

Islamic
Correspondence
Course



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Chapter 1

PREFACE

This book is a translation of "AL-MUSLIM," the Arabic work of Seyyid Muhammad Mahdi Shirazi of Karbala (Iraq). The translation has been done by Haji Mohsin M.R. Alidina, of Dar es Salaam University. Some material has been added here and there on the suggestion of the Publishers.

Chapter 2

Genealogy of the Prophet and the Imams

HASHIM ABDUL-MUTTALIB

ABDULLAH

ABU TALIB PROPHET MUHAMMAD (S.A.W.) FATIMA (A.S.)

ALI (FIRST IMAM)

HUSAIN (THIRD IMAM)

HASAN (SECOND IMAM)

ALI ZAINUL ABEDEEN (FOURTH IMAM)

MUHAMMAD-AL-BAQIR (FIFTH IMAM)

JAAFER AS-SADIQ (SIXTH IMAM)

MUSA AL-KADHIM (SEVENTH IMAM)

ALI AR-RIDHA (EIGHTH IMAM)

MUHAMMAD-AL-JAWAD (NINTH IMAM)

ALI AN-NAQI (TENTH IMAM)

HASAN AL-ASKARI (ELEVENTH IMAM)

MUHAMMAD AL-MAHDI (TWELFTH IMAM)

Part 1
LESSON IN ISLAM - BOOK TWO

Chapter 3

LESSON ONE

Dear Brother,

In Book One you learnt that after Prophet Mohammad (M.P.B.H. - S.A.W.) came twelve Imams (Spiritual leaders).

In this book, we shall mention, in brief, the life sketch of these personages (Imams) and also the life sketch of the Prophet's daughter who is the wife of the Prophet's successor and the mother of the other Imams.

We shall relate in brief the life sketch of these holy personages to strengthen our beliefs and to inform you about them so that we may draw examples from their lives.

Whoever obeys them in word and deed and follows in their footsteps will be exalted in the world and in the hereafter. May God help us.

Chapter 4

THE FIRST IMAM

He is Ali ibn Abi Talib (A.S.). His mother is Fatima binti Asad. He is the cousin of the Prophet and the husband of the Prophet's daughter. He is the True Successor after the Prophet and is Amirul Mumineen (The leader of the Believers) and the father of all the Imams (A.S.)

He was born in the Kaaba in Mecca at night on Friday 13th Rajab, thirty years after the birth of the Prophet (S.A.W.).

He was martyred on Friday night in the mihrab (the prayer niche in a mosque) of the Kufa Mosque while praying. He was struck on the forehead with a sword by Abdurrehman ibn Muljim (May God increase His punishment on him) on the 19th of the Holy month of Ramadhan. He died after three days at the age of 63. His funeral and burial were conducted by his sons Imams Hasan and Husain (A.S.). He is buried at Najaf (Iraq) where his shrine is.

Ali was a noble personage with innumerable qualities and generous disposition. He was the first to testify to Islam and had never worshipped idols. He never lost any battle in which he led his army and he never fled from the battle-field.

About one of his manifold qualities, the Prophet (S.A.W.) declared: "AQDHAKUM ALIYUN," "the best of all Judges among you is Ali."

Ali's unlimited knowledge was described by the Prophet in these words: "ANA MADINATUL ILME WA ALIYUN BABUHA," "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is it's Gate." This clearly shows that whosoever seeks knowledge from the Prophet (S.A.W.) must first pass through the Gate, if it is opened for him. If it is not opened, knowledge cannot be

obtained. The Gate only opens for those who would follow Ali's (A.S.) teachings and his footsteps.

Ali's relationship with Truth brought forth the Prophet's (S.A.W.) declaration of: "ALİYUN MAAL HAQQI WALHAQQU MAA ALİY," "Ali is with the Truth and Truth is with Ali."

The wise have spoken; now you can recognize the facts for yourselves.

He was just to his subjects, impartial in everything and pious in his dealings.

He would go into the State Treasury and look at gold and silver and would say: 'O Yellow one! O white one! Deceive others, not me" Then he would distribute it to the needy.

