

Q114

071

سورة نوح

Nuh

Noah



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SURATU NUH (71)

Suratu Nuh has 28 ayaat.

It was revealed in Makka and is the 71st sura of the Qur'an.

Benefits

- Will not die until sees place in Janna
- Hajat answered straight after recitation

SURATU NUH (71)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرْ قَوْمَكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ
يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

Surely We sent Nuh to his people, saying: Warn your people before there come upon them a painful chastisement.

قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ

He said: O my people! Surely I am a plain warner to you:

أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاتَّقُوهُ وَأَطِيعُوا

That you should serve Allah and be careful of (your duty to) Him and obey me:

يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ مِّنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُؤَخِّرْكُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى إِنَّ
أَجَلَ اللَّهِ إِذَا جَاءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

He will forgive you some of your faults and grant you a delay to an appointed term; surely the term of Allah when it comes is not postponed; did you but know!

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِي لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا

He said: O my Lord! surely I have called my people by night and by day!

فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُمْ دُعَائِي إِلَّا فِرَارًا

But my call has only made them flee the more:

وَإِنِّي كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوا أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ وَاسْتَغْشَوْا ثِيَابَهُمْ وَأَصْرُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا

And whenever I have called them that Thou mayest forgive them, they put their fingers in their ears, cover themselves with their garments, and persist and are puffed up with pride:

ثُمَّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُهُمْ جِهَارًا

Then surely I called to them aloud:

ثُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْلَنْتُ لَهُمْ وَأَسْرَرْتُ لَهُمْ إِسْرَارًا

Then surely I spoke to them in public and I spoke to them in secret:

فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا

Then I said, Ask forgiveness of your Lord, surely He is the most Forgiving:

يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا

He will send down upon you the cloud, pouring down abundance of rain:

وَيُمِدُّكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَأَنْهَارًا وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ

And help you with wealth and sons, and make for you gardens,
and make for you rivers.

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا

What is the matter with you that you fear not the greatness of
Allah?

وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَطْوَارًا

And indeed He has created you through various grades:

أَلَمْ تَرَوْا كَيْفَ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا

Do you not see how Allah has created the seven heavens, ~ one
above another,

وَجَعَلَ الْقَمَرَ فِيهِنَّ نُورًا وَجَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ سِرَاجًا

And made the moon therein a light, and made the sun a lamp?

وَاللَّهُ أَنْبَتَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ نَبَاتًا

And Allah has made you grow out of the earth as a growth:

ثُمَّ يُعِيدُكُمْ فِيهَا وَيُخْرِجُكُمْ إِخْرَاجًا

Then He returns you to it, then will He bring you forth a (new)
bringing forth:

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ بِسَاطًا

And Allah has made for you the earth a wide expanse,

لِتَسْلُكُوا مِنْهَا سُبُلًا فِجَاجًا

That you may go along therein in wide paths.

قَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ إِنَّهُمْ عَصَوْنِي وَاتَّبَعُوا مَنْ لَمْ يَزِدْهُ مَالُهُ
وَوَلَدَهُ إِلَّا خَسَارًا

Nuh said: My Lord! surely they have disobeyed me and followed
him whose wealth and children have added to him nothing but
loss.

وَمَكَّرُوا مَكْرًا كُبْرًا

And they have planned a very great plan.

وَقَالُوا لَا تَدْرِنَ آلِهَتِكُمْ وَلَا تَدْرِنَ وِدًّا وَلَا سُوعَاً وَلَا
يَعُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا

And they say: By no means leave your gods, nor leave Wadd, nor Suwa; nor Yaghus, and Yauq and Nasr.

وَقَدْ أَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا ضَلَالًا

And indeed they have led astray many, and do not increase the unjust in aught but error.

مِمَّا خَطَبَاتِهِمْ أُغْرِقُوا فَأُدْخِلُوا نَارًا فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا لَهُمْ مِّنْ
دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْصَارًا

Because of their wrongs they were drowned, then made to enter fire, so they did not find any helpers besides Allah.

وَقَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَيَّ الْأَرْضَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ
دِيَارًا

And Nuh said: My Lord! leave not upon the land any dweller from among the unbelievers:

إِنَّكَ إِن تَذَرَهُمْ يُضِلُّوا عِبَادَكَ وَلَا يَلِدُوا إِلَّا فَاجِرًا كَفَّارًا

For surely if Thou leave them they will lead astray Thy servants, and will not beget any but immoral, ungrateful (children)

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِمَنْ دَخَلَ بَيْتِي مُؤْمِنًا
وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا تَبَارًا

My Lord! forgive me and my parents and him who enters my house believing, and the believing men and the believing women; and do not increase the unjust in aught but destruction!

AYAAT 1-4

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرْ قَوْمَكَ مِن قَبْلِ أَنْ
يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

Surely We sent Nuh to his people, saying: Warn your people before there come upon them a painful chastisement.

قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ

He said: O my people! Surely I am a plain warner to you:

أَنْ اْعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاتَّقُوهُ وَأَطِيعُونَ

That you should serve Allah and be careful of (your duty to) Him and obey me:

يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ مِّنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُؤَخِّرْكُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى إِنَّ
أَجَلَ اللَّهِ إِذَا جَاءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

He will forgive you some of your faults and grant you a delay to an appointed term; surely the term of Allah when it comes is not postponed; did you but know!

These four ayaat describe the institution of Nabuwwa. Why did Allah send Prophets? Let us look at what Imam Ali (A.S.) says in the first sermon in Nahjul Balagha –

“..These prophets were to draw the attention of human beings towards the blessings of Allah, to convey His message to them, to teach them, to wisely use the treasures hidden in their minds and intellect, and also to direct them to understand nature and it’s secrets – the high covering over their heads, the land spread

under their feet, the ways and means of their civilizations, the diseases which weaken them, the misfortunes and calamities which fall on them and lastly death which brings an end to everything....Prophets were men of such strength of character and courage that though they were often in the minority and those who opposed them were in the majority, they never felt nervous, disappointed or baffled, and never left their missions, None of them left the world without pointing out the one who was to take up his place after his death and carry on the divine mission....thus ages succeeded ages until Allah wished to bring the teachings of His religion to the final stage of perfection. And as He had promised in the beginning He appointed the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) as His last Prophet."

Said (Firaun) : "And who is the Lord of you two , O Musa!"

Said he (Musa) : "Our Lord is He who gave everything its form and then guided it". Suratu Tāhã- 20:49,50

As the above ayaat of Qur'an shows that when Firaun asked Prophet Musa (A.S.) who his Lord was; the reply of Prophet Musa (A.S.) was He who gave everything its form and then guided it. From tiny atoms to whole galaxies all of creation is progressing as planned by Allah. We see a small seed in the course of prescribed conditions and laws becoming a powerful tree.

And your Lord inspires the bee..Suratun Nahl - 16:68

We see the bee who, inspired by Allah develops an order of a complicated society.

Similarly for man to reach perfection Allah has sent Prophets to guide humankind.

Who is a Nabi?

A 'Nabi' is a bearer of news.

A Nabi must have the following qualifications:

1. He must be sent by Allah. There cannot be a self made Nabi.
2. He must be sinless (Ma'soom).
3. He must be able to perform miracles (Mu'jiza) in order to verify his claim of Nabuwwa.

According to Islamic terminology, a Nabi is one who is sent by Allah to guide mankind to the right path. A Nabi is one who is high in the presence of Allah.

A Rasul is one who is sent by Allah with a new Sharia'.

Difference between a Nabi and a Rasul

A Rasul is one who brought a new sharia' (Code of life) whilst those who did not bring a new sharia but followed the previous Rasul were called Nabi –

pl. Ambiya.

In English they are all called Prophets as there is no distinguishing word for nabi & rasul.

ISMA

This means protection against committing sins. This protection is safeguarded by exercising Taqwa and knowledge. Although Isma is a grace from Allah the abstention from sins by Prophets and Aimmah is through their own free will. Allah says in the Qur'an :
"And We did not send any prophet but to be obeyed in accordance with the will of Allah" Suratun Nisaa 4:64

Only the one who is always on the true path and has not ever been unjust would be obeyed wholeheartedly by the people.

MU'JIZA

Every Prophet is granted the power of performing mu'jiza (miracles) in order to give proof that his message is from the Lord of the worlds.

A mu'jiza is an act that cannot be performed by learning or practise. Mu'jizas must conform to the mentality of the society to which the Prophet is sent.

The mu'jiza given to Prophet Musa (A.S.) was magic because Egypt was at that time engrossed and expert in magic.

