

Islamic
Correspondence
Course



Allamah Sayyid Sa'eed Akhtar Rizvi

Chapter 1

LESSON ONE

Dear Reader,

Do you know who is a Muslim? A Muslim is one who believes that there is only one God, Muhammad is His Last Prophet and the day of judgement. If you do believe in these, then you are a Muslim. However, to say only that you are a Muslim is not sufficient; but it is your duty to act according to the Islamic regulations so that you become a true Muslim and lead a happy life in this world and acquire greatness in the life hereafter by entering Paradise and enjoying the pleasure of God.

Therefore, you must make every effort to act accordingly.

The teachings of Islam may be divided into three parts:-

1. Roots (Usool) of Islam
2. Branches (Furoo) of Islam
3. Character of Islam

If a man sincerely believes in the Roots of Islam, faithfully follows the Branches of Islam and acquires the Character of Islam, then he is the best of the men in this world as well as in the life hereafter.

Chapter 2

ROOTS OF RELIGION (USUL-E-DEEN)

The Roots of Islam are its fundamental principles, the belief in which is essential.

These are-

1. Unity (Oneness) of God (Tawheed)
2. Justice of God (Adl)
3. Prophethood (Nubuwwat)
4. Succession to the Prophet (Imamat)
5. Day of Judgement (Qiyamat)

UNITY OF GOD (TAWHEED)

'Unity of God' is the belief that there is only One God. It means firm belief in the fact that everything has been created by God from nothing and that everything is under His control. Creating, Sustaining, Giving, Denying, Bestowing life, Bringing Death, Giving Health and Sickness are all under His Will and Intention.

"INNAMAA AMRUHU IDHA ARADA SHAY-AN AN YAQULA LAHU KUN FAYAKUN (Verily. His command, when He intends anything, is only that He says unto it 'Be', and it is) (Qur'an, 36:82).

The proof of His being is found in the heavens and what is therein. For example, the shining sun and the moon, the glittering stars and the clouds. the wind and rain. And is seen in the earth and what is in it; like oceans and rivers; trees and fruits: and valuable minerals of all kinds such as gold. silver and emeralds, and also in other things like creatures that fly and those that swim and the ones that creep or walk, in all their different forms and distinguishable voices, and that are similar and dissimilar; and the wonderful Man: with ears and tongue, his health and sickness, his happiness and anger and sorrow and such other things.

All those prove the existence of the Lord, the Wise and All knowing.

Thus, we believe in His Existence and worship Him, seek help from Him and depend upon Him, the Holy Being. And His name is Allah.

ALLAH has many positive attributes which befit him and some of these are:-

(a) Knowledge

He knows everything: big or small, even our unspoken intentions and desires. Nothing is hidden from Him.

(b) Power

Allah is Powerful. That is, He has power over everything and every affair, such as to create, sustain, bring death, give life etc. etc.

(c) Life

Allah is alive from ever and will live forever.

(d) Will

Allah has His own will and discretion in all affairs. He wills only that which is good and constructive; and does not will anything which is evil and destructive. All His actions are done by His own will. There is no one to compel Him to do anything.

(e) All-Perceiving

Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing; He is everywhere. Allah sees and hears everything though He has neither eyes nor ears. Even our unspoken intentions are not hidden from Him.

(f) Eternity Allah is Eternal,

i.e., He has neither a beginning nor an end. He was from ever when there was nothing; then He created all things, and even when all these things will come to an end, He will remain forever.

(g) Word

Allah is the Master of the word, i.e., He talks with his chosen servants like the prophets and angels. And the way of His talk is that He can create speech out of anything such as He did in a tree for Hazrat Musa (A.S.) and in the "Curtain of Light" for our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).

(h) Truth

Allah is true in all His words and promises. This list is not exhaustive of God's attributes. He is the Creator, Sustainer, Bestower of Life, Bringer of Death, Protector, Merciful, Forgiver, Almighty, Holy and Compassionate.

Allah is Holy and is free from every defect or need. For example: He has no body. He is everywhere because His power and knowledge are widespread.

Allah has neither a colleague nor a partner in His Divinity. Nor is He made or composed of any matter. He cannot be divided even in imagination. He is not visible. He has not been seen, is not seen, and will never be seen either in this world or in Qiyamat, the day of judgement.

Allah is not subject to any change nor does any transitory thing reaches Him.

All His attributes are His Self. It means that He is All Knowing All-Powerful from ever. We, the human beings, do not know anything in the beginning, then we learn and become learned; were weak and helpless in the beginning, then became strong and powerful. But Allah is not like this.

