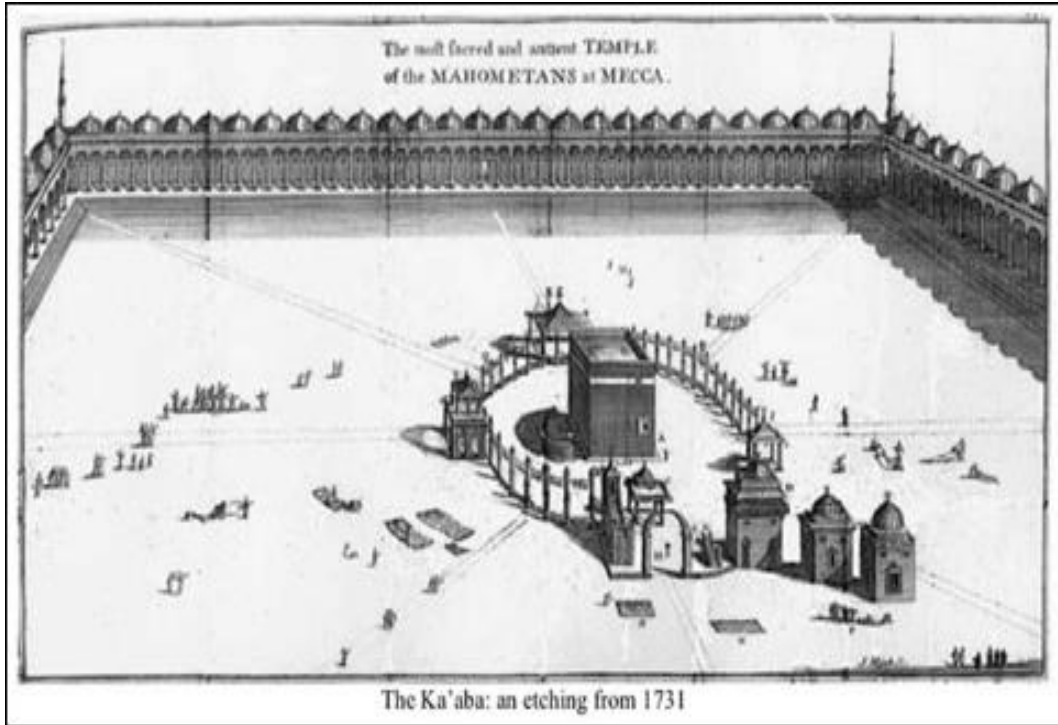
STORY

Prophet Ibrahim ('a) and Prophet Ismail ('a) Build the Ka'aba

The Ka'aba has been constructed and reconstructed by Prophets Adam, Ibrahim, Ismail and Muhammad (peace be upon them all). Scholars and historians say that the Ka'aba has been reconstructed between 5 to 12 times. The very first construction of the Ka'aba was done by Prophet Adam ('a). It got destroyed in the flood of Nabi Nuh ('a), except the foundation remained. After this, Prophet Ibrahim ('a) and Prophet Ismail ('a) rebuilt the Ka'aba on its original foundation. Allah SWT says in the Holy Qur'an that this was the first house that was built for humanity to worship Almighty Allah. The Ka'aba is also called "Bait al-Ateeq" or "The Ancient House."

Prophet Ibrahim ('a) and Prophet Ismail ('a) kept on calling people to worship Allah SWT. At that time there was no place built for the worship of Allah SWT. Prophet Ibrahim ('a) wished there could be such a place where people would be in peace and concentrate on only worshipping Allah. His wish was answered when Almighty Allah ordered him to build the Sacred House, the Ka'aba. Prophet Ibrahim ('a) said to Prophet Ismail ('a): "O Ismail, Allah has given me an order, will you help me complete it?" "Yes I will" Prophet Ismail ('a) replied. "Allah has ordered me to build a house here." Prophet Ibrahim ('a) said, pointing to a small hill. They went towards the place and started building the foundations of the Ka'aba. Prophet Ismail ('a) brought the stones and Prophet Ibrahim ('a) built the walls, and when the walls became high, Prophet Ismail ('a) brought a large stone and put it in front of his father who stood over it and carried on building with his son's help. Both of them went on building and going around the Ka'aba, saying: "Our Lord accept this service from us." When they finished the building, Angel Jibreel descended from heaven and showed Prophet Ibrahim ('a) how to perform the Hajj.

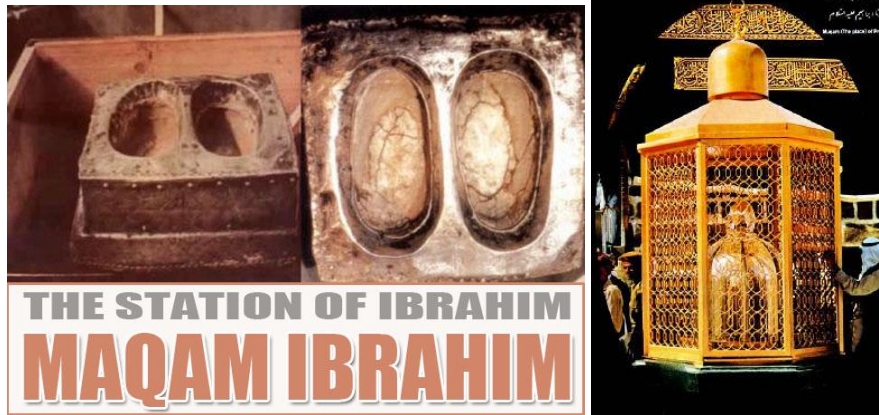
Then Prophet Ibrahim ('a) stepped on the stone and called on people: "O people obey your Lord." This large stone which Prophet Ibrahim ('a) stepped on is still there to this day near the Ka'aba. The stone has the imprints of Prophet Ibrahim's feet. It is called "Maqam Ibrahim."



Above: A drawing of the Ka'aba from 1731 (284 years ago today in 2015).

Below: A picture of the Ka'aba and how it looks today with people doing tawaf.





APPLICATION TO LIFE

What can we learn from this Du'a of Nabi Ibrahim ('a) and Nabi Ismail ('a) – the two great Prophets of Allah SWT? They were praying to Almighty Allah WHILE making the Ka'aba, to accept their efforts! This shows us that no matter what task we do, we should do it to please Allah SWT. Our intention is very important. That is why we start Salah (Daily Prayers) and Sawm (Fasting), for example, with the intention "*Qurbatan ila-Allah*" (to gain nearness to Allah). Our intentions should always be to do everything that pleases Allah SWT and to stay away from what displeases Allah SWT.

We should recite this Du'a of Nabi Ibrahim ('a) and Nabi Ismail ('a) at the end of any good deed; for example when you have read the Holy Qur'an, or when you help a friend or after praying the Sunnat or Wajib Salah or when you go learn about Islam. This way we remind ourselves that our 'ibadah (actions or worship) is only for the sake of Allah SWT and we seek His acceptance for our deeds.

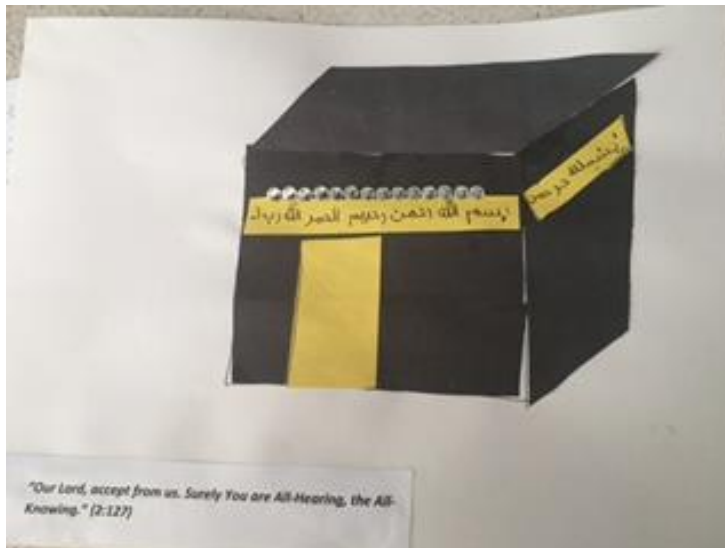
This Du'a also helps us remember that Allah always hears us (He is close to us – we can talk to Him at any time and in any language).

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. What do we learn from this Dua' of Nabi Ibrahim ('a) and Nabi Ismail ('a)?
2. When should this Du'a be recited? And why?
3. What does As-Samee' mean and what do we learn from this Asma' al-Husna?
4. Who was the first one to build the Ka'aba? And who rebuilt it again later?
5. What is "Maqam Ibrahim"?
6. What is another name of the Ka'aba and what does the name mean?

CRAFT IDEA

Students can glue together squares cut out of black construction paper, to make the Kaaba. The Kaaba can be made as 2D or 3D. They can glue yellow strips to make the banner at the top, and a yellow door. They can decorate the Kaaba with gemstones. The dua can be pasted on the 2D paper or on the Kaaba itself.



LESSON 1: GUIDANCE

Short Verse

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

“Guide us on the right path.”

Long Verse

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

*“Guide us on the right path. The path of those upon whom You have bestowed Your bounties, not (the path) of those on whom You are angry, nor (of those who have) gone astray”
(Surah Fateha 1: 6-7).*

TAFSIR

The above verses are verses 6 and 7 (the last two verses) of the first Surah of the Holy Qur’an (Surah Fateha). In verse five, we ask Allah’s help for a very important thing: to show us the guidance to the right path (to help us understand the guidance to the path of Allah or the path of Islam) and to help us stay on that path. Can that path be any path or way that a human being chooses? No!

Allah has never left this earth without guidance. He sent guidance in the form of books (Tawrat, Injeel, Zabur, and Qur’an) or people (Nabi, Rasul or Imam). In this verse, which is the sixth verse of Surah Fateha, Allah explains to us what that path is. It is the path of those who have Allah’s blessings, grace, bounties or favours (ne’mah). So who are these people who have Allah’s ne’mah? Let us find out from the Holy Qur’an:

“Surely, Allah wants to keep all uncleanness away from you, O you Ahl ul Bayt, and purify you with a thorough purification.” (Surah Ahzab, Verse 33)

“Say (O Muhammad): I ask of you no reward except love (muwaddah) for my family (qurbah).” (Surah Shura, Verse 23)

About the Ahl al-Bayt, Prophet Muhammad's hadith says: "My Ahl al-Bayt are like the ark of Prophet Nuh – whoever gets into it is saved; and whoever stays away is drowned and lost."

So, the *Sirat al-Mustaqeem* is the Path of Prophet Muhammad and his family (Ahl al-Bayt).

It is not enough to love the Prophet and Imams by going to mosque to celebrate their birthdays or cry during their death days. This is good and important but not enough. The love of the Rasul (s) and his Ahl al-Bayt ('a) should mean loving them by making them our role models and living our life according to their Sunnah (the way they taught us to live). Loving the Prophet and Ahl al-Bayt is called *Tawalla*.

Is there a path from which we should stay away? The next verse, which is the last verse of Surah Fateha, explains that. There are two other paths other than the right path. One path is the one that does less than what you are supposed to do. Allah is angry (*maghdhub*) on those who do not accept the entire right way.

The other is the path that accepts the right way, but that does more than they should or go above the limits. Allah calls those people astray (*dhaalleen*).

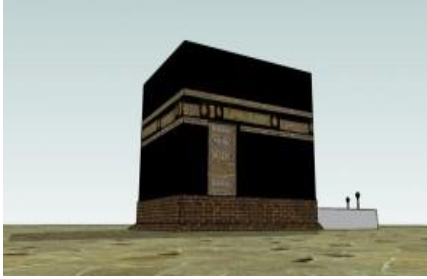
Many scholars say that when Allah talks of the path of those who do less (on whom Allah is angry), he is talking about the Jewish people because they refused to accept or follow any other Prophet after Prophet Musa ('a) and they refused to accept any other Revelation after the Tawrat (Torah).

The scholars also say that when Allah talks about the path of those who go above the limits (those who have gone astray), it refers to the Christian people because they decided to accept Prophet 'Isa ('a) - after accepting Prophet Musa ('a) before him - but then they raised the rank of Prophet 'Isa ('a) (they went above the limits) and said he was "the Son of God," which is not acceptable as Allah SWT does not have nor does He need a son, a family, etc.

However, any human being who falls behind in accepting the completely Right Way, the Way of Islam, can be said to be on the path that makes Allah angry and any human being who goes beyond what Islam says can be one who has gone astray.

So the best way is to follow the Right Path, which is the Path of Islam as taught by all the Prophets and Imams and Books or Revelation of Allah SWT.

STORY:
Nabi Ibrahim ('a) Prays for Guidance



After coming to Hejaz (Makkah), Prophet Ibrahim ('a) said to his son: "I have been commanded by Almighty Allah to re-build a house in this desert." Prophet Ibrahim ('a) was referring to the Ka'aba, the house which had been built by Prophet Adam ('a) and now he was going to reconstruct (rebuild) it. Hearing this, Prophet Ismail ('a) told his father he was ready to help him in this noble task.

After they completed the Ka'aba, Angel Jibraeel, who was always guiding Prophet Ibrahim ('a) brought the black stone (Hajr al-Aswad) from the heavenly garden and inserted it in its proper place. The Black Stone is still on the Ka'aba today.



Then Prophet Ibrahim ('a) said the following Du'a to Almighty Allah: *"Our Lord! And make us both submissive to Thee and (raise) from our offspring a nation submitting to Thee, and show us our way of devotion and turn to us (mercifully), surely You are the Oft-returning (to mercy), the Merciful..."* (2:128).

He further prayed: *"Our Lord! And raise up in them a Messenger from among them who shall recite to them Thy communications and teach them the Book and the wisdom, and purify them; surely You are the Mighty, the Wise."* (2:129). Almighty Allah granted Prophet Ibrahim ('a)'s du'a and raised our Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) from amongst the progeny of Nabi Ibrahim ('a).

This prayer of Nabi Ibrahim ('a) shows that being a Muslim requires commitment and effort. Even a distinguished Prophet of Almighty Allah like Prophet Ibrahim ('a) makes a request to

Allah to help him be submissive (obedient). He was constantly striving to submit to Allah and surrendered to the will of Allah, becoming a true Muslim.

Allah SWT loves those who submit to His commands and in return grants His believer what the believer asks for. In this case, Prophet Ibrahim ('a) and his son, Nabi Ismail ('a) had completed building the Ka'aba and then they raised their hands in prayer for Allah's guidance themselves and their families. This teaches us that even with Dua's, we should not be selfish to just pray for ourselves but include others first - especially our family, relatives, friends, neighbors and community.