Similarly, Rasulullah (S.A.W.) was raised amongst the Arabs who were poets and literary experts and they were challenged at their own art with the Holy Qur'an.

One difference between the mu'jiza of Rasulullah (S.A.W.) and the other Prophets' miracles is that the Qur'an stands as a challenge for all times and places while other mu'jizas are temporary and short lived.

The Duties Of A Prophet

"O Prophet (Muhammad)! We have sent you as a Witness, Bearer of Good news and a Warner" Suratul Ahzaab 33:45

The aim of Prophet hood and the work of Prophets is not simply to explain 'sharia'. The most important duty of the Prophets is to establish a social order of justice by means of putting the relevant laws into practise.

According to the Qur'an the duties of the Prophet are:

a) Giving knowledge and awareness to people by reciting divine signs : .

..he recites to them His signs....- Suratul Jumua' 62:2

b) Cleansing away the 'satanic' qualities from human behaviour:

..And he purifies them...- Suratul Jumua' 62:2

c) Teaching the divine laws ...

..And he teaches them the book ... - Suratul Jumua' 62:2

d) Answering the difficult rules and issues to the people .

They ask for a pronouncement (fatwa); Say : Allah pronounces to you.
Suratun Nisa 4:177

e) Encouraging people to freedom of thought .

..So give My creatures the good news, those who listen to the Word and follow the best of it.....Suratuz Zumar 39: 17,18

f) Establishing thought and reflection amongst people, thus raising their culture.

And We sent down to you the remembrance for you to explain to the people what has been revealed to them so that they make use of thought " Suratun Nahl 16:44

g) Teaching them wisdom.

Teaching them the book (Qur'an) and wisdom.....- Suratul Jumua' 62:2

h) Bringing people out of the darkness of ignorance and selfishness to the light of knowledge and guidance.

A book which We revealed to you for you to take mankind out from the darkness to the light with the permission of their Lord..... Surat Ibrahim 14:1

i) Pioneering social justice.

For mankind to establish justice ... Suratul Hadeed 57:25

j) Giving good tidings and warnings.

So Allah raised Prophets as bearers of good news and as warners...Suratul Baqara 2:213

Allah sent 124,000 Prophets throughout the world. We do not know the names of all these Prophets. Only a few of them are mentioned in the Qur'an; Allah says:

And indeed We sent Prophets before you, of them there are those whose stories We have related to you and of them are those whose stories We have not related to you....

- Suratul Mu'min 40:78

PROPHETS MENTIONED IN QUR'AN & AHADITH

Prophets mentioned in Qur'an.

1. Adam (A.S.)
2. Idrees (A.S.)
3. Nuh (A.S.)
4. Hud (A.S.)
5. Saalih (A.S.)
6. Ibrahim (A.S.)
7. Lut (A.S.)
8. Ismail (A.S.)
9. Is-haaq (A.S.)
10. Ya'qub (A.S.)

11. Yusuf (A.S.)
12. Ayyub (A.S.)
13. Shuayb (A.S.)
14. Musa (A.S.)
15. Harun (A.S.)
16. Ilyas (A.S.)
17. Ilyasa (A.S.)
18. Dhul-Kifl (A.S.)
19. Dhul-Qarnain (A.S.)
20. Uzayr (A.S.)
21. Dawud (A.S.)
22. Sulayman (A.S.)
23. Luqman (A.S.)*
24. Yunus (A.S.)
25. Zakariyya (A.S.)
26. Yahya (A.S.)
27. Isa (A.S.)
28. Muhammad (S.A.W.)

*He was an Etheopian- Majority of Muslims believe he was a Prophet.

Prophets mentioned in the Qur'an but not named

29. Khidr (A.S.)
30. Yusha bin Nun (A.S.)
31. Shamuel (A.S.)
32. Hizqeel (A.S.)
33. Rasul-e-Ashab-ul-Ukhdu (A.S.)
34. Shamun (A.S.)

35-36 Two other disciples of Isa (A.S.) **

**Successors to Prophet Isa (A.S.) - It is not known whether they were Ambiya.

Prophets mentioned in Ahadith

37. Sheeth (A.S.)
38. Saam (A.S.)
39. Armiya (A.S.)
40. Danial (A.S.)
41. Amus (A.S.)
42. Ubaydiya (A.S.)
43. Habaquq (A.S.)
44. Jirjees (A.S.)
45. Budasif (A.S.)
46. Khalid bin Sanaan (A.S.)