Allah is never dependant upon anything. Being selfsufficient, He does not need anything. He is all-Perfect. He does not need to seek advice nor does He need a Minister or soldier.

Allah has said:

"Say, Allah is One: Allah the Self-Sufficient (who has no need, but all need Him), He did not beget nor was He begotten; and there is none like unto Him."

Part 1
LESSON TWO

JUSTICE Of GOD (ADL)

Adl means that God is Just; He is neither cruel-unkind nor does He do anything that lacks in wisdom. Whatever He does endowing life, giving sustenance, or depriving anything has inherent benefit in it, though the benefit may not be apparent to us.

For example, when a doctor treats a sickness, we know the patient benefits from the treatment, though we do not know how the treatment brings about the benefit. Thus, when we witness God endowing one with riches, while leaving another in poverty, or granting one person greatness while denying it to the other, or keeping one healthy while the other is stricken with disease etc., we have to accept that these are based on rationalism even though we may not be able to understand the wisdom behind them.

God does no wrong or evil. Anybody who commits wrong or injustice does so either because he does not know that it is wrong (but God knows everything) or because he needs something which cannot be obtained without wrong-doing (but God has no need) or because he has been compelled by somebody-else to commit that wrong (but God is All-powerful and no body can compel Him to do anything). So it makes sense that it is impossible for God to do any injustice or wrong.

AN EXAMPLE OF GOD'S JUSTICE

It is told that once the Persian King, Kisra, was asked, "From whom did you learn Justice?"

He replied, "Because I know for sure that every man will be judged according to one's deeds; either bad or good." He was again asked: "How is that?"

He replied: "One day when I was on my way to the forest, I saw a gazelle. I sent my dog after it and it caught the gazelle by the leg. But the dog did not catch the gazelle as was the practice; it bit and broke the gazelle's leg.

Not long after, the dog went in front of the horse and was kicked in the leg and his leg was broken.

Soon after, the horse's leg slipped into a hole and broke.

Therefore, I realised that everybody's awards depend upon his deeds; when he does a good deed he will be rewarded well, and an evil deed will be punished. Hence, my good deeds". Dear reader, after reading these, would you ever want to commit evil deeds? Nay, never, Be far from evils.

Part 2
LESSON THREE - PROPHEHOOD

A Prophet is a man who received Revelation from Allah to deliver mankind from the darkness of tyranny, evil and ignorance and to lead them to the light of justice, truth and knowledge.

Prophets may be divided into two groups:-

(a) A 'Rasul' is that prophet who brought a new Sheriat (Code of Life). In other words, the prophets who come under this category are called "Ulul-Azm".

(b) A 'Nabi' is that prophet who did not bring any new Sheriat, but followed the Sheriat of a previous 'Rasul'.

Thus the grade of a 'Rasul' is higher than that of a 'Nabi'. In all, there came 124,000 prophets from God. The first of the prophets was ADAM (A.S.) and the last of them was MUHAMMAD (S.A.W.). There were FIVE Ulul-Azm Prophets.-

- (a) Prophet Nuh (A.S.) (NOAH)
- (b) Prophet Ibrahim (A.S.) (ABRAHAM)
- (c) Prophet Musa (A.S.) (MOSES)
- (d) Prophet Isa (A.S.) (JESUS)
- (e) Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

Jews were the followers of Prophet Musa (A.S.) and Christians were the followers of Prophet Isa (A.S.), while the Muslims are the followers of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.).

- (a) Tawrat was revealed to Hazrat Musa (A.S.)
- (b) Injil was revealed to Hazrat Isa (A.S.)
- (c) Zabur was revealed to Hazrat 'Dawood (A.S.)
- (d) The QUR'AN was revealed to our Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (S.A.W.)

All previous Books were cancelled by Allah when the Quran was revealed. Now the Quran is the only authentic and true Book which is to be followed by all men. Likewise, all previous religions like Judaism and Christianity have been cancelled by Allah and now the only TRUE religion is ISLAM which will remain until the Day of Judgement. Thus Allah says:-

"WA MAN YABTAGHI GHAYRAL ISLAMI DINAN
FALAN YUQUBALA MINHU WA HUWA FIL AKHIRATI

MINAL KHASIRIN"(And however will seek any religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted from him; and he in the life-hereafter will be among those who get loss). (3:85)

Thus Muhammad (S.A.W.) is the Last Prophet of Allah and Islam is the only true religion which abrogated all previous religions; and its Sheriat will continue until the last Day (Qiyamat).

