



GCSE Religious Studies

Islam: Beliefs & Teachings

Workbook- section 2

Name:



The Nature of Allah – Fairness and Justice

Justice (Adalat) means fairness, that is, to do what is right. Allah is absolute, so always does what is right. Muslims must accept this and try to act in a fair way to others. Humans cannot always see justice being served, because they are incapable of fully understanding how Allah acts. Allah is just in His creation, in His laws and in all His actions. Allah created all things perfectly through His true wisdom. Allah rewards a good act with a good act and an evil act with consequences. Allah's divine justice rules the universe.



Humans are commanded to be just and fair in their actions: “Be steadfast witnesses for Allah in equity and let not hatred of any people seduce you that you deal not justly” (Surah 5:8) and also, “We have made you a moderate nation.” (Surah 2:143) The Five Pillars are all just to help in life.

This belief should influence Muslims in their lives to never be extreme, to deal with people in the right way, to be fair to others and to do good deeds. So a Muslims must never be too angry or too calm, too courageous or too weak, too clever or too foolish. All Muslims should strive to live their lives in a balanced way. Extreme actions cannot be justified.

Shi's Muslims believe that the justice of Allah is absolute. Everything belongs to Allah, so humans can never lose anything. Humans only have things by the grace of Allah. Allah punishes humans for any bad deed. Any situation which seems negative is actually for our own good as Allah would never be cruel or carry out injustice. At least 40 verses of the Qur'an discuss the justice of Allah and on the Day of Judgement, each individual will face justice for their own actions.



How does the nature of Allah influence Muslims today?

Muslims:

- Will try to be as good a Muslim as they can
- Believe that talents were given by Allah in his beneficence
- know that it is up to them to make the most of their chances
- Know that Allah is always with them (immanent) and that they cannot succeed without Him
- Believe that struggling is a test of determination
- Believe that Allah only acts in a way that is best for the person
- Accept that they cannot know Allah's plan
- Will help others who are suffering. This is Allah working through them
- Believe that evil people will suffer the consequences of their actions
- May spend their time helping and educating Muslims who could be vulnerable to extreme action or the lies of others
- Want to make the world a better, calm, peaceful place
- Believe that extremism never works as it is not Allah's plan

Authority – the Concept of Risalah

What is risalah?

Risalah flows through the whole of life. Humans are born, go through the stages of life listening to Allah's guidance from the prophets and reading the holy books and finally die to be resurrected in the afterlife to paradise.



Muslims believe that Allah is the ultimate creator of the world, but why did He create this world? The Qur'an tells us that Allah told the angels that He was going to put man on earth. The angels questioned this, as they believed that man would simply cause chaos. Allah told them that He knew best and asked them to bow down before Adam. All the angels obeyed except Azazil, believing he was better than Adam. Allah then sent Azazil, now named Iblis, to earth to test humanity. What was He testing though? Human action? How can humans be tested without knowing the rules? Allah had a duty to give people a code to live by. If it is a duty to love, serve and submit to Allah, then humans have to know how to achieve this to be reunited with Allah at death. Allah is just, so it must be the case that He has revealed what He wants from humans.

Adam was the first prophet appointed by Allah. Prophets are guided in the truth and understand it. Their love of Allah prevents them from sinning. They deliver the messages Allah sends as guidance. Muslims believe that there were 124,000 prophets who developed the religion over time. Some prophets are also messengers 'rasul' (given divine revelation to deliver everywhere), whilst others as 'nabi' (given



revelation of news of an important nature, immediately concerning

themselves with their communities).

Muhammad (PBUH), the last of the prophets, known as 'The Seal'. Muslims believe that over time previous messages had become lost or changed. Judaism and Christianity contain some truths, but they are not the original messages. Allah then decided to call Muhammad (PBUH) and gave him revelations which became the Qur'an. Being written down they could not be changed so not more prophets would be needed. The Qur'an is the direct Word of Allah, containing everything humankind needs to do to pass the test for the next life.