PROPHET NUH (A.S.)

NAME: Abdul Ghaffar or Abdul Malek or Abdul A'laa

TITLE:Nuh (one who cries a lot - in fear of Allah)
Adam E Thaani (2nd Adam)

CHILDREN :Haam, Saam, Yaafis, Kan'aan

REFERENCES IN QUR'AN :3:33, 4:163, 6:84, 7:59-69,9:70, 10:71, 11:25-50,89, 14:9, 17:3,17, 19:58, 21:76,77, 22:42, 23:23-29, 25:37, 26:105,106,116, 29:14, 33:7, 37:75-79, 39:13, 40:5,31, 43:16, 50:12, 51:45, 53:52, 54:9, 57:26, 66:10, 71:1-12,21-25

He was born 126 years after the death of Prophet Prophet Adam (A.S.) and it is related that there were 10 Prophets before him (and after Prophet Adam (A.S.)).

Prophet Nuh (A.S.) preached and lived amongst his people for 950 years. His life span is mentioned by some to be 2500 years

He preached to his people about the oneness of Allah and asked them not to worship other gods but the chiefs and the people just ignored him, mocked at him and even beat him up. At times Prophet Nuh (A.S.) was buried under piles of stones and Jibraeel used to come and remove the stones and tend the wounds.

The people then decided to leave him alone saying he was mad (Qur'an 23:25).

Prophet Nuh (A.S.) after many years of preaching to no avail complained to Allah saying that although he called them night and day they were getting worse and would not listen putting their

finger in their ears covering their faces so he could not see them nor could they hear him.

Allah stopped rain to them for 40-70 years but the people were so stubborn that they refused to believe and listen (Allah stopped granting them children too).

Allah asked Prophet Nuh (A.S.) to build an ark as he was going to see his punishment in the form of a flood.

When the people saw him and the believers making an ark they started laughing at him. The ark was made at a place which is now known as Masjid-e-Kufa. It was 1200 yds in length, 800 yds in width and 80 yds in height. It had three stories - the 1st for the animals, the 2nd for the birds and the 3rd for the 30 believers inclusive of Prophet Nuh (A.S.) and his family.

When the ark was ready Allah asked Prophet Nuh (A.S.) his wife, his three sons, Haam, Saam and Yaafis, 72 believers and a pair of each kind of animal and bird to board the ark.

Prophet Nuh (A.S.) had another son called Kan'aan who refused to board the ark and was not a believer.

When they had all boarded the ark they were asked to say a little prayer to Allah - Qur'an 23:28 (All praise be to Allah who delivered us from an unjust people).

The water started pouring from the sky and gushing out of the land. (There is a spot marked in Masjid-e-Kufa where the water first started gushing out). The ark started moving. Prophet Nuh's son who had refused to enter the ark thought he would be saved by climbing on a mountain and did not listen to his father. He was drowned.

Soon there was so much water that all that could be seen was the sky and water. There was a solar eclipse. It is related that the ark was pushed by the waves until it reached Mecca where it circled the Ka'aba. The whole world was submerged in water except the spot where Ka'aba stood.

Prophet Nuh (A.S.) was scared as the ark was tossed in the high waters. He recited "La Ilaha Illallah' 1000* times. He also prayed as commanded by Allah "O my Lord! Make us land with a blessed landing for you are the best of all who cause to land".

When hearing the prayers from Prophet Nuh (A.S.) the earth swallowed in water, the sky stopped raining and the ark came to rest on Mount Juda Qur'an 11:44.

Prophet Nuh (A.S.) and the others came out at Mosul and here the foundation of the city of Madinatuth Thamaanin was laid. Prophet Nuh (A.S.) lived for quite along time after this.

When the angel of death Izrael came to him Prophet Nuh (A.S.) asked him whether ther was time for him to go into the shade from the sun. Izrael said there was and Prophet Nuh (A.S.) told him that the life of the world was just like passing from the sun into the shade i.e. like entering from one door and leaving through another.

Although he lived such a long time he never constructed a house for himself. He lived in a small hut.

AYAAT 5 - 9

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِي لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا

He said: O my Lord! surely I have called my people by night and by day!

فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُمْ دُعَائِي إِلَّا فِرَارًا

But my call has only made them flee the more:

وَإِنِّي كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوا أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ وَاسْتَغْشَوْا ثِيَابَهُمْ وَأَصْرُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا

And whenever I have called them that You may forgive them, they put their fingers in their ears, cover themselves with their garments, and persist and are puffed up with pride:

ثُمَّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُهُمْ جِهَارًا

Then surely I called to them aloud:

ثُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْلَنْتُ لَهُمْ وَأَسْرَرْتُ لَهُمْ إِسْرَارًا

Then surely I spoke to them in public and I spoke to them in secret:

Here we have all the methodologies employed by Prophet Nuh (A.S.) to talk to his people who refused to acknowledge that what they were doing wrong.

- i) He spoke to them night and day.
- ii) He spoke to them loudly, in public and in private

They were afflicted with kibr (pride).

“Never can the person who possesses a speck of kibr (pride) inside his/her heart enter Janna.” Rasulullah (S.A.W.)

Kibr is when a person feels a sense of superiority and behaves high-handedly with others. It shows itself in the person's actions and is easily noticed by others.

There are various aspects and levels of kibr.

1. **Kibr towards Allah & His commands** - This is the worst sort of kibr. It is when one challenges Allah's authority and claims to be God. e.g. Firawn. With regards to kibr towards Allah's commands, it is when one does not practise a wajibaat because one feels it does not comply with his/her status. e.g. When one goes out and there is not enough time to go home to pray salaa in time, then to avoid doing so in public for fear of being ridiculed.

2. **Kibr towards humanity** - It can be divided into the following categories.

- i) Kibr on possessing true faith.
- ii) Kibr on having no faith or having false belief.
- iii) Kibr on having good qualities.
- iv) Kibr in being immoral.
- v) Kibr in one's righteous acts and worship.
- vi) Kibr in committing sinful and wicked deeds.

Kibr is caused when one thinks that he/she possesses some kind of excellence. When this happens the person feels that others are inferior and a feeling of self-esteem develops in the nafs showing itself in actions. Even basic actions like walking and talking change. The intensity of kibr takes over a person without him/her realising it. He/she creates an artificial halo of sacredness around him/her.

It is said that pride comes before a fall. Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.) is reported to have said:

“There is no person who does not have a harness to his/her head. Whenever he/she has kibr (is proud), an angel says - ‘Be humble, lest Allah should disgrace you’ - Thus, in his/her eyes he/she may be the greatest of human beings whereas in the eyes of the people he/she is the smallest of creatures. When he/she is humble and modest - Allah removes the harness from his/her head and an angel says - ‘Elevate yourself, for Allah is elevating you’. Thus, he/she is the smallest of persons in his/her own eyes whilst the most elevated and noble in the eyes of others.”

To remove kibr, one of the most effective cures is to remember death as often as possible. Imam Ali (A.S.) used to announce in the masjid:

“Equip yourself and be ready, for your departure has already been announced.”

ANECDOTES ON KIBR

Azazeel

His name was Azazeel. He is also known as Iblees. He used to pray a lot and even used to give lectures to the angels.

One day there was a notice in the heavens which said that someone was going to be ordered out of the heavens.

All the angels were very worried because they thought it might be one of them. They went to Jibrail who was one of the most important angels to ask him whether he could do anything. Jibrail said he too was worried because it might be himself.

Jibrail suggested that they go to Azazeel because he was very clever.

Azazeel told them not to worry at all for he would pray to Allah for all of them. He forgot himself thinking he was the best and it could never be him. He had kibr (pride).

Allah made the first human being - Prophet Adam (A.S.) He asked all the angels including Azazeel to do sijda to Prophet Adam (A.S.) Iblees disobeyed Allah and refused to do sijda saying that he was better than Prophet Adam (A.S.) and so he would not do sijda.

“I am made out of fire and he is made out of earth!” he told Allah.

You see, he was only looking at the outside and not the inside and more important, He disobeyed Allah.

He was ordered out of heaven.

The wise ant

As Prophet Sulayman (A.S.) was walking through the valley of the ants, the chief of the ants warned his fellow ants of the coming of the army advising them to go into their homes to avoid being crushed.

When Prophet Sulayman (A.S.) heard the warning of chief of the ants, he smiled and walked up to him gently lifting him on the palm of his hand.

"Don't you know that I am the Prophet of Allah and that I would not harm any of Allah's creatures?" Sulayman asked the chief ant.

"Of course I do!" said the chief

"But, I feared that if my fellow ants would see the grandeur of your army, they would underestimate the grace of Allah which they receive and may become ungrateful."