Once the Ka'aba was built, Prophet Ibrahim ('a) was appointed to invite people to perform the ritual of tawaf of the Holy Ka'aba. Prophet Ibrahim ('a) announced what Almighty Allah had commanded him to all the people. Thus, the Ka'aba was the first house to be built for people according to Allah's order as a place for worship. In it, there are clear signs; such as the standing place of Ibrahim (Makaam Ibrahim) and whoever enters it, is safe. Lady Hajar ('a), Prophet Ismail ('a)'s mother came and gave a cloth as a gift to cover the Ka'aba.

In that year no one performed the Hajj (pilgrimage) except Prophet Ibrahim ('a), his son Prophet Ismail ('a) and his wife, Lady Hajar ('a).

APPLICATION TO LIFE

We learn the concepts of Tawalla and Tabarra in Furu' Ad-Deen, the 10 Branches of our Religion. Tawalla means to be friends with those who are the friends of Allah and the Ahl Al-Bayt. Tabarra means to keep away from those people who do not love Allah or those who dislike or hate the Ahl Al-Bayt. In these verses, we pray to Allah to help us stay on the path of those whom He loves or who love Him and to stay away from the path of those whom Allah is angry with or who don't love Allah. We have to be careful of the kind of friends we keep because friends can have a good or bad influence on our life and the choices we make in our life.

Our Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) has said about Surah Al-Fatiha: "It is the mother of the Qur'an and a remedy for every sickness."

If you are sick or have a need, recite Surah Fatiha. If you are in pain, recite Surah Fatiha 70 times to cure pain anywhere. To recite Surah Fatiha once is the same hasanaat (good deeds) as reciting two-thirds of the Holy Qur'an.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- (A) What are we praying to Allah for in these two verses?
- (B) What is “the Right Path” or Sirat Al-Mustaqeem?
- (C) How can we follow the Right Path or the Sirat Al-Mustaqeem?
- (D) On whom is Allah SWT angry according to this Ayah?
- (E) Whose path is the path of those who have gone astray according to this Ayah?
- (F) When Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) did Du’a, what did he pray for and who did he pray for?






ACTIVITY

Seeking Guidance through Du’a

We seek for guidance for Allah SWT, the Holy Prophet (s) and his Holy Household, the Ahl Al-Bayt (‘a). In addition, there are many people in our lives who help guide us on the right path. THE FIVE FINGER RULE helps us to remember all those people in our dua’s.

Trace your hand and write down what each finger represents.



-  The thumb is the closest finger to you, so you start by praying for your parents, your grandparents, uncles, aunts, friends – all the people that help you get closer to Allah SWT
-  The index finger is used to point. Next, pray for all the people who have guided you through their knowledge and wisdom. This includes ‘ulema, authors of Islamic books, teachers who taught you Islam/ Qur’an, etc.
-  The tallest finger is the Imam of our Time (‘ajtfs) and his family. We pray for his safety and ask for guidance from the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a)
-  The ring finger is the weakest finger. We pray for all those who are in need, the poor, the sick, those who have their own special needs, etc.
-  The little finger is the smallest and it is for us to remember ourselves. We pray to Allah SWT to guide us on the right path and to follow the teachings of our Holy Prophet (s) and his family.

CRAFT IDEA

Kids can trace their hand on construction paper and cut it out. They can stick the cut-out onto the back of a paper plate. Next, students can glue the Du'a and names of people they pray for, on each finger of the hand. They can decorate with stickers.



LESSON 2: FORGIVENESS & PROTECTION

Short verse

رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْ لِي

“My Lord! Surely I have wronged myself, so please forgive me.

Long verse

رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَغَفَرَ لَهُ ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

“My Lord! Surely, I have wronged myself, so please forgive me; so He forgave him; Surely, He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.” (Surah Qasas 28:16).

TAFSIR



Firawn hated Nabi Musa (‘a) even though Nabi Musa (‘a) was brought up in his house. One day, Nabi Musa (‘a) found an Egyptian cook of Firawn beating a poor helpless Jewish person. When the Jewish person saw Nabi Musa (‘a), he asked Nabi Musa (‘a) to help him from being beaten up by the cook. Nabi Musa (‘a) asked the cook to stop beating the Jewish person but the cook didn’t listen and continued beating the helpless Jewish person. When Nabi Musa (‘a) saw that the cook wouldn’t stop when being told to, he punched the cook in an attempt to stop him. When the cook was punched, he fell down and died.

Nabi Musa (‘a), in his attempt to help the oppressed Jewish person had killed the offender. He thought that the Egyptians would try to seek revenge for the death of their fellow Egyptian, the cook. So, Nabi Musa (‘a) prayed to Allah SWT to protect him and to keep his deed hidden from the men of Firawn, who were his enemies.

At this stage in his Prophethood, Nabi Musa (‘a) was not allowed by Allah to proclaim Allah’s message to the disbelievers. That means, he was in “Taqiyyah” (hiding his faith from his enemies). So, he prayed for protection.

Recite this Du’a when you need Allah to forgive you and to protect you.

There are two beautiful attributes of Allah (Al-Asma’ al-Husna) in this Ayah: *Al-Ghafoor* and *Ar-Raheem*.

Al-Ghafoor means “The Forgiving.” Al-Ghafoor comes from the word “ghafir” which means veiling or covering. So, Allah forgives us by covering our sins and by protecting us against punishment due to his forgiveness.

Ar-Raheem means “The Merciful or The Compassionate.” *Raheem* comes from the word from *Rahmah* meaning, *Ar-Rahim* is the one who grants *Rahmah* to us. When Allah showers His *Rahmah* on us, He is blessing us with guidance, forgiveness and strong belief; surely Allah’s *Rahmah* or blessings on us are infinite – they cannot be counted, nor can they ever be exhausted.

STORY: Protected by the Qur’an



People visiting the idols hanging on the Kaaba did a lot of shopping in Mecca and made the Quraysh rich. How dare Prophet Muhammad say the idols were useless and that there was only One God, Allah, who couldn’t be seen?! So, the Quraysh who were mad with the Prophet (S) for teaching this, secretly decided to call a representative from every tribe to kill the Prophet (S) so that he would no longer spread Islam and stop people from worshipping the idols hanging on the Kaaba.

At midnight the enemies of Islam surrounded the house of Prophet Muhammad. But Allah was the supporter and protector of His beloved Prophet. Allah already informed the Prophet (S) about this secret plot. He was given the command to journey from Mecca to Medina and live in Medina from then on. This event would be known as Hijrah (migration) and the Islamic Calendar would begin from that date.



On the night of Hijrah, Prophet Muhammad left his house to begin his journey. As he came out of the house he threw some sand towards the men who were waiting to kill him and recited the following verse of Surah Ya Seen:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا فَأَغْشَيْنَاهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ

"And We have made before them a barrier and a barrier behind them, then We have covered them over so that they do not see." (36:9)

Because of this, the men surrounding his house did not see the Prophet (S) pass by. It was as if they became blind for a moment!

So that the enemies would be tricked into believing that the Prophet (S) was still at home, the Prophet asked Imam Ali to sleep in his bed. This was a dangerous thing for Imam Ali to do because the enemies could easily come in and kill him thinking the Prophet was in his bed. But Imam Ali loved the Prophet (S) and was happy to help him.

On his way out of Mecca, the Prophet (S) met Abu Bakr who asked if he could go with him also. The Prophet took him. The Prophet knew that his enemies would soon find out that they had been tricked and they would track him down. So, he took shelter in the cave of Thawr. Allah commanded a pigeon to build a nest and lay eggs right at the entrance of the cave and a spider to spin its web across the opening of the cave after the Prophet (S) entered the cave.



Back at the Prophet's house, the enemies looked in the house. They saw Prophet Muhammad in bed, covering himself with his blanket. They rushed in, swords drawn and ready. But instead of the Prophet, they were surprised to find Imam Ali fast asleep in the Prophet's bed. They were enraged. They asked Imam Ali: "Where is Muhammad?"

Imam Ali ('a) asked them if they had left the Prophet (S) in his care.

They sent someone to track Prophet Muhammad. The expert tracker followed the footsteps to the opening of the cave but when he saw the undisturbed nest with the eggs in it and the unbroken web the spider had spun, he knew that no one could have entered the cave. So, the tracker turned back without entering the cave.



Prophet Muhammad (S) then continued on his journey and reached Yathrib safe. Yathrib exploded in joy and celebration and was renamed Madinat un-Nabi or the City of the Prophet. Today, we call it Madina. Masjidun Nabawi is in Madina.

About that night, Imam Ali ('a) says he had the best sleep! Allah was so pleased with Imam Ali ('a) for sleeping in the Prophet's bed that night – while endangering his own life – that a verse was revealed in Imam Ali's honour in Surah Al Baqarah (2:207)



"And among mankind is he who sells his nafs (self) in exchange for the pleasure of Allah."

APPLICATION TO LIFE

We learn from this Ayah that Allah is the best of Protectors. The Qur'an also has the power to protect us. There are many Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an that we can recite for protection including this one. It is highly recommended, for example, to recite Surah Ikhlas ten times when leaving your house as it will keep you safe until you return back home.

We learn from this Ayah that Islam allows us to do Taqiyyah (hide our faith) when our life is in real danger. We should never do things to endanger our life as life is a precious gift and blessing from Allah SWT for His servants.

Another thing we learn from this verse is that Allah is Most Forgiving. He forgives our sins and hides our faults from others. The Qur'an often talks about Allah's forgiveness. In fact, in Islam, to lose hope of Allah's Mercy and Forgiveness is the second Major Sin (right after Shirk – assigning partners to Allah). That is how much Allah loves us! Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: *"Most surely I am the Most Forgiving to one who repents and believes and does good deeds then continues to follow the right guidance. (20:82)*

We are supposed to try learn from and live by the Asma' al-Husna. So, the one who wishes to learn from the attribute of "al-Ghafoor" should constantly ask Allah's forgiveness. But since Allah forgives us when we do wrong, we too should be forgiving when others hurt us or others apologize to us. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah teaches us to be forgiving to others and to pardon others: *"Do not let those among you who possess grace and abundance swear against giving to the near of kin and the poor and those who have fled in Allah's way; they should pardon and overlook. Do not you love that Allah would forgive you? Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." (24:22)*

We are also supposed to live by Allah's name "Ar-Raheem" by being merciful and compassionate with others. The Prophet (S) has said, "One who has no compassion towards people will be deprived from Allah's Compassion." He has also said, "One who does not respect the seniors among us, nor shows compassion towards our young, nor safeguards the rights of the scholars among us, is surely not of us." Compassion among the servants of Allah is a sure path to achieving the mercy of Allah. The Messenger of Allah has said, "Be merciful unto those on earth so that those in the heavens may be merciful unto you."

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. What do we learn from this Ayah?
2. If we want Allah to forgive us, what should we do?
3. If we want Allah to be merciful towards us, how should we act?
4. What do you learn from the story?

ACTIVITY

Forgiveness

Invite students to give responses and to act out the following scenarios. What does forgiveness look like when ...?

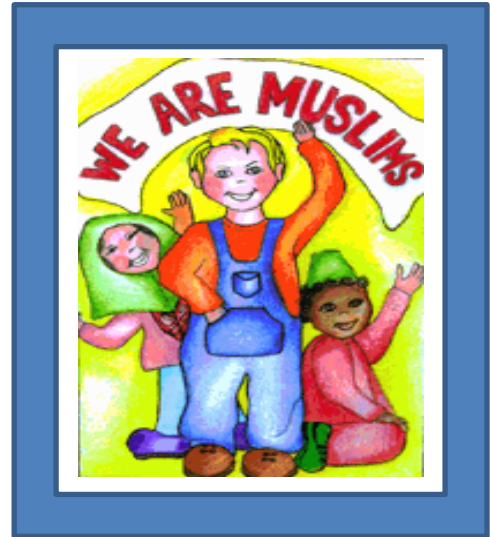
- ☹️ Your friend accidently broke your favourite toy
- ☹️ You did something to someone who you feel is a very bad person
- ☹️ Your brother or sister takes away something of yours without asking
- ☹️ Your friend got angry and said something unkind to you and then apologized
- ☹️ Someone keeps doing something hurtful to you over and over without being sorry

CRAFT IDEA

Students can make a 'Badge of Protection' from cardstock paper with punched holes around the edges. Students can lace ribbon/yarn around the edges. The Du'a can be glued in middle and then decorated with gems. Make sure there is enough ribbon left as a loop on top of the badge so that it can be hung on a door or bed.



Consider...
Is it kind?
Is it helpful?



How many times
should we
forgive a person?
As many times
as you would
like Allah to
forgive you.



O Allah,
if I hurt others, give me the
strength to apologize.
If people hurt me, give me the
strength to forgive. Ameen



LESSON 3: FOR INCREASE IN KNOWLEDGE

رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

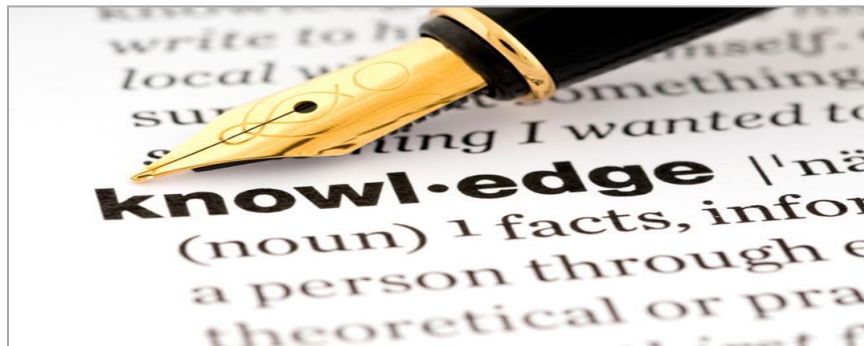
“My Lord! Increase my knowledge.” (Surah Taha, 20:114).

TAFSIR

This Ayah is part of the following complete Ayah: “Supremely exalted is therefore Allah, the King, the Truth, and do not make haste with the Quran before its revelation is made complete to you and say: O my Lord ! Increase my knowledge.”

According to the Tafsir of Aqa Mahdi Pooya, this Ayah makes it clear that the whole Quran had been revealed to the Holy Prophet (S) before he recited its chapters and verses to the people as and when commanded by Allah which is known as gradual revelation.