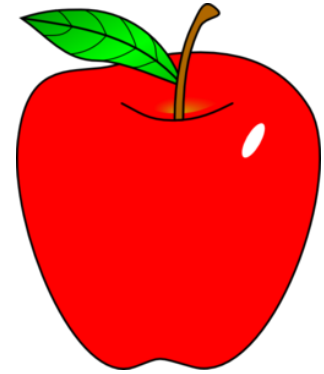
Angels have no physical form. They are messengers of Allah. They are known as bodies of light, which are in constant contact with the world. They are there when we pray. Angels have been seen by specifically chosen individuals in human form, for example, Angel Jibril to Muhammad (PBUH), but they are not human. Muslims believe that we all have two guardian angels who record our actions, which is why they turn to the left and right at the end of daily prayers as if to greet the angels on both shoulders.

Throughout time there have been books to guide Muslims in the right way. Holy books include the Suhuf of Ibrahim, Tawrat of Musa, Zabur of Dawud (David) and Injil or the Gospels of Jesus. Muslims believe that these books contain some true guidance but have been altered and are incomplete. The Qur'an is the directly dictated Word of Allah in its original form; it is absolute.

Prophet Adam

"I indeed am going to set a vicegerent (earthly representative of Allah) on the earth" (Qur'an 2:30)

"...I am going to create a human out of clay...so when I have made him, and breathed life into him..." (Qur'an 38: 71-72)



The angels collected soil, red, white, brown and black, smooth and gritty, soft and hard. It came from mountains and valleys, from dry deserts and green fertile lands.

Allah honoured Adam. He blew light into his soul. He ordered his angels to bow down before Adam as a sign of respect and honour. His descendants were to be as diverse as the clay he was created from.

So what do we know about Adam?



Everything was created for Adam and his descendants so to be able to worship and know Allah. Adam was to be the caretaker of the Earth. Adam was taught everything by Allah, given the ability to identify and give names, language and the ability to communicate. Allah gave him a thirst for learning, the ability to reason, evaluate and make choices.

To prevent loneliness, Adam was given Hawwa (Eve), a woman for company. Allah told Adam and Hawwa to enjoy all the things made for them, but not to eat from one tree. Iblis (a jinn, or supernatural creature) managed to tempt them to taste the fruit,

hence disobeying Allah. They also became aware of their nakedness and covered themselves. As punishment, Allah banished them to Earth, but He forgave them because they asked for mercy. They became ordinary people living on Earth instead of in the Garden of Bliss (Eden). On Earth, Allah sent guidance to Adam, so he could teach people about Allah.

Adam and Hawaa had many children, the most famous being Qabeel (Cain) and Habeel (Abel). The brothers continued the evil side of humankind when Qabeel killed Habeel, fulfilling the prophecy in the Qur'an. When Adam died, he named his son Seth as successor but over time his descendants spilt up and moved apart.