The chief ant then asked Prophet Sulayman (A.S.)

"May I ask you a question?"

"Yes!" said Prophet Sulayman (A.S.)

"Who is better at this moment of time?" asked the chief ant

"Why don't you answer the question yourself!" Prophet Sulayman (A.S.) said.

The chief ant replied:

"At this moment in time, I am better than you for I am standing on the palm of a Prophet of Allah, whilst you O Prophet! are standing on the ground!"

Rich man, poor man

One day the Prophet (S.A.W.) was sitting in a circle with his companions when a poor man came in. He was wearing tattered clothes. It is the akhlaq of a 'majlis' to sit where there is a vacant place and not look for a particular place.

The poor man saw a space and sat down. It so happened that the space was near a rich man who gathered his clothes and pulled them towards himself as if to create a space between him and the poor man. It seemed that the rich man was feeling a little uneasy.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) was watching the behaviour of the rich man. He addressed him saying:

"Did you fear that some of his poverty might stick to you?"

The rich man replied:

"No! Ya Rasulallah! "

The Prophet (S.A.W.) asked:

"Did you fear that something out of your wealth might be transferred to him?"

The rich man replied :

"No! Ya Rasulallah!"

The Prophet (S.A.W.) asked a further question:

"Did you fear that your clothes might get dirtied by touching his clothes?"

The rich man replied:

"No! Ya Rasulallah!"

"Then why did you move yourself away from him?" asked the Prophet (S.A.W.)

The rich man replied:

"Ya Rasulallah! I admit I made a grave mistake. I would like to make amends and I would like to give half my wealth to this Muslim brother of mine."

When the poor man heard his words he said:

"Ya Rasulallah! I don't want to take his offer!"

The companions who were present there were surprised and said :

"Why?"

The poor man replied:

"I fear that with the wealth I am offered I too may become proud and one day may make one of my brothers in Islam feel small in the way in which he (the rich man) has treated me today."

AYAAT 10 – 12

فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا

Then I said, Ask forgiveness of your Lord, surely He is the most Forgiving:

يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا

He will send down upon you the cloud, pouring down abundance of rain:

وَيُمِدُّكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ أَنْهَارًا

And help you with wealth and sons, and make for you gardens, and make for you rivers.

Imam Ali (A.S.) was once sitting with his companions when a man came and asked for a dua for increase in sustenance. Imam told him to do Istighfaar (ask for forgiveness). Another person came asking for a dua for children. Again Imam told him to do Istighfaar. Another came to ask for his endeavours to be successful and again the answer was to do Istighfaar. One of Imam's companions asked him why the answer was the same to a diversity of problems and Imam quoted these three ayaat of Suratu Nuh.

ISTIGHFAR

Istighfar is derived from ghafara: he covered, veiled, concealed or hid.

One of the qualities of the muttaqeen is doing istighfar -

“And those who, when they commit an indecency or wrong their souls, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their sins “ Suratu Aali Imran 3:134.

And we are taught to say:

“And pardon us! And grant us protection! And have mercy on us!”
Suratul Baqara 2:286

There are at least ten separate but related entreaties, contained in the dua for istighfar:

- i) To cover or suppress evil tendencies
- ii) To protect from committing sins because of human weakness
- iii) To ask for forgiveness for past sins
- iv) To protect from future sins and calamities or misfortunes
- v) To seek help and guidance to do good deeds
- vi) To implant in oneself Allah’s love
- vii) To instil humility in oneself
- viii) To ask never to be severed from Him
- ix) To keep one’s heart steadfast
- x) To do dua with total sincerity of heart

The meaning of istighfar is to ask forgiveness for the sins and transgressions committed with full sincerity and to continuously beseech Allah for His help in guiding him/her to do good deeds and to save him/her from future transgression.

Remember that nothing is achieved by mere words. Istighfar can be made in your own language by asking Allah to efface your past sins and protect you from future ones and to guide you to do righteous deeds, for this is the essence of istighfar. There is no need to repeat constantly, like a parrot, astaghfir-ullaha, astaghfir-ullah, while your heart is untouched. Bear in mind that it is only that prayer which is uttered with sincerity of heart that reaches Allah.

The istighfar of the Ma’sumeen who were sinless was for another noble and subtle purpose. When they contemplated the favours of Allah and tried to count them, they realised they could not. So to express their human inability to thank their Creator adequately for

His innumerable gifts they did istighfar in the hope it would make up for their inability to thank Allah fully.