He was kind to the needy, would sit with the poor; would fulfill the wants of the needy.

He was always truthful and judged without bias. In fact, he was like the Prophet in his manifold qualities and this was recognized by God who in a verse in the Qur'an referred to him as "Nafs of the Prophet (S.A.W.)" i.e. the spirit of the Prophet.

Part 2
LESSON - TWO THE DAUGHTER OF
PROPHET (S.A.W.)

The daughter of Prophet Mohammad (S.A.W.) ibn Abdullah is Fatima Zahra. Her mother is Lady Khadija, the mother of the Muslims. Her husband is Ameerul-Mumineen, the Leader of the Successors to the Prophet; her sons and grandsons are the Pure Imams (May Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon Them).

Lady Fatima (A.S.) was born on 20th Jumadal-Ukhra, fortyfive years after the Prophet (S.A.W.) was born. She died on Tuesday, 3rd Jumadal-Ukhra in 11 A.H.1 at the tender age of eighteen.

Her funeral and burial were conducted by Amirul Mumineen Ali (A.S.). She was buried at Madina Munawwara (The city of Light; The Prophet's city, in Saudi Arabia). He disguised her grave as willed by Lady Fatima herself.

In her piety, worship and nobility she followed her father's footsteps. Many a Quranic verse were revealed in praise of her.

The Prophet used to refer to her as the "Leader of the Women of the Universe" and used to love and respect her so much that whenever Fatima (A.S.) entered the Prophet's room, he would stand up to welcome her and would seat her on his place and would even kiss her hands.

Often the Prophet was heard saying, "God is pleased with what pleases Fatima and He is angry with what angers Fatima."

1A.H. = After Hijra. The Hijra, i.e., The Emigration of the Prophet from Mecca to Madina marks the beginning of the Muslim Calendar.

The Prophet also said, "Four women are the best amongst all in Paradise: Mariam binti Imraan (the mother of Isa); Khadija binti Khuwailid, Fatima binti Muhammad (S.A.W.) and Asia binti Muzaahim

One person asked Aisha (the Prophet's wife): "who was the most beloved of all of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.)?" Her reply was: "Fatima." He added another question: who amongst the males was the Prophet's

(S.A.W.) most beloved? Her reply was: "The husband of Lady Fatima," i.e. Ali ibn Abi Talib (A.S.).

The Prophet (S.A.W.) declared, "Indeed, God ordered me to marry Fatima to Ali (A.S.)."

She bore for Amirul Mumineen Ali (A.S.):

Imam Hasan (A.S.)

Imam Husain (A.S.)

Lady Zainab (A.S.)

Lady Umme Kulthum (A.S.)

Muhsin (A.S.): who was killed in his mother's womb when she was attacked by her enemies. Thus, in all, there were five children of Lady Fatima.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said, "Every child follows his father's family except for the progeny of Fatima as I am their ancestor and their source." (All the children of Fatima are the Prophet's (S.A.W.) Progeny). The Prophet also declared: "All families and kinship-ties will disappear on the Day of Judgement except for my family and kinship-ties."

Part 3
LESSON THREE

The second Imam is Hasan bin Ali bin Abi Talib (A.S.). His mother is Fatima Zahra, the daughter of the Prophet (S.A.W.). He is the grandson of the Prophet (S.A.W.) and is the second amongst his Caliphs. He is the Imam after his father Amirul Mumineen Ali (A.S.).

He was born at Madina Munawwara, on Tuesday, 15th Ramadhan, 3 A.H. He died of poison, administered by one of his wives, on Thursday 28th Safar, 49 A.H. His funeral and burial arrangements were made by his brother Imam Husain (A.S.). He was buried at Baqii, in Madina, where there is his grave.

In his time he worshipped God most and was the most erudite and best of mankind. He very much resembled the Prophet. Of the Prophet's Progeny in his time, he was the most generous and most courteous to everyone.

One of his acts of generosity was revealed when one of his slave-girls presented him with a bouquet of flowers. The Imam told her, "You are free for the sake of God." He further added: "WAIDHA HUYITUM BITAHYATIN FAHAYYU BIAHSANA MINHAA AU RUDDUHA" ("When you are given a gift return one that is better or its equal").