Part 3
LESSON FOUR -LIFE SKETCH OF THE
PROPHET

Muhammad (S.A.W.), the Son of Abdullah and Lady Amina Binti Wahab, was born at Mecca on Friday, 17th Rabiul-Awwal, 570 A.D., at sunrise in the year of the Elephant, during the reign of the Persian King Nushirwan (who is also renowned as Nushirwan the Just).

Muhammad used to spend much of his time in the cave of Mount Hira outside Mecca meditating in peace and solitude. There he was visited by Jibril (the Archangel Gabriel) who brought to him the Qur'anic revelation:

"BISMIL-LAHIR RAHMANIR RAHIM IQRAA BISMERABB1KAL-LADHI KHALAQ. KHA-LAQAL INSANA MIN ALAQ. IQRAA WA RABBUKAL AKRAM. ALLADHI ALLAMA BIL QALAM. ALLAMAL INSANA MA LAM YAALAM

(Read in the name of thy Lord, who created; Created man out of a clot of congealed blood. Read, and thy Lord is most Magnanimous, Who taught by pen, taught the man that which he knew not). (96:1-5)

The Prophet then spread to the public the message of his Lord. He proclaimed the word of Allah in the streets and in the corners, saying "AYYUHANNASU QULU LAILAHA 1LLA-LLAHU TUFL1HU". (O Ye people! Say 'There is no God but Allah' and you will be saved).

The Meccans at that time were idolators. They ridiculed and jeered at him and harassed him so much that the Prophet had to say, "No Prophet was so much persecuted as I"

At the beginning, only a handful responded to the Prophet's call. The first amongst them were his wife, Khadija (A.S.) and his cousin, Imam Amirul Munineen Ali Ibn bin Abi Talib (May God's blessings Be upon them) and then others followed.

The idolators intensified their persecution and the Prophet migrated to Medina. This Migration (Hijrat) is the beginning of the Islamic calendar which is reckoned in years "After Hijra (A.H)

In Medina the Prophet met with immediate success and many were converted to Islam. Slowly but surely, Islam began to spread and gain

strength until it spread across vast portions of the world bringing with it its unique unity and cultural affinity, overwhelming the existing cultures and systems.

In Medina, the Prophet was forced to defend himself against attacks from idolators Jews and Christians. Yet the Prophet persisted in his acts of mercy, peace and gentility. His acts of kindness were instrumental in curbing the number of death in these wars and skirmishes which totalled eighty. History reveals that in all, only about 1,400 person (on both sides) died in all the wars that were fought. Since the time when the Prophet was first ordered to proclaim his mission to the time of his death, the Qur'an was revealed to him in parts at various occurrences, until it was complete as a Book in a span of 23 years.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) used to guide the Muslims in the religious as well as worldly affairs; he taught them the Qur'an and its Wisdom, and showed them the rules of worship, social dealings, political affairs and all such things.

The religion was perfect in all its aspects, and God's declaration came: "AL YAWMA AKMALTU LAKUM DINAKUM WA ATMAMTU ALAIKUM NEEMATI WA RADHITU LAKUMUI ISLAMA DINA (Today I perfected for you your religion, and completed upon you my bounties, and was pleased with Islam as your Religion). (5:3)

Sometime later, the Prophet became ill and departed from this world on 28th day of Safar A.H. Ameerul Muminin Ali ibn Abi Talib (A.S.) performed the funeral rites of the purificatory bath. Shrouding and praying on his bier and the burial. He was buried at Medina Munawwarah (The City of Light) where his grave is today.

Thus ended the life of the Holy Prophet sent as "a witness and a bringer of good tidings, and a warner and a Summoner unto Allah by His Per-mission, and a lamp that giveth light" (Q.33.45-46), and to serve but "As a mercy and blessing to mankind". (Q.2I:10).

The Prophet was at all times a model for mankind in integrity, sincerity, honesty, behaviour, knowledge, politeness, fore-bearance, holiness, bravery, piety, greatness, sense of justice, humility, courage and valour.

In physique, the Prophet had a well developed body and a perfect stature with a bright handsome and radiant face that shone like the full moon.

The Prophet was the centre of honour and generosity, and the fountain head of knowledge, and a champion of equality and justice. None was ever like him before nor shall there ever be one like him again.

Such was the Prophet of Islam and his mission. His religion surpasses every other religion, and his Book has no parallel, for it is God's own revelation, the All-Wise, and the Munificent. (Allgenerous).

The Prophet left for the guidance of the Muslims two very important things: The Book of Allah and his own Familymembers. He said: "I am leaving behind among you two most precious things. (a) The Book of Allah (Quran) and (b) My progeny who are my family-members.