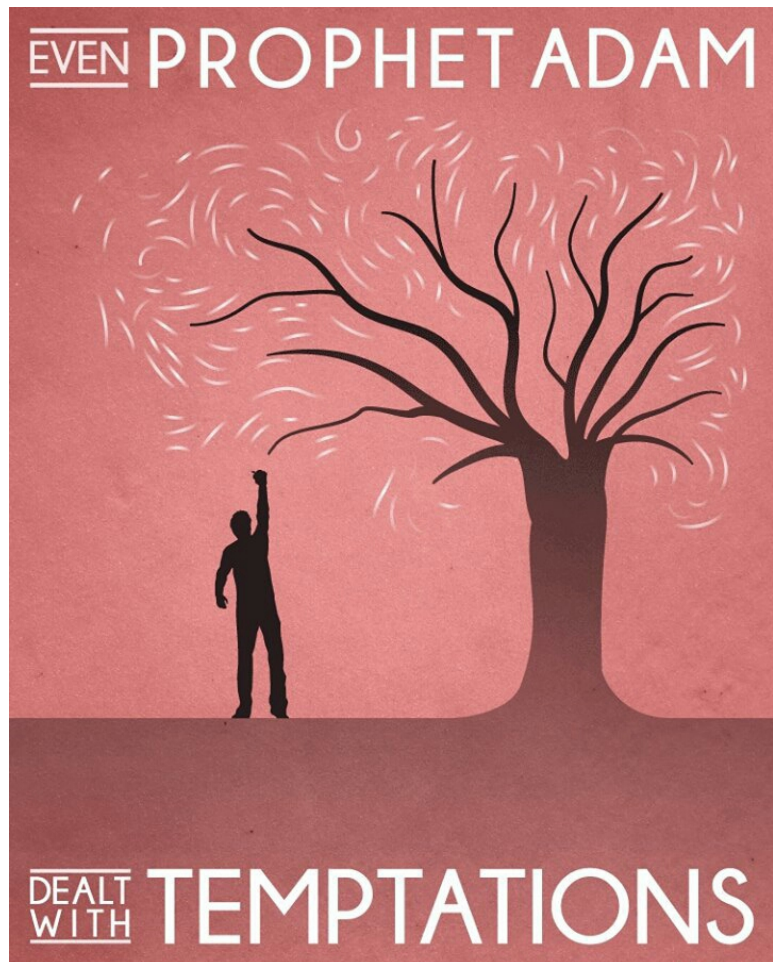


Why is Adam important in Islam?

1. He is the father of all humankind
2. He was a prophet until his death
3. He taught the revelations to his sons
4. He taught about the work of Iblis and how to protect themselves from jinn
5. He taught life on earth was temporary, eternal life was in the next life
6. He built the Ka'aba as the first place of worship, with the help of the angels after he was sent to earth

What can Muslims learn from Adam?

Iblis and Adam disobeyed Allah. However, Adam repented his sins straight away and regretted it all his life, so finding salvation. He openly criticised himself for falling into Iblis' trap but he hopes he could make amends and receive Allah's mercy. Iblis did not show repentance or regret. He lost all hope and was forever tormented.



Prophet Ibrahim



Ibrahim lived in Ur in Mesopotamia about 1900 BCE. He sold small statues (idol gods) for his father, Azar, who was a sculptor. One day, he decided to test the power of the idols. He threw them into the river to show they did not

have any power to save themselves – they sank, proving his point. He realised that there was no power in these statues. He began to search for the truth, and looking at the sun, moon and stars, but became convinced that there was just one true power: a single One God. Allah called him to be a prophet and Ibrahim submitted to Him. “For me, I have set my face towards the One who created the skies and the earth. I will never make partners with Allah” (Qur'an 6:79). He then tried to convert his father and save him, but his father threatened to kill him and sent him away.



Ibrahim preached in public but people did not listen. They ridiculed him. He went into their temples and

destroyed all the idols except one. The people were angry and questioned him. Ibrahim told them to ask the remaining idol for answers, which of course did not answer. Ibrahim asked them why they worshipped useless idols. Furious, the people shouted for him to be burned. A fire was built and Ibrahim was chained up and then catapulted into it. An angel spoke to him in the fire asking what he wanted most, but Ibrahim said he only wanted to please Allah. As a result, Allah commanded the fire to be cool. People were amazed: the chains were burned but Ibrahim was untouched. Ibrahim continued to receive revelations and wrote them on scrolls called the Suhuf. People



including his nephew, Lut, began to follow him. After a disagreement with Minrud, the King of Ur, Ibrahim realised that he would have to leave. With his family, he set off to the Promised Land (Qur'an 21:71). On the journey, quarrels led the group to split. Lut went to the plains east of the Dead Sea and Ibrahim carried on to the Promised Land.