His exemplary courtesy is evident in his dealing with a Syrian who rode a camel and was cursing Imam Hasan (A.S.). The Imam did not tell him anything. When he had finished with cursing, he was approached by the Imam who saluted him and smiled at him, then asked him "O Gentleman, I suppose you are a stranger here and have failed to recognize me. If you want your difficulties solved we would do so; if you ask for anything, we would have given you; and if you wanted to be directed anywhere we would direct you there; and if you want to go anywhere, we would take you there. If you are hungry, we will feed you; and if you have no garments, we will clothe you. If you feel lonely, we will give you company; and if you need anything we will fulfil your need."

When the man heard these words of the Imam, he cried and said: "I testify that you are the Caliph of God in this Earth and God knows where to bestow his vicegerency."

The Prophet said: "Whoever wishes to have the pleasure of seeing the Leader of the youths of Paradise he should look at Hasan." The Prophet also added: "Whoever loves me should love him" (i.e. Hasan).

Imam Hasan went for the Hajj (Pilgrimage) twenty-five times; and he would go on foot from Madina to Mecca. One of the Prophet's (S.A.W.) companions, Abu Huraira relates: "Once came Hasan bin Ali, and saluted the people who replied to his salutation. He went on his way. Abu Huraira did not know who he was that had saluted. He was told that the one who had saluted was Hasan bin Ali. Then Abu Huraira followed him and said: "Salutations be upon you, O my Master." People asked him why he had addressed him as his Master. Abu Huraira replied: "I testify that the Prophet (S.A.W.) of God has said, "Indeed he (i.e., Hasan) is the Master."

Part 4
LESSON FOUR - THE THIRD IMAM

The third Imam is Husain bin Ali bin Abi Talib (A.S.). His mother is Lady Fatima, (the daughter of the Prophet (S.A.W.)). He is a grandson of the Prophet (S.A.W.) and his third Khalifa and the forefather of nine other Imams after him. He is the third Imam following after his brother (Imam Hasan A.S.).

He was born at Madina on 3rd Shaban, 4 A.H. He was oppressed and killed thirsty in the renowned battle of Ashura² at Karbala on Friday, 10th Muharram A.H. 61. He was buried by his son, Imam Zainul Abedin (A.S.), three days after his martyrdom at Holy Karbala where his shrine stands today.

His qualities are innumerable. He is the "Flower of the Prophet (S.A.W.)" as declared by the Prophet about him and his brother Hasan (A.S.): "They are my flowers in the world."

The Prophet (S.A.W.) further stated, "Husain is from me and I am from Husain," adding that "Hasan and Husain are Imams whether they be standing or sitting."

He was a great erudite and a great worshipper. He would pray one thousand rakaats daily like his father Amirul Mumineen Ali (A.S.).

He used to carry baskets full of food on his own shoulders and would distribute it to the needy. The marks of burden on his shoulders were seen after his death. He was a generous and gentle person and would not tolerate anyone violating the principles of the Islamic Sharia (System of Laws).

*2*Ashura: 10th day of Muharram*

An example of his generosity is evidenced in his dealing with an Arab, who in order to get his needs fulfilled, came to the Imam, and composed a poem saying:-

"None has ever returned empty-handed that has come to your door in hope and expectation."

"You are generous and the one to be depended upon; your father was the Slayer of the wicked (those who went against God)" "Had it not been

for all that we received from your forefathers, we would have been overwhelmed by the fire of Hell"

When he heard this, Imam Husain (A.S.) gave him four thousand dinars, and apologizing he versified:

"Take these, and I ask forgiveness from you; be assured that I sympathise with you. Had we possessed the stick (of authority) then our clouds would have poured upon you, (if the power of Islamic state would have been in our hands, we would have bestowed you with more)

"But the times have betrayed us and my hand holds but little"

The Islamic tenets and the religion of his grandfather survived because of his brave stand. In fact, he caused the very world to survive to the End. He is the Leader of the Martyrs and is the best of all after his brother.