So long as you hold unto them fast, you will never go astray. And they will not separate from each other till they come to me (on the Day of Judgement) near the 'Kauthar' in heaven. Beware how you deal with them after me."

So it is necessary upon Muslims to abide by these two most precious things in order to be guided rightly in this world and in order to be awarded a place in Paradise. Along with the Qur'an, Muslims should also love Imams (Successors to the Prophet); to love those who love the Imams and to hate those who hate them; to follow the traditions narrated by the Imams; to learn and follow the true interpretation of the Qur'an from the Imams.

If the Muslims had stood together by these "two most precious things" the Unity of Mankind, resulting into establishment of everlasting universal peace, would have been achieved.

Part 4
LESSON FIVE - SUCCESSION TO THE
PROPHET

As we know, a Prophet is chosen directly by God to carry His mission; so the Imam (who is the successor of the prophet) must also be appointed by God Himself.

God informed our Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) about the names and identity of his twelve successors. These renowned Imams are the only rightful successors of the Prophet and they are:-

(a) Imam Ali al Murtaza, (a.s.) Son of the Prophet's uncle, Abu Talib, and married to Our Lady of Light, Fatima, the daughter of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.);

(b) Imam Hasan-al-Mujtaba (the Chosen) (a.s.) elder son of Ali and Fatima;

(c) Imam Husain, Seyyid-us-Shuhada (a.s.) (the Chief of the Martyrs), younger son of Ali and Fatima;

(d) Imam Zainul Abidiina (a.s.), (the Ornament of the worshippers) Ali, son of Husein (a.s.);

(e) Imam Al-Baqir (one who spreads the knowledge) Muhammad, son of AH (a.s.);

(f) Imam As-Sadiq (the True) Jafar bin Muhammad (a.s.);

(g) Imam Al-Kadhim (the Patient) Musa bin Jafar (a.s.);

(h) Imam Ar-Raza (the Accepted) Ali bin Musa (a.s.);

(i) Imam At-Taqi (the Pious) Muhammad bin Ali (a.s.);

(j) Imam An-Naqi (the Pure) Ali bin Muhammad (a.s.);

(k) Imam Al-Askari Hasan bin Ali (a.s.) (1) Imam Al-Mahdi Muhammad bin Hasan, Al-Qaim (one who stands on the path of Truth) Al-Munatazar (a.s.), the Imam of our time.

The twelfth Imam is alive to this day; but is hidden, and will reappear at a time appointed by Allah. He is the AWAITED ONE and Mahdi (Guided by Allah) who will revive and spread Islam throughout the world.

These 12 Imams were the Hujjat (proof) of Allah on His creatures and they were created from the Nur (Light, of the Prophet (s.a.w.)); and they were like the Prophet in knowledge, forbearance, holiness, justice, trustworthiness, character, and other virtues. How could it be otherwise? They were the Caliphs of the Prophet and his successors, the Imams and guides of the creatures and the Proofs of Allah.

And the Prophet (s.a.w.) said.- "Verily, My ahlul-Bait (family-members) are likened to Hazrat Nuh's Ark, those who got into it were saved from the flood and those who left it were drowned and perished"

Therefore, one who loves and stands by them (Ahlul-Bait) will succeed in Akherat (in the life hereafter); and one who leaves them will be doomed in ignorance and evil.

Part 5
LESSON SIX - DAY OF JUDGEMENT
(QUIYAMAT)

The fifth root of religion is the 'Day of Judgement'. It means that one day God will bring to life every human being and he will be judged according to his belief and actions, so that the virtuous person will be rewarded, and evil one will be punished.

If a man had true faith and did good deeds (prayed) (Salat), fasted during Ramadhan (Saum), paid the Tax on wealth (Zakat), gave alms, looked after the orphans, fed the poor and did other such deeds, he would receive the Grace of Allah and will be sent to Paradise where he will find contentment according to his spiritual qualities. There will be gardens beneath which flow the streams, in the shade of the Mercy of Allah, where there will be beautiful palaces, houris and many other unimagined bounties and Blessings of Allah. Persons holding the wrong kind of belief and doing evil deeds (killing, going on wrong path, eating what is not lawful, stealing, drinking liquor and other sins) will be punished in the Hell, where there is Fire, and Torture, where the food is of Zaqqum, and drink is of boiling water. There they will remain forever in sorrow and punishment. And before Paradise and Hell, there are two things to happen:-'