The word “Qur’an” comes from the Arabic verb “qura-a,” which means to recite or to read. In this Ayah, the Prophet (S) is asked to recite this Du’a: “Oh my Rabb, Increase my knowledge.” Rabb is one of the 99 Attributes (Al-Asma’ Al-Husna) of Allah - it is very hard to translate “Rabb;” Some Ulama’ (scholars of Islam) think that there are 12 meanings for the word Rabb and that Rabb may be the Greatest Attribute of Allah (Ismi A’adham). Reciting this name often brings great favours from Allah. Rabb means Cherisher, Sustainer, and Provider. As soon as Allah wills that something is created, His Rububiyat begins. The Rabb nurtures the created being with love, care and never-ending protection, providing all the creation’s needs.



Seeking Knowledge is very important in Islam. It is so important that the first verse revealed to the Holy Prophet (S) tells us to “Read!” (96:1). The Holy Qur’an also says: “Allah elevates to high positions those from amongst you who are faithful and those who have acquired knowledge.” (58:11) The Holy Prophet (S) tells us “It is obligatory for every Muslim to acquire knowledge. Allah likes those who seek knowledge.” And as for those of you who go out to seek knowledge, Our Prophet (S) says that the angels are so delighted with you that they spread their wings. And every single creature of the heaven and the earth including the fish in the sea ask for your

forgiveness. Wait, that is not all! As you proceed on the path of seeking knowledge, Allah makes you proceed on the path of Jannah also.

APPLICATION TO LIFE

Seeking knowledge is hard work – but the Holy Prophet (S) told his followers fourteen hundred years ago, when travelling was very hard (there were no airplanes or cars or trains!) that even if they find knowledge all the way in China, they have to go there to seek it. This was the Prophet's way of saying that it doesn't matter how much effort it requires, seek knowledge – that is how important it is.

However, just having knowledge is not enough. What is the point of knowledge if you don't act on it? As your knowledge increases, so it should change the way you act. Imam Ali ('a) says: *“O you who carry knowledge around with you; are you only carrying it around with you? For surely knowledge belongs to whoever knows and then acts accordingly, so that his action corresponds to his knowledge. There will be a people who will carry knowledge around with them, but it will not pass beyond their shoulders. Their inner most thoughts will contradict what they display in public, and their actions will contradict what they know.”*

Imam 'Ali, the door to the Prophetic city of Knowledge, once told his companion Kumayl: *“O Kumayl, knowledge is better than wealth; for knowledge guards you, while you have to guard wealth; and wealth is less when spent, while knowledge grows and increases when used.”*

The Holy Qur'an is *furqan* - that which teaches us to distinguish between good and evil; it is called *dhikr*, the reminder. It is also *Al kitab al-hakeem* (a decisive book of divine wisdom) and *mubeen* (clear and expressive). But the Qur'an is a **book** of knowledge. It is hard for us to understand some of its verses as the knowledge in it is so deep and so vast and sometimes, mysterious – it even has some mysterious letters like “Ya Seen” or “Ta Ha.” We need someone to explain the Qur'an to us. A book can tell us what to do but it can't show us **how** to do it. So, we also need someone to show us how to live according to the Qur'an. That is why the Qur'an was revealed to a Prophet, a Messenger and a Divine Guide – our Last Prophet, Muhammad Al-Mustafa (S) who was succeeded by the twelve Imams. We should learn our knowledge from the Book of Allah, the Holy Qur'an, and we should act on that knowledge by making the Prophets and Ma'sumeen our role models and following their way of life (Sunnah).



STORY:

Bahloul the Wise Companion of the Seventh Imam

Haroun Rashid feared for the safety of his kingdom from the 7th Imam, Musa Kadhim ('a); therefore, he hated the Imam and his companions and imprisoned the Imam for a long time. He later had poisoned food sent to our Imam ('a) while the Imam was in cruel Haroun's prison in Baghdad. Our Holy Imam ('a) is buried near Baghdad in a place which has since been named Kadhmayn. "Kadhmayn" means "the two Kadhims" and it refers to Imam Musa Kadhim ('a)'s and Imam Muhammad Al-Jawad At-Taqi ('a)'s shrines.



Some of Imam Musa Al-Kadhim ('a)'s companions and special friends came to him because the Khalifa Haroun was angry with them, and asked him for advice on what to do. The Imam answered them by writing the letter “ج” -- all of them understood the letter in their own way and acted accordingly. One person took “j” to mean “jala watan” or exile and left town. Another thought of “jabl” and went to hide in the mountains. Bahlool (whose real name was Wahab bin Amr) took the “j” to mean “junoon” or crazy and so he started acting like he was crazy. He got away with saying the truth by acting crazy. This is how all of the Imam's companions were saved from calamity.

Before acting crazy, Bahlool lived a life of influence and power, but after obeying the Imam's order, he turned his face away from the majesty and splendor of the world. In reality, he became crazy for Allah's pleasure. He dressed in rags, lived in deserted places instead of Haroun's palaces, and lived on a bite of stale bread. He did not accept favours from or depend upon Khalif Haroun or those like him who were rich but who hated our Imams and their Shi'as and were not really good followers of Islam.

One day Haroun was drunk (i.e., he had drunk alcohol) and was sitting in a place on the corner of the river, watching the water waves. Meanwhile, Bahlool passed by. Haroun gave a drunken laugh when he saw Bahlool and then gave Bahlool a happy, warm welcome, and ordered him to sit down.

Haroun said, "Bahlool, today I am going to ask you a matter. If you give the right answer I will give you 1,000 Dinars (money); if you can't answer, I will give the order to throw you from my palace into the river.

Bahlool said, "I don't have any need for the Dinars, but I will accept your offer on one condition. If I correctly answer your question then you must free 100 friends of mine that are in your prison; if I don't answer correctly, you can throw me in the river." Haroun agreed to this deal.

So, Haroun asked, "If I have one goat, one wolf, and a bundle of grass, and I want to get them one by one from this side of the river to the other side of the river; then in which order should they be taken so that the goat can't eat the grass and the wolf can't eat the goat?"



"First leave the wolf and take the goat across the river. Then come back and take the grass, leave it there, but bring the goat back. Now leave the goat here and take the wolf to the other side. Leave it there, come back alone, and then take the goat. This way one by one, they can all be safely taken across the river. Neither will the goat eat the grass, nor will the wolf eat the goat."

Haroun exclaimed, "Bravo! You gave the correct answer."

Then Bahloul told Haroun the names of his 100 friends who were all Shi'as of the Holy Imam. When Haroun received the list of names from Haroun, he recognized the names and knew these were all Shia's and those who loved Imam Kadhim ('a), so he broke his promise.

Imam Musa Kadhim ('a) who was so loved by Bahloul taught us the following about knowledge: *"Participate in the gathering of thinkers and keep close to them even though you find no place to sit and are forced to stand, for, God revives dead hearts under the blessing of wisdom in the same way that He revives the dead land through rainfall."*

STORY #2 **Seeking Knowledge**

Seeking knowledge is hard work – but the Holy Prophet (s) told his followers fourteen hundred years ago, when travelling was very hard (there were no airplanes or cars or trains!) that even if they find knowledge all the way in China, they have to go there to seek it. This was the Prophet's way of saying that it doesn't matter how much effort it requires, seek knowledge – that is how important it is.

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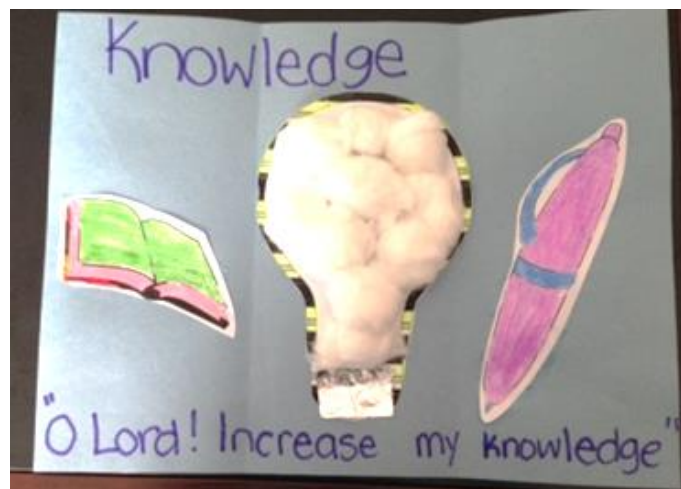
"O Kumayl, knowledge is better than wealth; for knowledge guards you, while you have to guard wealth; and wealth is diminished when spent, while knowledge grows and increases when put in use."

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. What do we learn from this Ayah?
2. What is better – knowledge or wealth?
3. Why do our Imams say having knowledge is not enough? What should we do with our knowledge?
4. What do you learn from the story?

CRAFT IDEA

Students make a light bulb in the centre of folded construction paper. They glue cotton onto the light bulb. Students glue images of books and pens around the light bulb. The Du'a is written at the bottom of the construction paper.

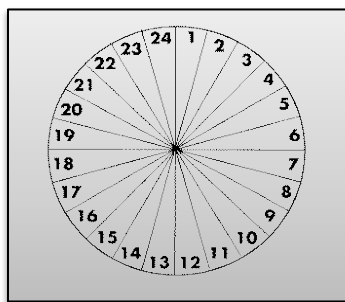


ACTIVITY

Knowledge

We have repeatedly heard the following hadiths of the Holy Prophet (s) regarding knowledge.

- ✍ "The ink of the scholar is more sacred than the blood of the martyr."
- ✍ "Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave."



Create a circle graph (with 24 divisions to show the 24 hours in a day like the example on the left.) Use the circle graph to show how much of your life is spent in learning every day (show a typical weekday in the month of Ramadhan, for example). See the example below.



LESSON 4: IMPORTANCE OF SALAH

Short verse

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ

“My Lord! Make me keep up prayer (salah),

Long verse

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ

“My Lord! Make me keep up prayer (salah) and from my offspring (too). Our Lord, and accept my prayer” (Surah Ibrahim 14:40)

TAFSIR

This Ayah is Prophet Ibrahim (‘a)’s Du’a asking Allah SWT to make him establish prayer, and to give his children the motivation to do the same, and to favour them all by accepting their du’a (supplication). In this Du’a, Prophet Ibrahim includes Prophet Muhammad (S) in this dua’ as Prophet Muhammad (S) is also an offspring of Prophet Ibrahim (‘a).

According to the explanation of Aqa Mahdi Pooya, there shall always be an inheritor of Prophet Ibrahim's creed (belief) among his offspring (children) to defend and promote the religion of Allah. Prophet Ibrahim (‘a) was promised this in the Qur’an. The Old Testament of the Bible – which both Jews and Christians follow as inspired revelation from God – also talks about Allah’s covenant with Prophet Ibrahim (‘a) or Abraham as he is called in the Bible.

Qur’an:

“And when his Lord tried Ibrahim with certain words, he fulfilled them. He said: Surely I will make you an Imam of men. Ibrahim said: And of my offspring? My covenant does not include the unjust, said He.” (Al-Baqarah, 2:124)

Bible – Old Testament (King James Version)

Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. (Genesis 17: 5 -7)

“Through you shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:3).

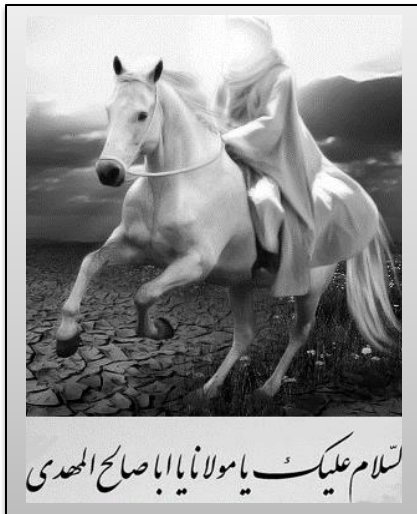
Allah made Prophet Ibrahim ('a) a Prophet and then an Imam of mankind. When he was tested and passed all the tests, he became an Imam. According to verse 33 of Surah Ale Imran, Allah chose and preferred Prophet Adam ('a) and Prophet Nuh ('a) and the descendants of Prophet Ibrahim ('a) and the descendants of Imran (Ale Imran) above all His creatures. The necessary merits of these preferred people were known to Allah only but whosoever was chosen had to undergo an evident test or trial and pass it.

The office of *Imamah* is not inherited or passed on from father to son. It is Allah's promise, which is only given to a sinless (infallible) believer of Allah who comes out successful from the tests and trials specifically prescribed for him by Allah. A sinner or a forgiven sinner cannot be an Imam.

Allah made it obligatory on mankind to obey Prophet Ibrahim ('a) in all matters (because he was Prophet and Imam). After Prophet Ibrahim ('a), his family tree was divided into two branches as he had two sons: Prophet Is-haq ('a)'s descendants and Prophet Ismail ('a)'s descendants. Prophet Is-haq's descendants ended in Prophet Isa ('a) who was raised to heavens and is still alive. The descendants of Nabi Ismail ('a) ended in Hazrat Abdul Muttalib.

From there, it divided into Hazrat Abdullah, who was the father of Prophet Muhammad al Mustafa (S) and Hazrat Abu Talib ('a), who was the father of Imam 'Ali al Murtada ('a). Muhammad and Ali were identical with each other in spirit, character and wisdom. One reflected the other. (See Family Tree of the Prophets and Imams from Adam ('a) to Imam al-Mahdi ('a) on next page)

The two descendants of Prophet Ibrahim – Prophet Muhammad and Imam 'Ali - through Nabi Ismail ('a) united when Imam Ali ('a) married Sayyida Fatimah az-Zahra ('a), the daughter of the Holy Prophet, and from there the Imamah continued through Imam Husayn ('a) till Imam Al-Hujjah ('atfs).