Part 5
LESSON FIVE - THE FOURTH IMAM

The Fourth Imam is Ali bin Husain (A.S.). His mother is Shah Zanan, the daughter of King Yazdajurd. (Shah Zanan means the Queen of Women). She is referred to as "Shahr Bano" (The Queen of the City). This Imam was born at Madina on 15th Jumadal Ula, A.H. 36, the day when Ali (A.S.) captured Basra. He was poisoned and died on Saturday, 25th Muharram, A.H. 95, at the age of 57. He was buried at Baqii in Madina.

He was without a match in his erudition, worship and qualities, and piety and helping the needy. Many persons received knowledge from him. His sayings, invocations and historical narrations are preserved. He would come out in the darkness of the night carrying bags of money and sometimes food and even fire-wood. When he would reach the houses of the poor, he would knock their doors and distribute everything he had.

He would hide his face so that no one should recognize him. When he died, then did people realize that he had been their benefactor all that time.

He liked very much to sit and eat with the poor, orphans and crippled. His behaviour was exemplary. Every month he would gather his slaves and would tell them: "If there is any amongst you who wishes to marry, I shall get him/her married, or wishes to be sold, I shall sell him/ her; or wishes to be set free, I will set him/her free." Whenever someone came to him to express his need, he would say: "Welcome to you who are helping me to take my savings to the Hereafter."

He was pious and would pray in one day and night one thousand raka'ats.³ When the time of prayers came his body would shiver and his face would pale and his body would shake like a palm-leaf. He was known as "DHUTH-THAFANAT" -one with hardened skin on knees. The cause for this title was his many prostrations that resulted in hardened skin growing on his forehead, palm of the hands, the knees and the thumbs. Every six months these hardened patches had to be cut off. Whenever he remembered God and his bounties, he would fall into prostration; whenever he recited the verses in which prostration is mentioned, he would prostrate. Whenever he completed his obligatory prayers, he would prostrate; whenever he would reconcile two people, he would prostrate. For his acts of prostration he was referred to as As-Sajjaad (one who performs many prostrations). The

people of the time would say: "We have never seen a Quraishi better than him."

A person amongst the Imam's relations once insulted the Imam, who silently heard him out. After some time, the Imam went to his place. Those who were there thought that the Imam had gone to seek vengeance. But, this could never be! The Imam (A.S.) recited the following Qufanic verse: "WAL KADHI-MINAL GHAIIDHY WALAAFINA ANI-NASI WALLAHU YUHIBBUL MUHSINEEN" (Those who swallow their anger and forgive others; God befriends those who do good). Then the Imam addressing the man said, "O brother! you attacked us and said what you fancied; if what you said was true, then may God forgive me; and if what you said was not true, may God forgive you."

*3*Rakaa: is a part of prayers. Every prayer has 2, 3 or 4 parts.*

Part 6
LESSON SIX - THE FIFTH IMAM

The Fifth Imam is Muhammad Al-Baquir (A.S.). His father is Imam Zainul-Abedeem (A.S.) and his mother is Fatima, daughter of Imam Hasan (A.S.).

He was born on Monday 1st Rajab, A.H. 57. Both his parents were the grandson and granddaughter of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (A.S.). So, he was the first person to be the descendant of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (A.S.) on both sides. He died of poison on Monday, 7th Dhul-hijja, A.H. 114, at the age of 57. He was buried at Baqii in Madina Munawwara.

He was a man of many qualities of greatness, reverence and piety. He was the epitome of knowledge and courtesy and gentle disposition. He was devout, humble and generous.

The following story reveals the quality of his character:

One day a Christian insulted the Imam (A.S.) calling him a bull. The imam replied, "I am Baquir (one who unearths knowledge)". The Christian added: "you are the son of a cook." The Imam replied, "That was her job." The Christian insultingly said, "you are the son of a Barbarian mother." The Imam replied, "If what you have said is true, may God forgive her; and if you have been lying, may God forgive you."

Seeing this kindness in the Imam the Christian submitted to Islam.