(a) **Grave** - A person will be asked in the grave about his faith and deeds, and he will be awarded or punished accordingly. The Prophet (S.A.W.) said: "The Grave may be either the Hell (Fire) or Paradise". The reward or punishment of the grave is not like that of Paradise or Hell. The man in his grave feels just like a man who is asleep, who may either be dreaming a peaceful and comfortable or frightful dream; and feels comfort or discomfort according to that dream. But the man sitting at his side does not know what has befallen the man sleeping next to him. Likewise the living people do not see the condition in which the dead man is; they only see the dead body, without knowing whether he is in Bliss or Torture.

b) **Resurrection** - It means that all human beings will be brought to life again with the bodies and then will be assembled at one place. There they will stand before the highest Court of Justice, where the Scales of Justice will be erected, and where the Judges (the Prophets and Imams) will be present. Each one will be given his own book of deeds, and witnesses will be called. Those who had done good deeds on earth

will be exalted; and those who had pursued the path of evil will be shamed.

It is upon every individual then to strive to do good deeds to spare himself from loss from which there is no refuge.

Chapter **3**

GLOSSARY

S.A.W. = (sallallahu Alayhi wa Alihi wa sallam) O Allah! Send Thy Blessings to our Prophet Muhammad Mustafa and his ahlulbait (members of his family)

A.S. = (Alayhi/Alayha/Alayhimu ssalaam) May peace be on him/her/them.

A.H. = After Hijrat

ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS COURSE BOOK ONE

Student's Name
.....

Student's Number: IRC/
.....

Date of writing Answers
.....

QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: 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) Islam is made up of parts.
(A) five
(B) three
(C) four

(b) The Roots of Religion are

- (A) three
- (B) two
- (C) five

- (c) God is Eternal, meaning
- (A) He is All-Knowing
 - (B) He has neither a beginning nor an end
 - (C) He is All-Powerful

- (d) God has no Sharik means
- (A) He is One
 - (B) He cannot be seen
 - (C) He does not need an advisor nor a helper

QUESTION 2:

Say 'Yes' or 'No' as appropriate in the following:

- (a) God has a son Yes/No.
- (b) God will be seen on the Day of Judgement. Yes/No.
- (c) God is Just Yes/No.
- (d) God sees everything and hears every sound. Yes/No.

QUESTION 3:

Arrange the following correctly.

1. A Rasul

- 1. is Adam (a.s.)
- 2. The First Prophet

- 2. is Islam
- 3. The Final Religion

3. is one to whom revelation has been sent by God

- 4. A Prophet
- 4. is 124,000 5, The number of Prophets
- 5. is a prophet who has been given a new Shariat (Law)

QUESTION 4:

Fill in the blanks:

- (a) Our Prophet was born on(day) on the... .. (date) of the month of
- (b) The Prophet's mother is and his father is
- (c) The first person to declare faith in the Prophet is
- (d) The prophet migrated from to go to
- (e) The Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet by and it was completed in the period of
- (f) The Prophet left behind two things; which are and... ..

QUESTION 5:

- (a) Who has the right to appoint the Khalifa of the Prophet?
- (b) How many Imams there appeared after the Prophet?
- (c) Write down the names of the First, Seventh and last Imams?
- (d) Write down the meaning of Al-Maad (Qiyamat).
- (e) Who will be saved on the Day of Judgement, the Believer or the Non-Believer?

From the same author on Feedbooks

Day of Judgement (1975)

A detailed and referenced Islamic perspective of the Soul, Death, Hereafter and the Day of judgement. Sayyid Saeed Akhter Rizvi's expertise on Islamic subjects such as these and simplistic use of English language makes it a "Must Read" book.

It is hoped that this book will give enlightenment to our brothers and sisters; and will help them in appreciating and following the tenets of Islam more faithfully.

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Muhammad (S) is the Last Prophet (2012)

This text is a response to the erroneous Ahmadiyya (Qadiani) beliefs about the alleged prophet-hood of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. It discusses in depth the finality of prophet-hood with Prophet Muhammad in light of the Qur'an and traditions (ahadith). It also refutes the claims that connect Imam Mahdi with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

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What is Taqiyah? When can it be used? Best way to perform taqiyah, and when it is not allowed.

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The Justice of God - Adl -e- Ilahi (2012)

The concept of the 'Justice of God' in Islam. This book deals with philosophical topics such as 'Test and Suffering', 'Action and Knowledge of God', 'Fate and Divine Decree'.

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IN THE AGE OF INFORMATION
IGNORANCE IS A CHOICE

*"Wisdom is the lost property of the Believer,
let him claim it wherever he finds it"*

Imam Ali (as)