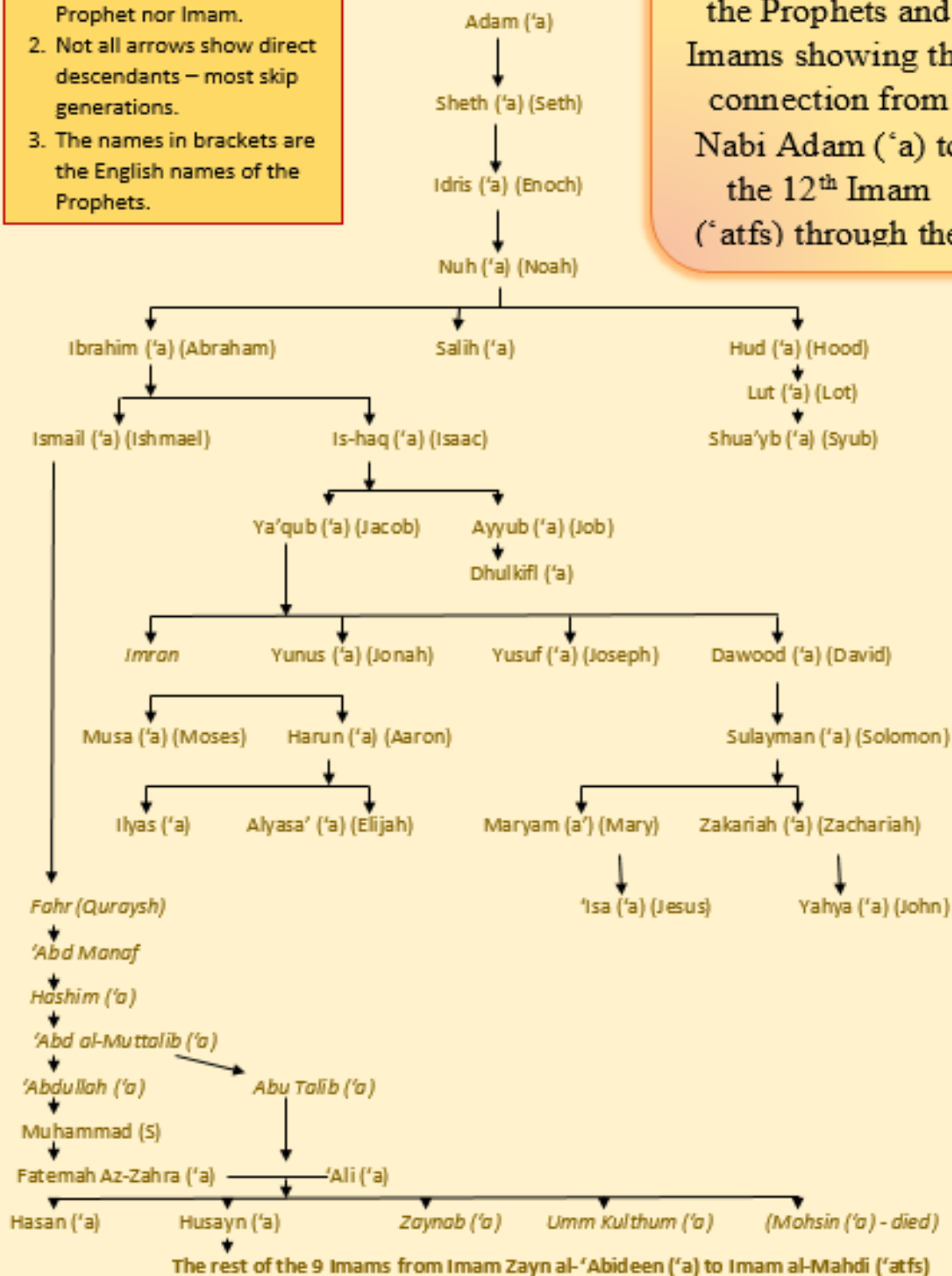


Therefore, as it was a duty for everyone to follow Prophet Ibrahim ('a), who was Rasul and Imam, it is also the duty of all Muslims to obey and follow the twelve Imams after our Last and Final Prophet of Islam, Muhammad al-Mustafa (S). Imam 'Ali ('a) is the first Imam and the rightful wasi (successor) of the Prophet (S). Our twelfth Imam is alive and in ghaibah and we follow the Imam of the time, Imam Al-Mahdi Al-Hujjah ('atfs) in all matters. We should pray for his safety every day and say salaam to him every day.

Notes:

1. Names in Italics are neither Prophet nor Imam.
2. Not all arrows show direct descendants – most skip generations.
3. The names in brackets are the English names of the Prophets.

The Family Tree of the Prophets and Imams showing the connection from Nabi Adam (‘a) to the 12th Imam (‘atfs) through the



In this Ayah, Prophet Ibrahim ('a) asks that he and his offspring should keep up “salah” (daily prayer). Salah is the first Furu ad-Deen (branch of religion) and is the pillar of our religion. Prophet Muhammad (S) said: “The first thing that Allah made obligatory upon my Ummah was the five prayers; and the first thing from their acts of worship that shall be taken up will be the five prayers; and the first thing that they will be questioned about will be the five prayers.”

STORY

Bilal the First Muaddhin of Islam

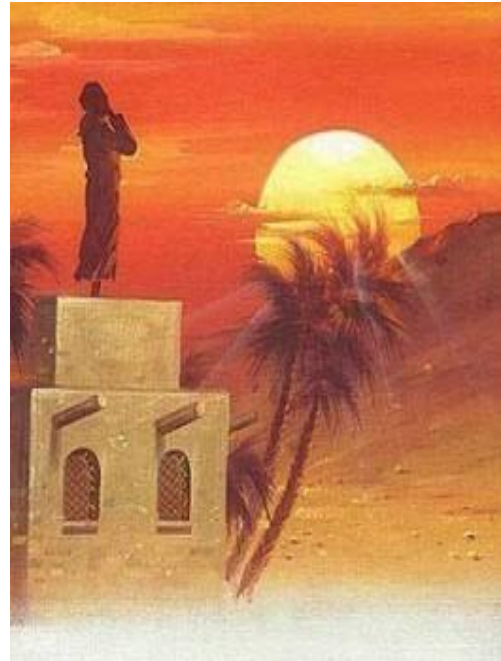
Bilal was an African. He was a slave. He was amongst the first to convert to Islam. When his owner got the news of his conversion, he beat Bilal and made him work harder. He also fed him very little. He was hoping that when Bilal faced all this hardship, he would give up believing in his new religion, Islam and go back to idol worship.



When this did not work, his owner started torturing Bilal. He would make him lie bareback on stones made red-hot by the hot desert sun and leave him out there in the cold nights. He also whipped him constantly. Bilal became weak but still when his master leaned over him he heard him whisper “*Ahad, Ahad*” – meaning “One, One,” showing his strong belief in the One Allah, the hearer of all Du’as.

News of the sufferings of Bilal reached the Holy Prophet (S) and he became very sad. He told his companions that whoever could afford to buy Bilal from his slave-master should do so and free Bilal. Some books say that Abu Bakr managed to do this and others say that it was the Holy Prophet (S) himself who bought and freed him. As soon as he was free, Bilal devoted his life to the Prophet (S) and Islam. He was also one of the people who migrated from Mecca to Madinah during the Hijrah (migration of the Prophet).

After Hijrah to Madina, the Muslims could pray in public – they no longer had to hide their faith like they did in Mecca, where their lives were always in danger. Everyone wanted to participate in prayers together but the problem was how to get everyone together at the same time and inform them that prayers were being performed. The people suggested the use of a bell but the Holy Prophet (S) said that this was a Christian practice. Someone else mentioned a horn, but that was being used by the Jews. The use of a fire was also rejected since it was a practice of the Magi (fire-worshippers). Finally, someone suggested calling out loudly to tell everyone it was time for Salah. The Holy Prophet (S) liked this idea and asked Bilal who had a loud voice to call out "*Salat al-jama'ah*" before every Salah.



Later, Jibrail brought down the words of the *adhan* and Bilal was taught these words. He became the first *muaddhin* (Caller of Prayer) of Islam.

Amongst the companions were some people who were racist and some who were jealous. They wondered why Bilal, being a slave and an African whose skin was black, was given such a great position. According to them he did not deserve such a right but they dared not say this to the Prophet (S).

Instead they complained that that Bilal could not pronounce the sound '*sheen*' and was saying '*seen*' instead of sheen. They said, Bilal said "*As-hadu...*" instead of "*Ash-hadu.*" Because of this, they told the Prophet (S) he should be stopped from giving the *adhan*.

At that time, Jibrail came down from the Heavens and told the Prophet (S) to tell the people that Allah (SWT) accepted Bilal's *seen* as *sheen*. This silenced all the companions.

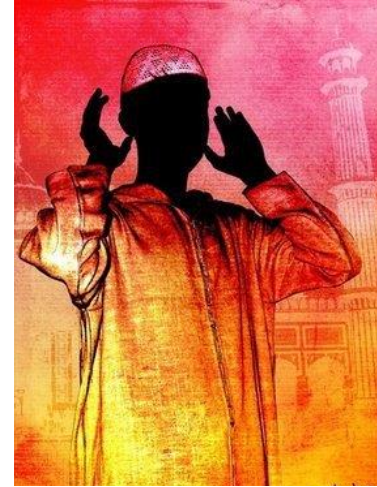
When Rasulallah (S) conquered Mecca, it was Bilal who was asked to call *Adhan* from the top of the Ka'aba. Bilal was a faithful companion of Prophet (S) till his death. After his death, he was very upset when Abu Bakr declared himself the first khalifa as he knew that Imam 'Ali ('a) had been chosen as the Successor of the Prophet (S). Bilal had been present in Ghadeer.

As Khalifa, Abu Bakr wanted to lead the prayers so that he could show he had power and authority. He asked Bilal to give *adhaan* since he knew that this was a familiar sign to the Muslims from the Prophet (S)'s time.

Bilal had given adhan daily since Hijrah and he knew that if he gave it now, it would only show that he supported Abu Bakr. Therefore, he refused to do this implying that he would only give adhan at the request of the rightful successor of the Holy Prophet (S) (meaning Imam 'Ali).

Abu Bakr, very angry at Bilal, made his life so hard that Bilal left his beloved Madina and moved to Syria. But he missed Madina – so some months later, he returned.

When Sayyeda Fatimah ('a) heard that Bilal had come back to Madinah, she sent a message to him asking him to recite adhan once more as he used to when her father had been alive. Bilal entered the mosque at Dhuhr time and began calling Adhan. As the citizens of Madinah heard his familiar voice they gathered around and remembered the days of the Prophet (S). Sayyeda Fatimah ('a) and her children started crying when they heard his voice and when he reached "*Ash-hadu ana Muhammadur Rasulallah,*" someone came to Bilal and told him to stop as Sayyeda Fatimah ('a) was crying a lot from remembering her father.

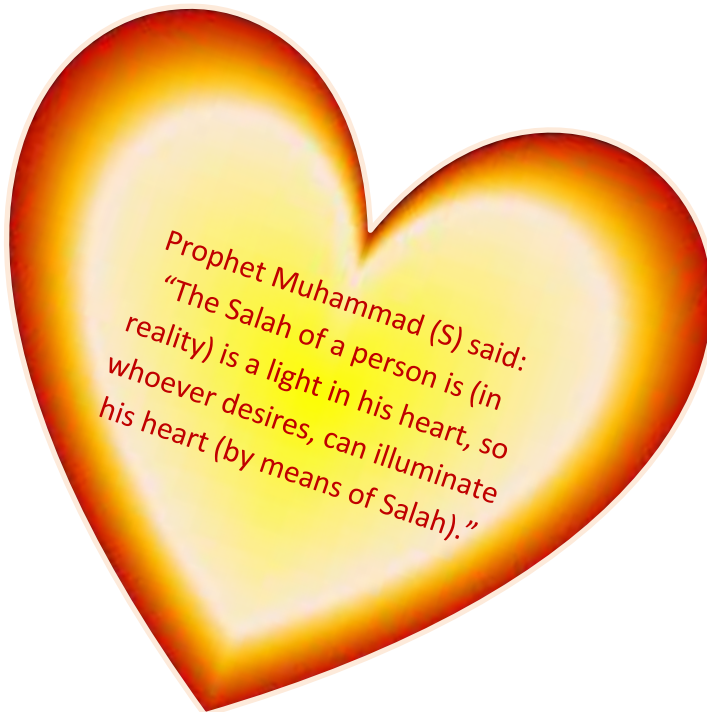
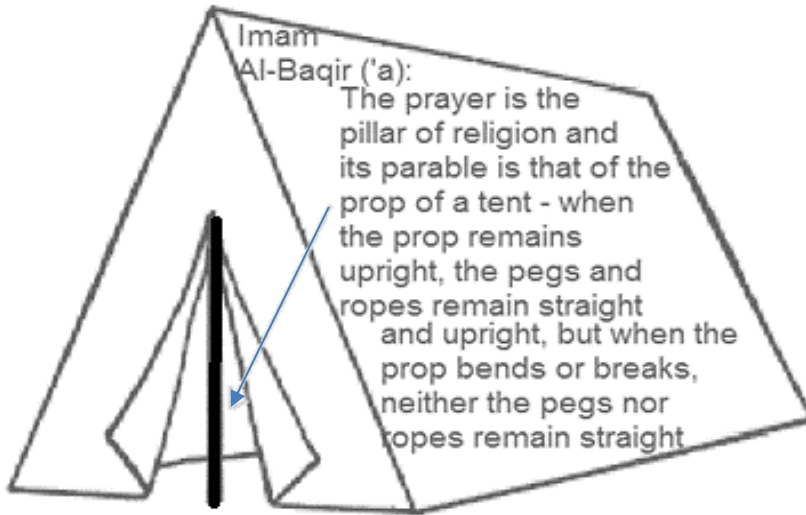


Bilal immediately stopped but by now he had the attention of a large crowd. He took advantage of the situation and began telling them to reject the government of Abu Bakr and accept the true successor of the Prophet (S) – Imam 'Ali ('a).



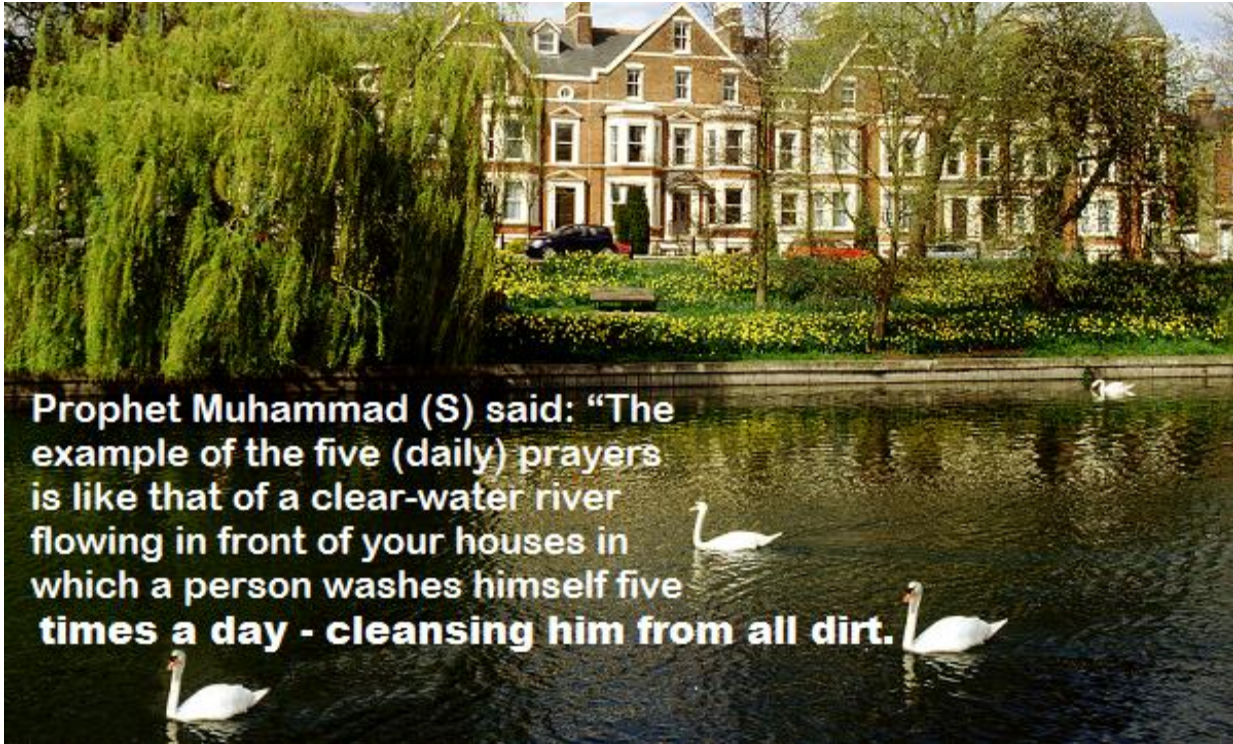
Bilal lived the rest of his life in Damascus, Syria and when he died, he was mourned by the people there for a long time. His tomb is present even today as an important site for ziyarah and many visit it to pay their respects to this great and faithful companion of the Holy Prophet (S) and his Ahl al-Bayt ('a).