Jabir bin Abdullah Ansari, a companion of the Holy Prophet, said, "One day I was with the Prophet who had his grandson, Husain, on his lap, and was playing with him. The Prophet said to me. "O! Jabir, this son of mine will beget a son by the name of Ali.

When Doomsday comes, a caller will proclaim: "Let 'the Leader of the Worshipers stand forth." So Ali bin Husain will come forward. This Ali bin Husain will beget a son, Muhammad. O Jabir! When you meet this Muhammad convey to him mygreetings. After that you will not live for long."

He was the Ocean of Knowledge and would answer questions unhesitatingly. Ibn Ata Al-Makki says: "I never saw great scholars feeling inferior in front of anybody like I saw them before

Imam Mohammad Al-Baquir (A.S.), (i.e. whenever a scholar came in the presence of the Imam he at once felt the inadequacy of his own knowledge). Indeed, I have seen Hakim bin Utayba (who was such a respectable scholar) in presence of the Imam like a child in front of his teacher."

Muhammad ibn Muslim relates: "Nothing ever flashed across my mind which I did not ask Imam Muhammad al-Baquir (A.S.), till I had asked him thirty thousand questions."

He would always remember God. Imam Jaafar Sadique (A.S.) relates: "My father would remember God at every moment; whenever I accompanied him I saw him remembering God; he conversed with people and yet he would remember God; he would pray tahajjud⁴ at length and he was devoted to the worship of God and would cry for love of God."

⁴The prayers said after midnight. It is not obligatory, but optional though highly recommended.

Part 7
LESSON SEVEN - THE SIXTH IMAM

The Sixth Imam is Jaafar bin Muhammad As-Sadiq (A.S.). His mother is Fatima (whose other name is Farwah).

The Imam was born at Madina, on Monday, 17th RabiulAwwal, the day of the Prophet's birth, A.H. 83. He died of poison on 25th Shawwal, 148 A.H., at the age of 65.

He possessed knowledge, was superior in quality and was a person of wisdom, knowledge of the Sharia (Laws) and was pious. He was Truthful, Just, possessed greatness, generosity and valour; and also was a master of many other qualities.

Al-Mufid relates: "Scholars of religion obtained from him much more than they did from any other amongst the Ahlul-bait; nor has there been anyone more prolific in propagating religion amongst the scholars of history and hadith than Imam Jaafar Sadiqu (A.S.)."

In fact the list of persons (who were reliable and who belonged to different sects) who acquired knowledge from him numbered four thousand; Abu Hanifa, the leader of one of the sects of the Sunnis, being one of them.

He was pious and thus ate vinegar and oil and would wear coarse garments. At times his clothes would be full of patches.

He used to toil in his own garden himself. Many times he would become unconscious in remembrance of God.

One night the Abbasid Caliph of the time sent a messenger to call the Imam. The messenger reports: "I went to the Imam's place and found him in his private room. The Imam's cheeks were covered with dust and with utmost humility he was supplicating God with his hands raised towards the heavens; his face and hands were covered with dust."

He gave away much in charity and was a person of gentle disposition, soft-spoken, co-operative and pleasant to work with.

One day the Imam (A.S.) called his slave by the name of Musaadif, and gave him one thousand dinars to prepare for a trading voyage to Egypt,

as the number of dependants in the home had increased and there was need to look for some more means of livelihood.

Musaadif bought trading goods and left for Syria with a group of merchants. When they neared Egypt, they met another group of merchants returning from Egypt. The traders told the merchants who were coming from Egypt that they had certain kind of merchandise and enquired of them if those things were available in Egypt. Those merchants replied that they were not available there. Now Musaadif's group took oath not to sell their merchandise at a profit less than hundred per cent. This they did and returned to Madina.

Musaadif went to the Imam (A.S.) taking with him two bags, each containing one thousand dinars. He told the Imam that one bag contained the capital sum, and the other, profit.

The Imam told him that the profit was excessive and asked them what they had done with the goods. He explained what they had done and the oath they swore (not to sell under the hundred per cent profit). The Imam expressed surprise and asked them whether they had sworn an oath not to sell the goods to the Muslims except at 100% profit!