Ibrahim married Sarah and later took on Hajar as a second wife because Sarah was barren. Hajar had a son, Ismail, whom Ibrahim loved greatly. He dreamt he was told to sacrifice Ismail, and when he told Ismail of the dream, both agreed to do what Allah had commanded. As both were willing, the test was passed and a ram was sacrificed instead. Clearly, Ibrahim was willing to give up everything for Allah. Allah then granted Sarah with a son, Ishaq. It has been said that Hajar and Sarah were jealous of each other, so Hajar and Ismail left to live elsewhere. They were on their own, but they never gave up hope and when they ran out of water, Allah gave them a well, which Hajar names Zamzam. In thanks to Allah for the lives on his families, Ibrahim built (or rebuilt) the Ka'aba with Ismail.

Later, Ismail took his father's place as a prophet and led the first community in the valley of Makkah.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

Why Muhammad (PBUH) was chosen to be the Prophet of Allah

Muhammad (PBUH) is important for Islam at the time and Islam today. In 610CE, at the age of 40, Muhammad (PBUH), was called to serve Allah. Why Muhammad (PBUH) though, and why at this point? Muhammad (PBUH) had a tough life, he never knew his father because he had died before Muhammad (PBUH) was born. He became an orphan at age 6



when his mother died, and he had to grow up very quickly, earning his keep by looking after his grandfather's sheep and then working as a merchant for his uncle Abu Talib. Many boys might have struggled with this. For Muhammad (PBUH), it made him stronger, developing characteristics in him such as responsibility, determination, patience, courage, honesty, trustworthiness and self-discipline. By age 40, he was married to Khadijah, had children, had his own successful business and was highly respected in the community.

This was all part of Allah's plan; Muhammad's (PBUH) role would now be as Prophet to deliver a message that was never going to be changed or corrupted. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had the task of converting the people of Makkah and beyond to the ways of One God and laying down the basic structures for a religion.

What did Muhammad (PBUH) do as a prophet?

The conversion of Makkah was not straightforward, and Muhammad (PBUH) had to escape to Madinah (the Hijrah) after his religious message was rejected and his life came under threat. In Madinah, he became the ruler of the city both spiritually and politically. This was the first Islamic community to be set up. He later did fulfil his task of converting the people of Makkah to Islam.

The call of Muhammad (PBUH) to Prophethood

Muhammad (PBUH) was a wealthy merchant, but was disillusioned with life in Makkah; people behaved in an immoral way, cheated people out of money, gambled, prostitution was rife and idol worship was the normal thing.



Muhammad (PBUH) began to spend time along outside the city, meditating in a cave to find peace of mind and the right path to follow. Most scholars agree on the account that on Allah's command, Angel Jibril appeared beside

Muhammad (PBUH) commanding him to 'Recite!' Muhammad (PBUH) said he could not read. The Angel squeezed him tight three times before he said the words. When the angel left, Muhammad (PBUH) left the cave, trembling from what had happened. He returned to Khadijah to tell her the story. (In the Shi'a tradition they believe that Muhammad (PBUH) was not terrified and they he was in fact expecting it). After reassurances from Khadijah and her Christian cousin, three years passed with Muhammad (PBUH) spending more time in meditation and spiritual contemplation. The revelations continued. Allah commanded him to preach to close family friends and then the people of Makkah about Islam and One God.

Why was it important for Muhammad's Prophethood to happen at that point?

1. It was all part of Allah's plan for it to happen
2. People were becoming more distanced from the ways of Allah, earlier revelations were being ignored; Makkah was become a centre for idol worship as it grew as a trade centre
3. Previous holy books had been lost or changed
4. The religion now needed structure in its organisation in the same way that Judaism and Christianity had
5. Muhammad (PBUH) was a role model that people could follow and trust in. it is said he stood for the truth when truth was lost, was gracious to those who persecuted him, always compassionate and respectful, was concerned with the welfare of others (human or animal), loved children, taught equality, lived humbly and was the model husband, father and friend.