APPLICATION TO LIFE



Salah is the pillar of our Deen and it helps us keep our faith in our religion alive – it helps us remember that Allah is the Greatest and we are His servants and we submit to Him. Just like a tent needs a pillar to keep prop it up, our faith needs Salah to prop it up and keep it straight and firm.

When we pray Salah five times a day, it reminds us to thank Allah and remember Him. It makes us stay away from doing sins throughout the day because we know we will soon have to go stand up before Allah and talk to Him again (so it makes us ashamed to sin). That's how Salah becomes like a light in our hearts.



Prophet Muhammad (S) said: “The example of the five (daily) prayers is like that of a clear-water river flowing in front of your houses in which a person washes himself five times a day - cleansing him from all dirt.”

Salah is like taking a shower in a refreshing, clean river. When we say our Salah five times a day, we clean ourselves five times a day because in Salah we remember Allah and we prostrate to al-Akbar and we ask forgiveness from Al-Ghafoor.

The Call to Prayer (Adhan) and the Call to Begin (Iqamah) are said before Salah. It is mustahab to start the five wajib daily prayers with Adhan and Iqamah and there is much reward for it.

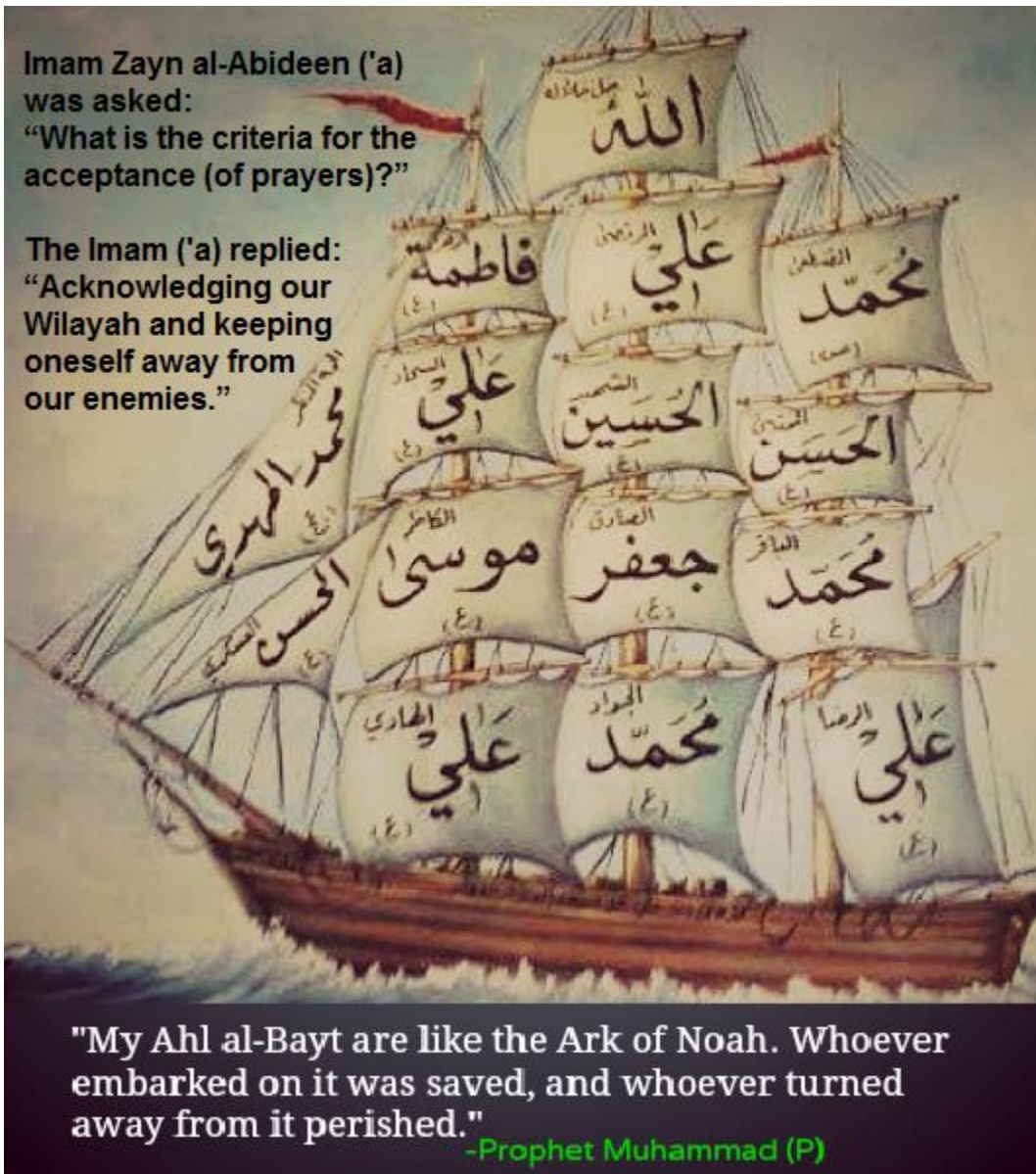
Imam Sadiq ('a) said: “One who offers his prayers along with Adhan and Iqamah, two rows of angels pray behind him, while one who offers his prayers with only the Iqamah and without the Adhan, one row of angels pray behind him.”

The Imam ('a) was asked: “And how long is each row?”

The Imam (a) replied: “At the very minimum, its length is the distance between East and West, while at the maximum, its length is the distance between the earth and the heavens.”

Imam Zayn al-Abideen ('a)
was asked:
"What is the criteria for the
acceptance (of prayers)?"

The Imam ('a) replied:
"Acknowledging our
Wilayah and keeping
oneself away from
our enemies."



QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. What do we learn from this Ayah? Whose Du'a was this Ayah?
2. When Nabi Ibrahim ('a) prays for his "offspring," who does that include?
3. Do you know who is the father of Prophet (S) and how is Prophet (S) related to Imam 'Ali ('a)?
4. Why is Salah like a pillar of a tent?
5. What do we learn from Hadith (Sayings of Prophet or Aimmah) about Salah?
6. Who do we have to love and who do we have to stay away from for our Salah to be accepted by Allah SWT? Why?

CRAFT IDEA

Students trim and glue a template of a musalla (prayer mat) on cardstock or construction paper. They make 2 strips of fringe from thick ribbon or construction paper and glue it to either end of the musalla. Students can decorate it with gems and stickers. They use ribbon to make a loop so that they can hang it in their rooms, to remind them to pray.



ACTIVITY

Salah

We know that the best deed that brings human beings closer to Allah SWT is the Salaah. However, many of us neglect its importance by delaying it and not praying it as soon as Adhan is called, or we don't pray it at all and recite it Qadhaa; or we pray it very quickly. Have a discussion about different strategies we can adopt that will help us perfect our salaah.

Understand what you recite and think about what you are saying during Salah

Have a relaxed, stress-free mind. Write down a to-do list if you have many chores to complete so you don't think of it during Salah

Recite Tasbih of Sayyida Fatima ('a) after Salah

Recite Sajdah of Shukr, Du'a, Qur'an, Ziyarah after Salah. Don't finish your Salah quickly. Du'a can be done in any language.

Be clean and Tahir- put perfume. Make sure the place of prayer is clean

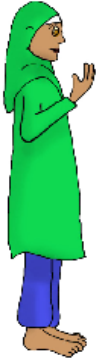
Focus on pre-Salah actions like wudu, du'a of wudu, adhan, iqamah, etc.



LESSON 5: ASKING FOR GOOD

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

“Our Lord, give us good in this world, and good in the hereafter, and save us from the punishment of the fire.” (Surah al-Baqarah 2:201).



TAFSIR

This Du'a is well-known because it is often recited in our Qunoot in the five Daily Prayers. It is also recited when doing tawaf around the Ka'aba. It is a beautiful Dua' where we ask Allah SWT to give us good here in this world and also good in the hereafter. It is a Du'a that teaches us that we should not only pray for this world and we should not only pray for the hereafter as Islam is the middle path and so, we should pray for both this world and the next. The good we get in this world can help us because we can use that good to earn good in the hereafter.

The word “hasanah” means “good.” Goodness is so important that Imam ‘Ali (‘a) and Sayyida Fatimah (‘a) named all their three sons based on this word: Hasan (“good”), Husayn (the younger “good” as Imam Husayn was younger than Imam Hasan) and Muhsin (the doer of “good”).

In the Qur’an, Allah says the following about the “Muhsineen” (the doers of good deeds): *“Yes! Whoever submits himself entirely to Allah (aslamah – from the word Islam) and he is the doer of good (muhsinin) he has his reward from his Lord (Rabb), and there is no fear for him nor shall he grieve.” (2:112)*

In this Du’a, we also pray to Allah to save us from the punishment of the fire of Hell. The next Ayah in the Qur’an after the above Ayah says:

“They shall have (their) portion of what they have earned, and Allah is swift in reckoning.” (Al-Baqarah, 2:202)

Which means that whatever good or bad we do, Allah SWT will reward or punish us accordingly as He is Just and All-Knowing. Nothing is hidden from Him. So, Allah will only put us in the fire because of our own deeds which we did in this world – but in this Du’a, we pray to Allah not to put us in the fire even if we deserve it (i.e., to save us from the fire). This is because Allah is not only the Most Just (Al-Adil) but He is also the Most Merciful (Ar-Raheem).

Imam Sajjad ('a) describes “the station of him whom sins have passed from hand to hand” (i.e. the person who has sinned a lot) and is now asking for forgiveness in the most eloquent words in his *As-Sahifa as-Sajjadiyah* in Du'a 31: “*His Supplication in Repentance*”

So he stood before You pleading,
his eyes turned toward the ground in humbleness,
his head bowed before Your might in lowliness;
he revealed to You in meekness
those secrets of his which You know better than he;
he numbered for You in humility
those sins of his which You count better than he;
he sought help from You
before the dreadful into which he has fallen in Your knowledge
and the ugly which has disgraced him in Thy judgement:
the sins whose pleasures have turned their backs and gone
and whose evil consequences have stayed and stuck fast.

He will not deny Your justice, my God, if You punish him,
nor will he consider Your pardon great
if You pardon him and have mercy upon him,
for You art the Generous Lord
for whom the forgiveness of great sins is nothing great!

O God, so here I am:
I have come to You obeying Your command
(for You have commanded supplication)
and asking the fulfilment of Your promise,
(for You have promised to respond)
You have said [in the Qur'an – 40:60],
Supplicate Me and I will respond to you.

O God, so bless Muhammad and his Household,
meet me with Your forgiveness
just as I have met You with my confession...

STORY

The Poor Man from Madinah

Once the Holy Prophet (S) was informed that a person from Madinah had become very poor. The Prophet (S) said: “Bring him to me.”

When some people brought the person before him, the Prophet (S) said to the poor man: “Bring whatever you have in your house; do not regard anything as unimportant.”

The person went home and returned with a bowl and sack-cloth. The Holy Prophet (S) placed them for auction, and they were eventually bought by a person for two dirhams.

Handing over the money to the poor Muslim from Madinah, the Holy Prophet (S) advised: “Use one dirham to buy some food for your family and use the other dirham to buy an axe for yourself.”



The man did as the Prophet (S) asked him to and bought an axe. He then went to the Prophet (S) with his axe. The Prophet (S) told him: “Go into the desert and collect firewood; collect every piece of wood that you find and do not consider anything to be trivial and insignificant, and then proceed to sell them.”

The poor person went away and did as the Prophet (S) had asked him to do, collecting as much firewood in the desert every day and selling it.

He came back to the Prophet (S) fifteen days later to show him how much he had earned from selling the firewood. He was no longer a poor man, but a hard-working man who earned and did not need to beg from others. The Prophet (S) told him it was better to work than beg for a living.

APPLICATION TO LIFE

We ask Allah SWT for goodness in this world and in the hereafter. We also know that we have to be responsible if we want to do good deeds. And that we have to earn good in the hereafter. Good deeds don't happen by themselves. We need to make them happen.

**DON'T BE UPSET
BY THE RESULTS
YOU DIDN'T GET
WITH THE WORK
YOU DIDN'T DO.**



When you plant a seed, it grows into a tree. The same is with our deeds. Whatever good deeds we do here (plant in the world), they will take root and we will earn their results or fruits (either in world or in the hereafter).

When Imam Ali appointed Muhammad Bin Abu Bakr to be the governor of Egypt, he wrote him a letter. In that letter, he said the believers who do good deeds with the intention of getting a reward in the hereafter (not in the world) are told by Allah in the Qur'an that Allah erases one evil deed for every good deed you perform. The Qur'an says: *"Verily good deeds take away evil deeds; this is a reminder for those believers who are mindful"* (11:114).