Then the Imam took one of the bags and said, "This contains my capital, and we would not touch that profit." He continued, "O Musaadif. It is easier to fight with a sword than to earn a lawful (halal) living."

Part 8
LESSON EIGHT - THE SEVENTH
IMAM

The Seventh Imam is Musa ibn Jaafar, Al-Kadhim (A.S.). His mother is Hamida al-Musaffat. The Imam was born at Abwa (which is a place between Mecca and Madina) on Sunday, 7th Safar, 128 A.H.

The Imam was poisoned and died inside a prison of the Caliph Harun. He remained imprisoned for fourteen years bearing untold hardships and oppression. He died on 25th Rajab, 183 A.H. at the age of 55. His funeral was conducted by his son Ali Ar-Ridha (A.S.). He was buried at Kadhimain where his shrine stands today.

He was the greatest erudite of his time. He was also the most generous, most superior and brave and of most gentle behaviour of all in his time. His greatness is known to all. His knowledge was nonparell. His love of worship can find no match.

He would swallow his anger and hence he is known as AlKadhim (meaning "the swallower of anger"). For his righteousness, he was entitled Al-Abdus-Salih (meaning "the righteous slave of God").

His knowledge was revealed on various occasions anddazzled the people. His dialogue with Buraiha (a Christian Priest) is well-known; when the Imam convinced him, the Christian became a sincere convert to Islam.

Once a man in need begged a hundred dinars from the Imam. The Imam (A.S.) asked him certain questions in order to test his religious knowledge, and gave him two thousand Dirhams.

The Imam had a beautiful voice in reciting the Qur'an. He would worship for hours on end and would recite the Qur'an and prostrate for a long time. He would often cry for love of God. The Imam died while in a state of prostration.

Abu Hamza once saw the Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A.S.) toiling in the garden while the sweat of his head was reaching to his feet. He asked the Imam where his servants were.

The Imam addressing Abu Hamza replied that, there was someone better than the Imam and his father, who used to toil with his own hands.

Abu Hamza asked who the person was. In reply the Imam stated that it was the Prophet of God, Muhammad (S.A.W.) and Ameerul Mumineen Ali (A.S.), and that all his ancestors used to work with their own hands. This was the Tradition of the Prophets and Vicegerents and the Righteous persons.

Part 9
LESSON NINE - THE EIGHTH IMAM

The Eighth Imam is Ali bin Musa Ar-Ridha (A.S.), whose mother is Lady Najma.

The Imam was born on 11th Zulqaada, 148, A.H., at Madina Munawwara.

He was poisoned and died on the last day of the month (29th) of Safar, A.H. 203 at the age of 55. His funeral was conducted by his son Al-Jawad (A.S.) and he was buried at Mesh-had where his shrine exists today.

His knowledge, gentleness, generosity and pleasant disposition and humility and worship are universally acknowledged and need not be related here.

Caliph Mamun wanted the Imam to be his heir-apparent. The Imam (A.S.) declined for he was aware of the guiles of Mamun.

The Imam (A.S.) was, however, forced by Mamun to accept the title of successor after him. But the Imam accepted on condition that he would not partake in any way in the administration of the government. The Imam's intense knowledge of various religions and sects was revealed in the various discussions arranged by Mamun. Even travelers upon returning to their respective homes would relate about the Imam's knowledge.

The Imam (A.S.) would stay up praying the whole night and would finish reciting the whole Qur'an in three days. He would worship for hours on end and would complete one thousand rak'aats in one day and a night. He would prostrate for many hours. He used to fast frequently.

The Imam (A.S.) would often give charity secretly, in the thick of the night.

The Imam (A.S.) would never interrupt anyone's talk, nor would he ever abuse anyone. He never sat reclining upon anything in presence of other, nor would he ever laugh loudly or spit in presence of anyone.

He would sit with all his wives, kinsmen and slaves and partake of his meals.

Part 10
LESSON TEN - THE NINTH IMAM

The Ninth Imam is Muhammad Taki bin Ali, al-Jawad (A.S.). His mother is Lady Sabika.

He was born on 10th Rajab, 195 A.H., at Madina Munawwara.