Then Imam Ali wrote in the letter: *"On the Day of Judgment, the good deeds of the believers will be counted and Allah will reward them ten to seven hundred times more for every good deed. The Qur'an says: "A recompense from your Lord, an award according to a recounting" (78:36); "They will be given a two-fold (multiple) reward for what they do, and they shall dwell in peace and safety in exalted places" (34:37)."*

Some good deeds have huge rewards - even if we think they are small – Allah loves them so much that they can earn us reward in this world and the hereafter. For example: Imam Ja'ffar As-Sadiq ('a) has said: *"Doing good to the family purifies the deeds, increases wealth and wards off misfortunes, eases the accounting and delays death."*

So, when you do good to your family, according to Imam Sadiq ('a), It helps you in this world because:

- a. it increases your wealth (so you can have an easy life but can also use your wealth for the hereafter)
- b. keeps away misfortunes from happening to you (like accidents for example)
- c. gives you longer life to enjoy this world (and to earn for the hereafter)

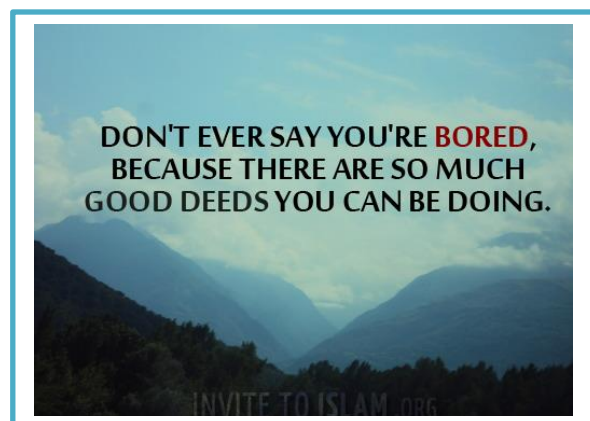
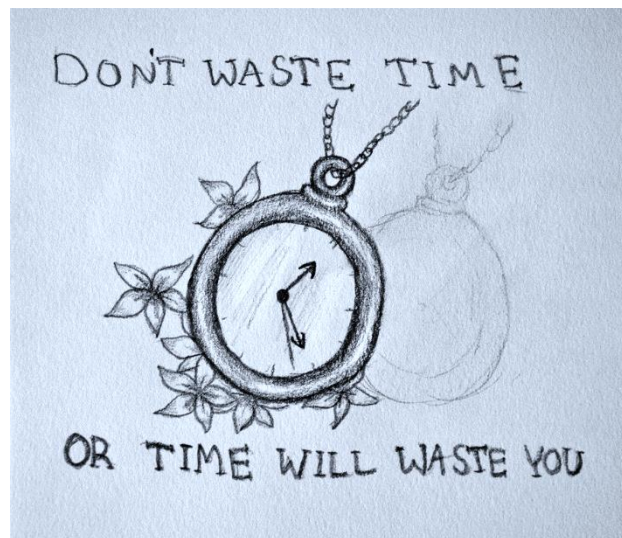
It helps you in the hereafter because:

- a. purifies your deeds (so if you have sins, Allah forgives your sins)
- b. makes your accounting easier on the day of Judgement (helps you get to Jannah faster).

We often complain of being bored or we are lazy. Both these keep us from doing good deeds. Whenever you have time on your hands, know that time is a gift from Allah and that time melts away as quickly as ice melts in summer! Once time is gone, it doesn't come back. So, if you have some free time, don't think "I don't have anything to do. I am bored." Instead think: "Yes! I have some free time that I can use to do a good deed!"

Imam Sadiq ('a) tells us: "Be just with people in your personal matters....Choose for them what you choose for yourself! And remember Allah constantly; never be lazy nor feel bored; surely, that is what my father taught me and that is what his father counseled him."

Imam Husayn ('a) says: "A tricked (deceived) person is one whose life is wasted hour by hour."



QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. What are the three things we pray for in this Ayah?
2. What do we learn from Imam Sajjad ('a)'s Du'a for Repentance? [Hint: We ask Allah SWT to look at our deeds with _____ instead of _____.]
3. What do we learn from the story? Why did the Prophet (S) not help the poor man by giving him some money – instead he made him go earn his own money?
4. What does the saying “Reap what you sow” mean for a Muslim?
5. Should a Muslim ever be bored? Why or why not? [Hint: Remember what Imam Husayn ('a) said.]
6. Should a Muslim person ever be lazy? Why or why not? [Hint: Remember what Imam Sadiq ('a) said.]

CRAFT IDEA

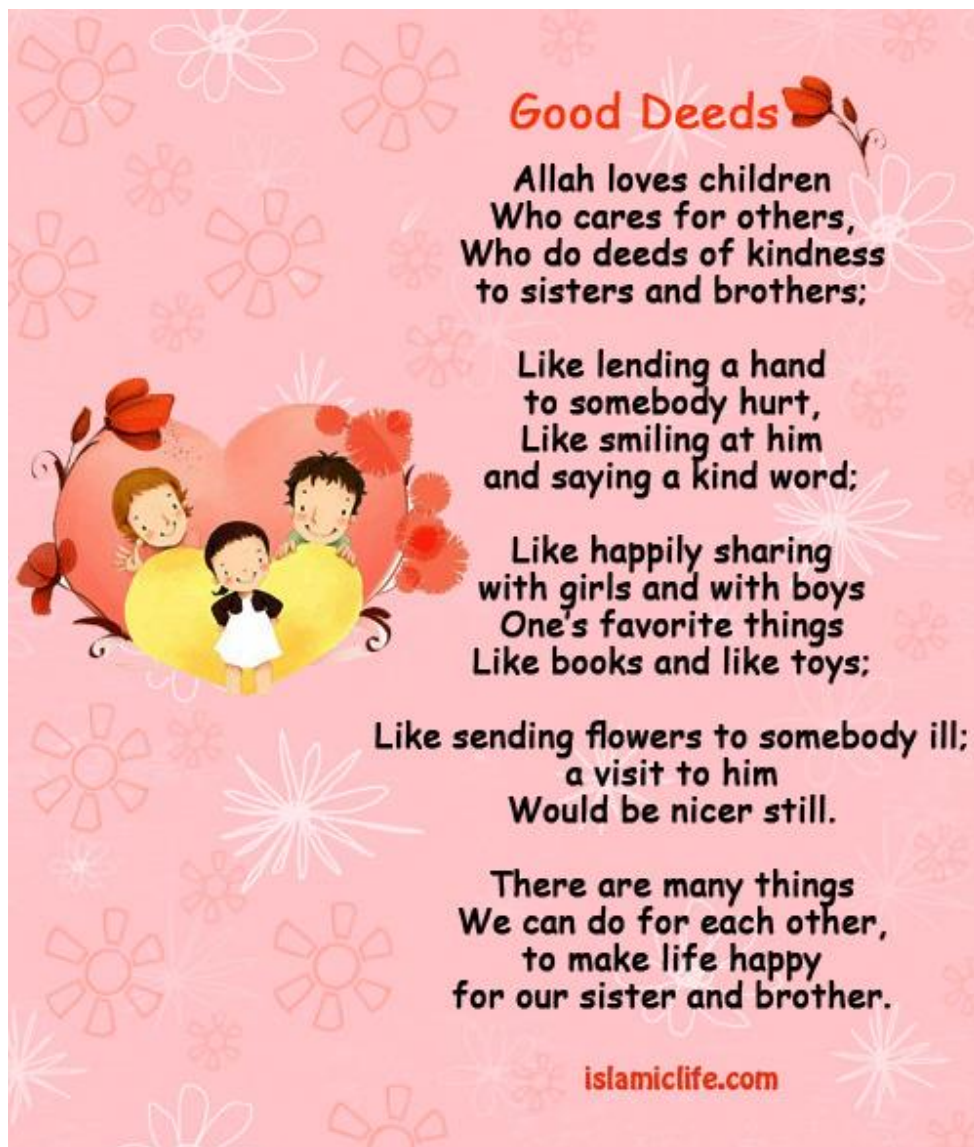
Using chart paper and markers, the teacher can either trace 2 hands on top of the page or draw 2 hands raised up in Du'a.

Then on left side, the teacher will draw a globe/earth to symbolize what we pray for on earth (family, shelter, toys, health, and stay on right path). Kids will either draw or write words or have the teacher write/draw what they will pray for in this world. On right side of page, which will represent Hereafter, kids/teacher will draw/write what they will pray for the hereafter (e.g. Castles, gardens, be close to Ahl al-Bayt).



ACTIVITY
Good Deeds

Write or draw some good deeds you plan on doing this Ramadhan. Write one good deed for each of the following people: Your Parents, your siblings, your teacher, your neighbour, your friends, and a stranger.



Good Deeds

Allah loves children
Who cares for others,
Who do deeds of kindness
to sisters and brothers;

Like lending a hand
to somebody hurt,
Like smiling at him
and saying a kind word;

Like happily sharing
with girls and with boys
One's favorite things
Like books and like toys;

Like sending flowers to somebody ill;
a visit to him
Would be nicer still.

There are many things
We can do for each other,
to make life happy
for our sister and brother.

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LESSON 6: CLOSENESS TO ALLAH

رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ

“My Lord! Build for me a house with You in Jannah...” (Surah Tahreem 66:11)

TAFSIR

In the previous Ayah, Allah SWT gives the example of the wicked disbelieving wives of Nabi Nuh (‘a) and Nabi Lut (‘a). In that example we learn that just because some one is the wife or relative of a prophet does not mean they are given a high status in Islam. In Islam, your status in the eyes of Allah SWT is according to your deeds.

Similarly, in this Ayah, Allah SWT gives the example of the wife of Fir’awn who is pious and trusts Allah SWT but is married to an evil and disbelieving person like Fir’awn.

The wife of Fir’awn was Sayyida Asiya (‘a). She is one of the four divinely perfect women along with:

- Sayyida Maryam (‘a), mother of Nabi Isa ibn Maryam (‘a) who was born without a father;
- Sayyida Khadijah (‘a), the first wife of the Holy Prophet (S) and mother of Sayyida Fatimah Az-Zahra (‘a); and
- Sayyida Fatimah Az-Zahra (‘a), daughter of the Holy Prophet (S), wife of ‘Ali ibn abi Talib (‘a) and mother of Imam Hasan (‘a) and Imam Husayn (‘a) - from whom the rest of the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) came. She is, therefore, known as Umm al-Aimma – the Mother of the Imams.

Fir’awn is known for not believing in Allah and in fact saying he himself was god. Fir’awn was proud and evil. He made the Banu Israil his slaves. He killed many infant sons when he came to know that the Banu Israil believed there would be a boy born who would save them and destroy Fir’awn.



The wife of Fir'awn, on the other hand, saved the life of Nabi Musa ('a) when many boys were being killed by Fir'awn's army. After seeing the miracles performed by Nabi Musa ('a) in the court of Fir'awn, she believed in Allah, the One Rabb of the universe. She hid her belief in Allah SWT from Fir'awn.

However, Fir'awn came to know about it soon enough. He warned her against it many times and insisted that she should stop believing in Allah SWT, but Sayyida Asiya ('a) did not agree.

Finally, cruel Fir'awn ordered that her limbs be tied with nails and she should be left under the burning sun with a huge stone on her chest. As she lay there, this great woman prayed:

"My Lord! Build for me a home with You in Paradise and save me from Fir'awn and his deeds and save me from the unjust people."

Allah SWT answered her Du'a and made her an example for all of mankind forever. The Qur'an starts this Ayah with the words: *"And Allah sets forth an example to those who believe the wife of Firawn..."*

It is interesting that Sayyida Asiya ('a) asks Allah SWT for a house in Jannah as she lived in the great palace of her husband, Fir'awn, the ruler of all of Egypt. She could have continued to live in it with all the wealth of Egypt for her use – but she didn't want that if it meant disbelieving in Allah SWT. With this Du'a, she showed that she regarded Fir'awn's palace unimportant.

She also asks that she be saved from Fir'awn and his deeds and from unjust people. This is her way of saying she is not like Fir'awn and she is not an unjust person. Instead, she asks for a House in Jannah NEAR Allah SWT. The house in Jannah is just as important to her as her love of Allah.

Sayyida Asiya ('a) is a Shaheeda – she gave her life for the sake of Allah SWT.

STORY **The Trader meets a Bandit**

During the time of the Noble Prophet (S) there lived a trader who, in all things, always placed his trust in Allah. He used to travel from Syria to Madinah for trade and during one of his trips, he met a bandit who drew his sword and intended to kill him.

"If it is my wealth that you desire, come and take it and leave me alone," pleaded the trader.

"Killing you is a must, for if I let you go free, you will identify me to the authorities," said the bandit.

“In that case give me some time until I have offered a two rak’at Salah,” requested the trader.

The bandit agreed and the trader said his prayers. Having completed the prayers, he raised his hands and begged: ‘O’ Lord! I have heard from Your Prophet that whoever places his trust in You shall remain protected. I have no helper in this desert and Your Grace is my only hope.’

Having placed all his trust in Allah, he had hardly completed this Du’a when a rider on a white horse appeared in the distance. When the rider came close, he fought the bandit and killed him.

Then, turning to the trader, he said: “O you who places your trust in Allah! I have killed the enemy of Allah and Allah has saved you from him.”

“Who are you that you have come to my assistance in this desert?” the trader asked.

“I am your *tawakkul*. Allah brought me out in the form of an Angel and I was in the heavens when Jibra`il called out to me and said: “Hurry and help your master and destroy his enemy,” and so here I have come and destroy your enemy.”

Having said this, the angel disappeared out of sight.

The trader fell down in Sajda of Shukr (thanksgiving to Allah).

On arrival in Madinah, he approached the Noble Prophet (S) and told him what had happened.

Said the Prophet (S) on hearing the story: “Indeed! *Tawakkul* raises a person to the peak of success and the rank of a person who has it is equal to the ranks of the Prophets, the friends of Allah, the righteous ones and the martyrs.”



APPLICATION TO LIFE

Sayyida Asiya (‘a) put her total trust in Allah SWT even in her last very difficult hours in this world. She did not fear anyone – her faith in Allah was so great and her love for Allah so pure! She did not ask anyone for her need at that time – she only asked Allah. She showed great *tawakkul* in Allah. Allah SWT says in the Qur’an (3:159): “So when you have decided, then place your trust in Allah; surely Allah loves those who trust.”

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq ('a) was asked regarding the words of Allah SWT in the Holy Qur'an: '*And whoever puts his trust in Allah, then Allah is enough for him*' (65:3).

The Imam (a) said: "There are various degrees of trust in Allah. Of them one is that you should put your trust in God in all your affairs, being well-pleased with whatever Allah does to you, knowing for certain that he does not stop His Goodness and Grace towards you, and that the command therein rests with Him. So put your trust in Allah, leaving that to Him and relying upon Him in regard to that and everything other than that."

Tawakkul or entrusting one's affairs (work) to Allah depends upon a person's knowledge and firm belief in Allah, the Rabb al-Aalameen and the Maliki yawmiddin – the Lord of the Universe and the Master of the Day of Judgement. However, trusting Allah doesn't mean that we just sit down and do nothing and trust Him. Trusting Him means we have to work hard and not give up our efforts. We should perform actions to the best of our abilities and then rely on Allah for His justice, help and beneficence to help us.



QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. Who are the four special divinely perfect women?
2. What does Sayyida Asiya ('a)'s Du'a show?
3. What do we learn from the story of the man who meets the bandit?
4. What does tawakkul mean?

CRAFT IDEA

Students will glue pre-cut pieces (scrap book paper) onto paper to construct a castle. Using various craft materials, students will decorate the castle as desired. The Du'a will be glued to the centre of the castle.



ACTIVITY

Read the following poem and connect it to your own life. Then complete the graphic TWICE. Once with your own ideas on how to get closer to Allah SWT, and another with your ideas on how one may be moving away from Allah SWT. Share and discuss your graphic with your classmates.

*Watch your thoughts; they become words.
Watch your words; they become actions.
Watch your actions; they become habits.
Watch your habits; they become character.
Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.*



LESSON 7: WHEN DOING A GOOD DEED

رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ

“My Lord! Surely I am in need of whatever good you may send down to me.” (Surah Al-Qasas 28:24)

TAFSIR

While fleeing away from Egypt, Nabi Musa (‘a) went towards Madyan, and wandering in the desert, arrived at an oasis, weak and hungry, after a week. He sat under a tree near a well and saw shepherds giving water to their flocks while two girls waited with their flocks for their turn.



The shepherds were drawing water for their own flocks but no one drew water for the girls. These two girls were Safura and Safra, daughters of Prophet Shu‘ayb (‘a), who was very old and so could not come to give water to the flocks himself. So, the young ladies would go out and do this chore for their old father. However, because of their modesty they did not force themselves into the crowd of males.

Prophet Musa (‘a) did not like how inconsiderate all the men at the well were – filling the water for themselves and making ladies wait! So, he went over to the girls to help. Nabi Musa (‘a) asked the shepherds to help the young ladies but they told Nabi Musa (‘a) to draw water for the flocks of the girls himself if he wanted to help; they refused to help.

The strong arms of Nabi Musa (‘a) kept the shepherds away and he drew the huge bowl from the well alone which the shepherds needed several men to pull out. He gave the water to the girls.

The Qur’an says: *“So he watered (their sheep) for them, then went back to the shade and said: My Lord! Surely I am in need of whatever good You may send down to me.” (28:24)*

Upon hearing the incident from his daughter, Nabi Shu‘ayb (‘a) invited Nabi Musa (‘a) home.

While walking, he told the girl to walk behind him and in case he needed guidance on where to go, they could point the direction by throwing a small stone in that direction ahead of him.

When Nabi Shu'ayb ('a) ordered food to be served, Nabi Musa ('a) declined and told Nabi Shu'ayb ('a) that he would not sell any of his good deeds for a profit of this world; he did not give water to the flock of sheep for any favour or gift from the girls or their father.

When Nabi Shu'ayb heard Nabi Musa ('a)'s reason for refusing the meal, he replied that it was not in return for his help with the sheep that he served food, but this was how he always welcomed a guest in his home. Nabi Musa ('a) then accepted the food and they ate.

One of Nabi Shu'ayb ('a)'s daughters recommended to him to ask Nabi Musa ('a) to work for the family because he was strong and trustworthy.

Imam Musa al Kadhim ('a) says that Nabi Shu'ayb ('a) asked his daughter: "I know by his removing the huge rock from the mouth of the well that he is strong, but how do you know that he is also trustworthy?" Then the girl narrated to her father how Nabi Musa ('a) had asked them to walk behind him and point the way by throwing a small stone ahead of him, for he said that he did not belong to those people who looked at women (i.e., Nabi Musa ('a) did the hijab of the eyes and did not want to walk behind the women and stare at them while they gave directions as he was a Prophet of Allah and was full of modesty).

Nabi Musa ('a) did work for Nabi Shu'ayb ('a) and he also married one of his daughters as the Qur'an explains: *"He [Shu'ayb] said: I desire to marry one of these two daughters of mine to you on condition that you should serve me for eight years; but if you complete ten, it will be of your own free will, and I do not wish to be hard to you; if Allah please, you will find me one of the good."* (28: 27)

Recite this dua'a whenever you do a good deed because Allah certainly gives us the reward of whatever good we do. It is also said that to get a lawful profitable occupation in a new country one should recite this Dua'a. This Dua'a can be recited seven times after every wajib Salah.

STORY

Imam Ali ('a), the Successor of the Prophet (S)

At the time of going for the Battle of Siffin, the army of Imam 'Ali ('a) stopped at a place where there was no water. Imam 'Ali ('a), with some of his warriors, went in search of water.

In a nearby monastery, a monk informed him that water is available at a place five miles away from the monastery.

Not only the soldiers but the horses were so thirsty that there was no possibility of taking them five miles away. The Imam ('a) asked his men to dig the earth on a particular spot near the

monastery. After some digging a huge rock appeared. All the men who could gather round the rock, did their best to lift the rock and remove it, but the rock did not move an inch.

Then the Imam ('a), who had once lifted the iron gate of the fort of Khaybar, put his hand under the rock, lifted it and threw it several feet away. There was abundant water under the earth covered by the rock for everyone to drink from.

The monk asked Imam 'Ali ('a) if he was a prophet. Imam 'Ali ('a) said: "No. I am the successor of the last Prophet of Allah."

The monk said: "It is written in our holy books that there is a well near here but none except a Prophet of Allah or a divinely chosen successor will discover it. Now I want to become a Muslim."

The monk converted to Islam, took part in the battle of Siffin and was martyred in the battle.

At the time of departure for the battle, after everyone drank from the well, Imam 'Ali ('a) covered the well with the earth. While returning from the battle of Siffin, Imam 'Ali ('a) asked the soldiers who were with him if they could find the well again. They thought it was easy, but even they searched and searched, they could not find the well again.

Imam 'Ali ('a) informed them that the well would remain hidden till the day of Judgement.

APPLICATION TO LIFE

The above Du'a of Nabi Musa ('a) shows that he only did this good deed of helping the girls for Allah's sake – to please Allah SWT and to get reward from Allah SWT only. He did not want any reward from people or any reward in the world. He wanted a reward from Allah SWT in the hereafter.

This Du'a also teaches us that we are needy of Allah SWT and He is not in need of anyone or anything. He is As-Samad as we recite in our Salah every day when we recite Surah Al-Ikhlās.

Al-Samad is an Attribute of Allah whose meanings include the following: the ultimate goal, the obeyed Master without Whose command nothing can happen, the Support of those who need to be supported, the One to Whom all matters are referred, the One Who decides all issues, the One to Whom pleas are directed.

As-Samad is Allah to Whom we pray to grant our requests and Whom we beg to make our wishes come true. He is the Master sought during the time of need. Arabs describe a household

“As-Samad” if people go there in the hope of fulfilling their worldly needs. Allah is the final destination, the ultimate goal. The one whom Allah honours by making him the kind of person to whom people go to and ask help from – and the person helps as much as he possibly can – that person is truly one upon whom Allah has bestowed a great deal of goodness. It is goodness inspired by this Asma’ al-Husna.

Whoever recognizes Allah as the ever-Lasting Who never dies will turn away from the adornments of this fleeting life and will have no desire for its material things.

One of the good manners of a believer inspired by this ‘Asma of Allah, As-Samad, is that he does not ask help from anyone besides Allah to help him meet his worldly needs, nor does he rely on anyone else besides Allah SWT to fulfil his needs and wants. Instead, because of his akhlaq, people come to him for help.

According to a hadith, the Messenger of Allah (S) has said, "One who is most loved among people is the one who benefits (helps) them most."

Prophet Muhammad (S) was asked: “What people does Allah love most?”

The Prophet (S) said: “Those who are most useful to other people.”

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. What do we learn from the story of Nabi Musa (‘a)?
2. Why did Nabi Musa (‘a) not want to eat the meal that Nabi Shu‘ayb (‘a) offered him?
3. What do we learn from the story of Imam ‘Ali (‘a)?
4. Whom should we ask for help?
5. Which Asma al-Husna means Allah is not needy but we pray to Him for our needs?
6. Who does Allah like?
 7. Which other Du’a have we learned seeking good from Allah SWT? Recite it.

CRAFT IDEA

Students brainstorm when they would recite this Du'a. Teachers will be provided with 6 images of children doing various tasks. After brainstorming, each child is given an image and asked to describe what is happening. As a group, students recite the Du'a together after each image is discussed.

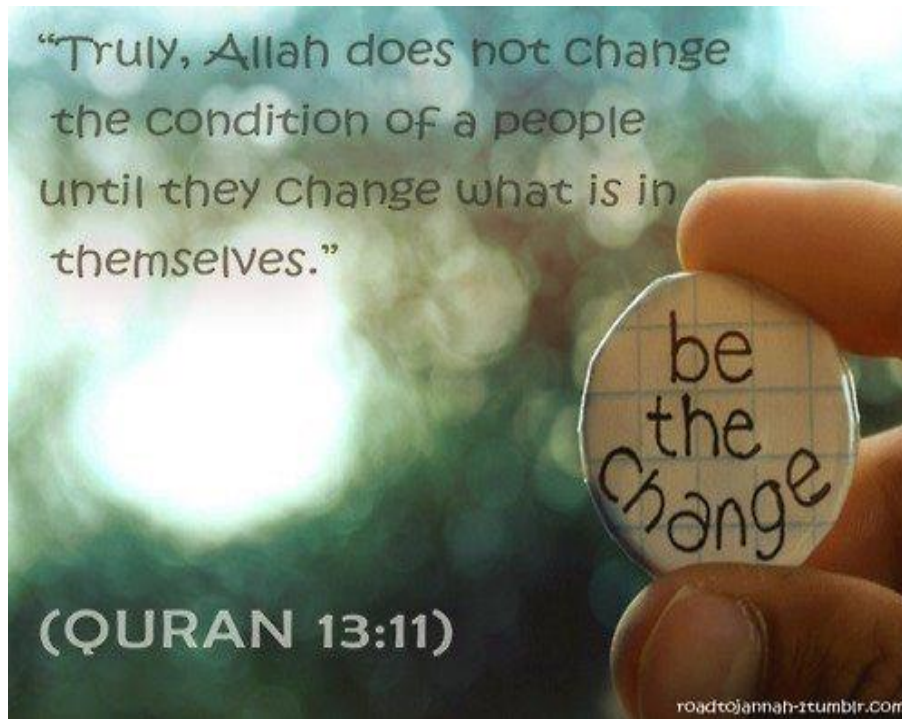
2nd Craft idea: (for another day). KEYS TO SUCCESS keychain – Have 5 keys pre-cut on cardstock paper ready for students. Students can colour each key if time permits. Have students glue each action/attitude onto the keys. Glue title “keys to success” onto the tag. Use ribbon to fasten together. Decorate keys if desired. Remind children that we must adopt these actions/attitude as well as pray to Allah SWT for our success.



ACTIVITY
New Task

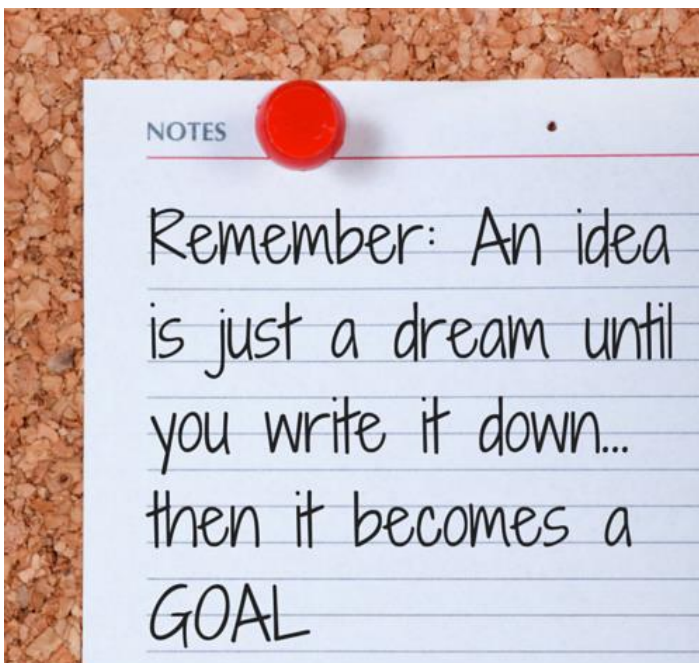
Before trying any new task, we ask Allah SWT to help us achieve success. By putting Allah SWT first in our minds, we make an intention to please Allah SWT with our actions.

Goal setting is a strategy that allows us to organize ourselves, so that we can experience more success with the help of Allah SWT. Allah doesn't help those who don't help themselves. He says in the Holy Qur'an:



Complete the following to help you communicate your goal. The steps will help you achieve it, Insha Allah.

1. Write down your goal in as few words as possible
2. Why do you want to reach this goal?
3. List 3 action steps you will take to achieve this goal (how will you do it)
4. Complete the sentence: I will know I have reached my goal when _____
5. How will you find the time to accomplish your actions?
6. Who will you ask for help and support with your goal?
7. I will reach my goal by _____(date)
8. My halfway measurement of achieving the goal will be _____(date)





LESSON 8: DU'A FOR PARENTS

Short Verse

رَبِّ اَرْحَمُهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا

“My Lord, have mercy on them (both) just as they raised me when I was small.”
(Surah Isra 17:24)

TAFSIR

The above is the Du'a of Nabi Ibrahim (‘a). The entire Ayah with the Ayah before it are as follows:

“And your Lord has commanded that you shall not serve (any) but Him, and goodness to your parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, say not to them (so much as) “Ugh” nor chide them, and speak to them a generous word.”

“And make yourself submissively gentle to them with compassion, and say: O my Lord! have compassion on them, as they brought me up (when I was) little.”

Right after commanding us to believe in only One Allah (i.e., Tawheed), we are told to honour our parents, be kind to them, not be rude to them, not tell them off and to show humbleness and compassion to them. We cannot expect Allah's forgiveness if we are rude to those who brought us up.

In the Du'a, Allah uses the word “*rabbayani*” to describe our Parents' upbringing. Rabbayani sounds very similar to the name of Allah – Ar-Rabb, which as we learned in Lesson 3, is very hard to translate in English. Some Ulama' (scholars of Islam) think that there are 12 meanings for the word Rabb and that Rabb may be the Greatest Attribute of Allah (Ismi A'adham). Reciting this name often brings great favours from Allah. Rabb means Cherisher, Sustainer, and Provider. As soon as Allah wills that something is created, His Rububiyat begins. The Rabb nurtures the created being with love, care and never-ending protection, providing all the creation's needs. Parents also nurture us with love, care and protection and provide for us when we are young. That is why when Allah SWT talks about their bringing us up, He uses the word “*rabbayani*” for them, similar to His attribute. Our parents are the means by which Allah makes sure we are safe and provided for until we are all grown up and can take care of ourselves. Because our parents sacrifice so much when bringing us up, we are to be kind and loving and gentle with them.

STORY

Prophet Ibrahim ('a)

King Namrud ruled the city of Babylon; he was a proud man and forced the people to believe in him as their god. He imprisoned and killed people whenever he wanted and took whatever he wanted of their crops. The people he ruled were idol-worshippers and they worshipped nature also, mostly the sun and the moon. They were afraid of Namrud's power. Namrud's story is found both in the Qur'an and in the Old Testament (Bible).



Allah SWT decided to send Prophet Ibrahim ('a) to the idol-worshippers of Babylon so they may be guided.

A short while before Prophet Ibrahim ('a) was born; Namrud was told by his high ranking astrologers that a child would soon be born in this country that would stand against him and advise people to stop worshipping idols. Instead, this child would invite people to a new religion when he grew up.

Namrud was horrified. He commanded his army to somehow prevent this baby from being born. Namrud ordered all male babies born in that year would be killed. Pregnant women were terrified.

Nabi Ibrahim ('a)'s mom showed no signs of pregnancy – this was a miracle and was Allah's plan to protect His Prophet ('a).

Prophet Ibrahim ('a)'s mom was very much afraid of Namrud's army and she left the city before giving birth to her child. She hid herself in a cave in the desert. This was the cave in which Prophet Ibrahim ('a) was born in the city of Kawthariya, near Ur and Babylon.

She then covered the child with a cloth, closed the mouth of the cave with stones and returned to her own home without her child. She told no one about her baby being born, afraid that if she did, Namrud's army would look for him and kill him as they were killing all baby boys.

Baby Nabi Ibrahim ('a) was all alone in the cave with no one to care for him. When he would become hungry, he would suckle his own fingers. Allah SWT caused milk to flow from his fingers and that is how he fed himself. The child grew up under Allah SWT's protection. From time to time, his mother would come secretly to the cave to be with him. She couldn't do this often for fear of being followed by someone or of her secret being found out.

Prophet Ibrahim ('a) gradually grew up in this cave and when he was thirteen years old, he secretly came back to the city with his mother. His father, Tarikh, had already died by then so he was adopted by his Uncle Azar (his father's brother).

Azar was famous for making idols out of stone. This was his business. He would make idols and his sons used to sell these idols to the people. When Prophet Ibrahim ('a), the great Nabi of Allah, was asked by Azar to sell the idols, he dragged the idol by a rope on the dirty ground all the way to the market. It was his way of showing the people that what they were worshipping couldn't even protect itself from being dragged on the ground – how could it be their god and protector?

The Holy Qur'an says: *"And when Ibrahim said to his sire, Azar: Do you take idols for gods? Surely I see you and your people in clear error."*

As he grew older, Prophet Ibrahim ('a) remembered his parents' great sacrifice for him and always prayed to Allah SWT for them. The Du'a at the beginning of this lesson is Nabi Ibrahim ('a)'s Du'a for his parents.

APPLICATION TO LIFE

Our parents are a great gift from Allah SWT and sometimes we do not realize this because we are not matured enough to know their value. Allah SWT reminds us in the Holy Qur'an in several places the importance of the status of parents. He tells us to show mercy, to be humble to them, to be kind, not to talk in loud voice to them, not to scold them when they grow old

etc. We should always show love to them and do special things for them. And we should always pray for them.

Displeasing parents is the sixth greatest sin in Islam. The Holy Prophet (S) says:

“One who displeases the parents, (it is as if) he has displeased Allah. One who angers both his parents (it is as if) he has angered Allah.”

Imam Sadiq (‘a) has said: “Allah will not accept the Salah of the person who stares angrily at his parents. Even though they (parents) may be unjust.”

When the Prophet (S) was asked who we should be benevolent with, three times he answered “Your mother,” and the fourth time, he said, “Your father.” He said:

“Was it not your mother who suffered the birth pangs to give birth to you and provided you with your natural diet from her breast? Indeed the rights of a mother far outweigh those of the father.”

Someone asked the Holy Prophet (S) about the rights of the father. He (S) replied, “He should be obeyed always, as long as he lives.” Then he was asked, “What is the right of the mother?” He answered, “If the service to a mother equals the quantity of the particles of sand in the desert and the drops of rain on earth, it (this service) will not repay for a single day that she kept you in her womb.”





QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. What do we learn from this Ayah?
2. Why does Allah SWT use the word “*rabbayani*” (similar to His Own Attribute – *Ar-Rabb*) when He describes what parents do when they bring up their children?
3. What does the name “*Ar-Rabb*” mean?
4. What do you learn from the story?
5. Who is more important – your mother or your father?

CRAFT IDEA

Students use Popsicle sticks to make a photo frame. They use 4 sticks and connect them with glue. They can paste their Du'a on the top horizontal stick. They then paste or place their family picture on the four sticks so that the picture is centered. They make another frame with 4 sticks and place it on top of the original frame. They can decorate their frame with jewels and tie the optional ribbon to the sides to make a hanger.



ACTIVITY

Parents

O Allah!
Forgive my parents have
mercy on them. Let me be of
service to them with
kindness and
compassion. Accept their
deeds and grant them
Jannah

We know that we can never thank our parents enough for what they have done for us. The most important thing we can do for them is to pray for them.

Make a card. Write down your own unique prayer or poem for your parents in the card and give it to them with a gift on 'Eid.

LESSON 9: PUBLIC SPEAKING

Short Verse

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي

“My Lord, expand for me my chest and make easy for me my work.” (Surah Taha 20: 25-26)

Long Verse

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي وَاخْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي
يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي

“My Lord, expand for me my chest and make easy for me my work, and remove the knots from my tongue, so they understand my words.” (Surah Taha 20:25-28)

TAFSIR

This Dua was recited by Prophet Musa (‘a) when he was commanded by Allah SWT to go to Fir’awn and show him the power of Allah SWT by the help of the two miracles given to him. That is when Nabi Musa (‘a) recited this Du’a asking Allah SWT to make his task easy and to make his tongue eloquent – so that Fir’awn and his people would understand what Nabi Musa (‘a) was trying to say.

We must always seek Allah SWT’s help to get success in our work. This Du’a is often recited before starting a speech in public.

STORY: Prophet Musa (‘a) Vs. the Magicians of Fir’awn

After living in Madyan for 10 years, Nabi Musa (‘a) decided to leave with his family. As he headed out into the desert, one night it got very cold and Nabi Musa (‘a) saw a fire at the top of a mountain. So he told his family to wait while he went to get some fire so that they could stay warm.

Nabi Musa (‘a) climbed the mountain and when he got closer, he saw flames coming from a bush but the bush was not burning and a voice called out to him. It was Allah speaking to Nabi Musa (‘a) through the burning bush.

Allah told Nabi Musa (‘a) that it was time to go back to Egypt to warn the evil Fir’awn and to free the Banu Israil from their suffering under Fir’awn’s rule.

Nabi Musa (‘a) told Allah that no one would listen to him and that Fir’awn would try and harm him. So Allah gave Nabi Musa (‘a) some special powers. He told Nabi Musa (‘a) to throw his stick down and it became a huge serpent. And when Nabi Musa (‘a) picked up the serpent, it became a stick again. And when Nabi Musa (‘a) put his hand under his shirt and then took it out, it would shine like the dazzling light of the sun.



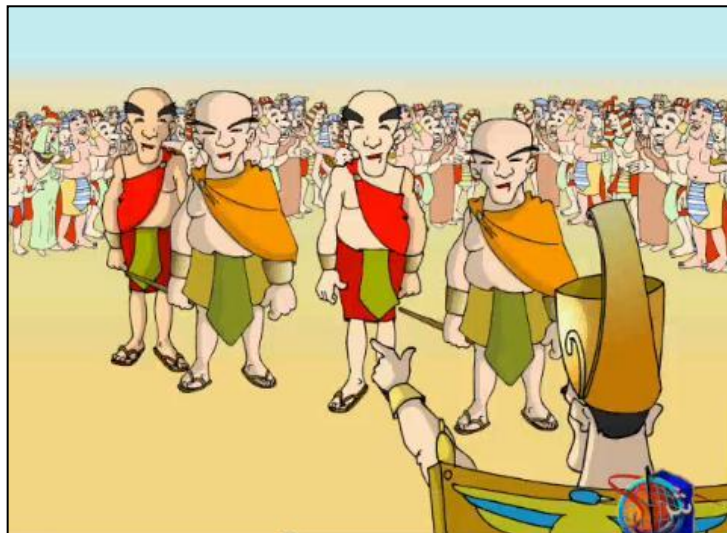
Allāh also told Nabi Musa (‘a) to take his brother Nabi Hārun (‘a) as his helper against Fir’awn.

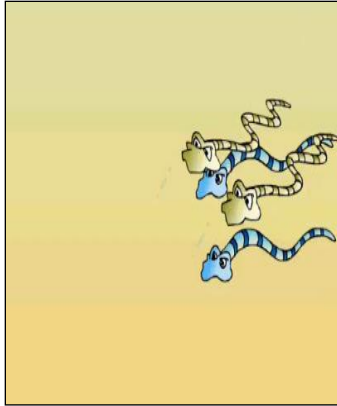
And so Nabi Musa (‘a) went back to Egypt. At first Fir’awn wanted to capture Nabi Musa (‘a) and punish him but when he saw the miracles of Nabi Musa (‘a), he got frightened.

Then Fir’awn told Nabi Musa (‘a), “This is only magic. It is not a miracle from Allah. I am God.” And so Fir’awn challenged Nabi Musa (‘a) to a contest.

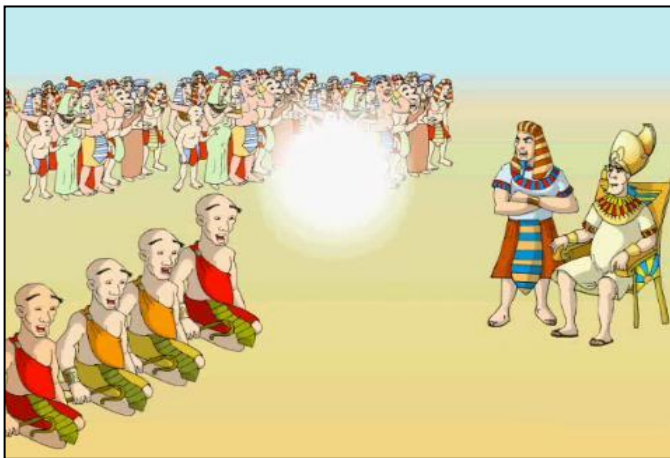
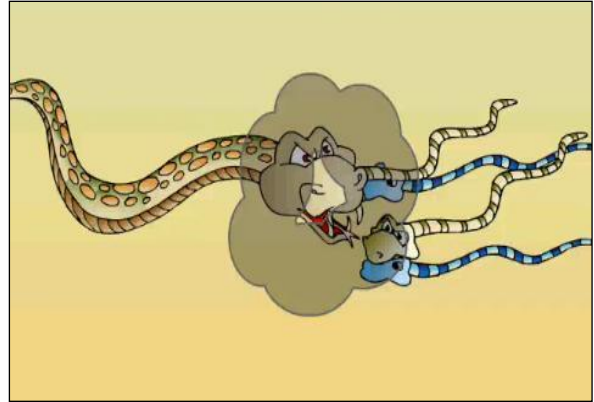
Fir’awn called the best magicians he could find in the whole of Egypt and he told them to come to his palace to challenge Nabi Musa (‘a).

When the magicians came, they brought some pieces of ropes and threw it on the ground. They tricked the people and everyone thought the ropes had become snakes.





Then Nabi Musa ('a) threw his stick down and it became a huge serpent and ate up all the pieces of rope.



The magicians were very surprised to see this miracle. They knew this was from Allah and it was not magic. So they fell to the ground and said, "We believe in Allah and we believe in Nabi Musa ('a)."

Fir'awn felt ashamed because he had lost. Now he was very angry at the magicians and he decided to cut their legs and hands and to kill them.

APPLICATION TO LIFE

When Allah SWT commanded Prophet Musa ('a) to go invite Fir'awn to the right path, Prophet Musa ('a) needed some support to do this mission and asked Allah SWT to strengthen his speech and make people understand what he is saying. He asked Allah SWT to expand his chest, to make him big hearted, have positive feelings in front of his enemy and to let his brother Prophet Harun ('a) to accompany him. Allah SWT granted Prophet Musa ('a)'s wishes. Allah SWT is always there to help us in any way; we just need to remember to call to Him at all times.

Sometimes we may want to say something to a friend but are afraid we may hurt them or say the wrong thing which may cause misunderstandings. This Du'a is powerful in that situation also and it will help us.

There may be times when we want to speak in front of others – when giving a speech or reciting Qu'ran in public or participating in a play or presenting something to your class - but do not have enough courage. We get nervous and sometimes frightened too. This Du'a is very helpful as it makes us seek Allah SWT's help to be successful in what we want to do.

Sometimes we may recite this Du'a and are still not comfortable to standing in front of others, but we should not stop trying. We should continue to practice and practice. We can do this in front of the mirror, in front of our family members, or even in front of one or two friends. Every time we try, and begin by reciting this Du'a and believe that we can do it with Allah SWT's help, we will see an amazing difference. We have to try our best and Allah SWT will help us!

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. Why did Prophet Musa ('a) recite this Du'a?
2. What does it mean "remove the knots in my tongue"?
3. How did Allah SWT help Prophet Musa (AS) to make his mission easy?
4. What miracles did Allah SWT provide Prophet Musa ('a), which he used when he met Fir'awn?
5. When should we recite this Du'a?

CRAFT IDEA



Students construct a play Microphone to use to recite their Du'as. Use a foam ball and cover it with foil. Place the ball on top of rolled Bristol board and stick it on with packaging tape. Stick a 'wire' (ribbon with Du'a) at the bottom of the roll. Decorate with sparkle jewels around the foam ball and on the roll for the 'on/ off ' button. Students can use their microphone to practise their Du'as.

ACTIVITY

Public Speaking

Students are always asked to participate in class discussion and/or present thoughts publicly. This can be a challenge for many. However, with practice, students can learn how to speak our thoughts clearly.

Have students do the following:

1. Write down some encouraging advice and helpful tips for your classmates who may be shy to speak publicly. Help them face their fear.
2. As a class, make a list of impromptu speech topics – e.g. charity, war, peace, discrimination, animals, sleep, homework, etc.
3. Take turns to pick a topic from #2 and practice speaking about it for 1 minute. Use the advice given to you by your classmates on speaking publicly.





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