He died of poison at Baghdad on the last day of Zulqaada, 220 A.H. at the age of 55.

He was buried behind his Grandfather, Imam Musa bin Jaafar (A.S.) where his shrine stands today, at Kadhimain. The Imam (A.S.) was the greatest erudite of his time and most generous and benefactor.

He was very co-operative and was gentle in his disposition. He was very eloquent. He used to ride his horse carrying gold and silver and would give to anyone who asked. When his uncles asked, he would give them fifty or more dinars, and his aunts would get twenty-five or more dinars.

His knowledge was well-known to the people.

Once, eighty disciples gathered at his place upon return from their Pilgrimage and asked the Imam (A.S.) various questions.

The Imam replied to them all satisfying each one of them. Once many people gathered around him at Mecca and asked him thirty thousand questions at a session. The Imam (A.S.) replied to each unhesitatingly and faultlessly. At this time his age was only nine; but, such a thing is no uncommon phenomenon with Ahlul-Bait (A.S.).

The Caliph Mamun Rashid gave the Imam his daughter in marriage after a very tough test, and this incident is well-known in history.

Part 11
LESSON ELEVEN - THE TENTH IMAM

The Tenth Imam is Ali bin Muhammad An-Naqii (A.S.). His mother is Lady Samana.

The Imam (A.S.) was born at Madina Munawwara on 5th Rajab, 214 A.H. He died of poison in Samarra on Monday 3rd Rajab, A.H. 254 at the age of 40. He was buried where his shrine stands today, at Samarra.

He was the most superior person of his time; a great erudite and the epitome of greatness and generosity and soft-spoken.

He was pious and gentle in manners and disposition and very generous.

One day the Caliph sent to the Imam thirty thousand dirhams. The Imam gave it to an Arab from Kufa and told him, "Go and pay your debts and spend it for your children and dependants and forgive us (for not giving you more.)" The Arab exclaimed, "O! Son of Prophet, I came here expecting far less than ten thousand; but, God knows where his vicegerency should be." Then he took the money and departed.

Part 12
LESSON TWELVE - THE ELEVENTH
IMAM

The Eleventh Imam is Hasan bin Ali, Al-Askari (A.S.). His mother is Lady Haditha. The Imam (A.S.) was born on Monday, 10th Rabiul Akhar, 232 A.H. He died of poison on Friday 8th Rabiul Awwal, 260 A.H. at the age of 28. His funeral was conducted by Imam Al-Hujjat Al-Mahdi (A.S.). He was buried near his father at Samarra. His generosity, benefaction, devoutness and humility are wellknown to everyone. He was well built in physique and possessed handsome features. He was venerated, though he was young in age. He resembled the Prophet (S.A.W.) in his disposition. It is reported from Ismail who said: "I was once waiting for the Imam (A.S.) on the way, when he passed, I pleaded for relief of my distress." The Imam (A.S.) told him that he was swearing a false oath in the name of God when he had hidden one hundred dinars in the earth. "I do not say this because I do not want to give you anything," the Imam continued. Then the Imam ordered his servant to give him one hundred dinars.

A certain person hearing of his generosity went to the Imam (A.S.). He needed five hundred dirhams. Imam (A.S.) gave him five hundred dirhams and added three hundred on top of it. The Christians too testified that the Imam (A.S.) was like the Messiah (Jesus) in his benefactions, knowledge and power of performing miracles. He was a devout worshipper and would pray the night prayers (Tahajjud) for the most part of the night.

Part 13
LESSON THIRTEEN - THE TWELFTH
IMAM

The Twelfth Imam is Al-Hujjat Al-Mahdi Muhammad bin Hasan (A.S.); his mother is Lady Narjis.

He was born at Samarra on the night of 15th Shaaban, 255 A.H.

He is the last Imam (A.S.) and is the Proof of God on earth. He is the last of the true Caliphs of The Prophet; and the last of the Twelve Imams of the Muslims. He is alive in the world and has been granted long life by God. He is in concealment (cannot be seen). He will appear before the Day of Judgement when the world will be full of injustice and sins. He will fill the world with justice, equity and equality.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) and the Imams (A.S.) have predicted that he would live and not die.

He will rule over the world and will establish justice and wipe off the oppressors. As God has declared: "May God make (it) triumphant over all other religions even though the idolators might be angered."

O God! Make imminent his appearance and make us amongst his helpers and companions.

Since the Imam went into concealment in his house, the Muslims go to the place at Samarra to worship God. This place is known as "Sardab-ul-Ghaibat."

Chapter **5**

ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS COURSE BOOK TWO

The Student's Name
.....
Student's Number: IRC/
.....
Date of writing Answers... ..
.....

QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1:

Arrange the following correctly.

1. Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.)
1. is the brother of Imam Husain (a.s.)
2. Imam Ali An-Naqui (a.s.)

2. is the daughter of the Emperor of Iran

3. Imam Hasan (a.s.)
3. is the son of Imam Muhammad al-Jawad (a.s.)

4. Shahr Bano, the mother
4. is the mother of Lady Fatima Zahra (a.s.)

5. Lady Khadija (a.s.)
5. is the first Imam and the Ancestor of all other Imams.

QUESTION 2:

Under each of the following questions, there are three answers (A), (B) and (C). Write the letter of the correct answer in the space provided.

(a) "Aliyun Ma-al Haqqi wal Haqqu Ma-a Aliy" means

- (A) I am the city of Knowledge and Ali is its gate
- (B) Ali is with the Truth and Truth is with Ali
- (C) The best of your Judges is Ali

(b) The seventh Imam was called Al-Kadhim because

- (A) he was very learned
- (B) he was very pious
- (C) he used to swallow anger

(c) The number of disciples of Imam Jafar as-Sadiq (a.s.) was

... ..

- (A) 4,000
- (B) 124,000
- (C) 500

(d) Imam Husain (a.s.) was martyred at Kerbala on the day of 'Ashura'. 'Ashura' means

- (A) 10th day, Muharram
- (B) 5th day, Dhul-Hajj
- (C) End of the month

(e) Imam Muhammad al Mahdi is 'Gha-eb', means

- (A) he is alive, but at present is not seen
- (B) he is the last Imam
- (C) he is suprememost

QUESTION 3:

Say Yes or No in the following:

(a) The mother of Imam Hasan (a.s.) is the daughter of the Holy Prophet. Yes/No

(b) Any student who came before Imam Muhammad Al-Baquir(a.s.) appeared to have very little Knowledge. Yes/No

(c) The Third Imam (a.s.) and the Fourth Imam (a.s.) used to carry food and other necessities to the needy at night. Yes/No

(d) Imam Ali ar-Ridha (a.s.) used to have food with his servants and relatives. Yes/No

QUESTION 4:

Fill in the blanks:

- (a) Bibi Fatima Zahra (a.s.) is the Suprememost of the of the universe; and is the daughter of
- (b) Imam Muhammad Al-Jawad (a.s.) is the Imam; he was born on (date) in the month of in the year
- (c) Imam Ali An-Naqui (a.s.) gave an Arab
- (d) Imam Al-Mahdi was born in the town of on the eve of of in the year
- (e) Imam Al-Mahdi (a.s.) is ; he will appear near the time of ; when the earth will be full of ; and will fill the earth with justice and

QUESTION 5:

- (a) Who was the grandson of Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.) on both sides?
- (b) What did Imam Hasan (a.s.) say when his slave girl presented him with a bouquet of flowers?
- (c) When the Fourth Imam was abused by one of his relatives, how did he reply?
- (d) Who is the Imam of the time now? Where is he at present? Can we see him at present?
- (e) How many children had Bibi Fatima Zahra (a.s.)? Name them.

QUESTION 6:

- (a) Why and when did Imam Jafar As-Sadiq (a.s.) state that "To fight with a sword is easier than earning a lawful livelihood"?
- (b) What did the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) mean when he said that he was the fore father of the progeny of Fatima, and their lineage?
- (c) What has Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (a.s.) said about working with one's hands?
- (d) Who are the Leaders of the youths of Paradise?

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let him claim it wherever he finds it"*

Imam Ali (as)