The following are some selections from the sayings of Rasulallah (S.A.W.):

I swear by Allah that I ask Allah's pardon and turn to Him in repentance more than seventy times a day.

Rasulallah stated that Allah has said: If anyone knows that I have power to forgive sins I will pardon him and not care, so long as he associates nothing with me.

If anyone continually asks pardon, Allah will appoint for him a way out of every distress and a relief from every anxiety, and will provide for him from where he did not reckon.

Allah's Forgiveness:

Allah Almighty is the Oft-Forgiving. There are many Names of Allah given in the Qur'an. Some of these Names are related to His mercy and forgiveness. Some of these are:

1 Al-Ghafoor (The Oft-Forgiving): This name occurs in the Qur'an more than seventy times. There are other names from the same root, such as *Ghafir* and *Ghaffar*. The meaning of the Arabic word "*ghafara*" is to cover, to hide and from it comes the meaning "to excuse", "to pardon", "to remit" and "to forgive". Allah Almighty does all these things. In the Qur'an, it is mentioned that Allah does not forgive the Shirk (without repentance) but He may forgive every other sin for whomsoever He wills. (al-Nisa' 4:116) We must turn to Allah to seek His forgiveness.

2 Al-`Afw (The Pardoning): This has another aspect of forgiveness which denotes a complete erasing of the sin. This Name occurs in the Qur'an five times. Literally the Arabic word `Afw means "to

release”, “to heal”, “to restore”, “to remit”. Thus in relation to Allah it means “to release us from the burden of punishment due to our sins and mistakes”, “to restore our honor after we have dishonored ourselves by committing sins and making mistakes.” Sometimes in the Qur’an both names: *`Afw* and *Ghafoor* come together.

3 Al-Tawwab (The Acceptor of repentance): This Name of Allah is mentioned in the Qur’an about 11 times. Allah accepts the repentance of those who sincerely repent and turn to him. The Arabic word “*tawwab*” gives the sense of “oft-returning” which means that Allah again and again accepts the repentance. We make sins and mistakes then we repent, He accepts our repentance. Then again we commit sins and make mistakes and when we repent, He again very kindly accepts us and gives us another chance.

4 Al-Haleem (The Clement): This Name is mentioned fifteen times in the Qur’an, and it means that Allah Almighty is not quick to judgment. He gives time. He forebears and is patient to see His servant returning to Him.

5 Ar-Rahman and ar-Raheem (Most Gracious and Most Merciful). These Names are the most frequent in the Qur’an. Ar-Rahman is mentioned 57 times and *ar-Raheem* is mentioned 115 times. *Ar-Rahman* indicates that Allah’s grace is abundant and plenty and *al-Raheem* indicates that this is always the case with Allah. He is full of love and mercy and He is ever Merciful.

Unlike inanimate things, living things have the ability to change the course they follow – roots of tree meet a stone- change course – animal meets obstruction, changes course – similarly for the

human being tawba is a change of course – not a simple as that of plants and animals but much more complex.

It is an internal revolution against the self; between the animalistic and angelic. when a person sinks deeply in sin and the angel within him/her is not satiated, a reaction occurs and it's intensity depending on the action (sin) and the nature of the person's conscience. .

An 'insa'an' is constantly in a state of tawba. If you leave a clear mirror in a place where you think the air is pure, you will find a film of dust settling on it in a short while in the place where you had previously thought there was no dust in the air. However, if a wall is dirty an extra stain will not show up on it easily and if it is blackened then it will not show anything. Prophet (S.A.W.) continually uttered tawba – Umme Salama narrates that 2 months before his death before he did anything he would say " Glory be to Allah! I seek forgiveness from Him and I turn to Him" When asked he said he had been commanded to – later realised it was the commandment in Suratun Nasr.

A man came to Imam Ali (A.S.) saying: "Astaghfirullah rabbi wa atubu ilayh" I seek forgiveness from Allah and I turn repentant towards him. Imam realised he was not serious and said: "Do you know what tawba is?" "Tawba has a high position. It has six conditions for it's acceptance out of which the last two are the conditions for completion.

1. To show remorse and regret at what has been done.
2. A definite resolution not to repeat the sin again.
3. To return what belongs to others.
4. Wajibats that are qadha must be restored.
5. To rid oneself of all the flesh that has grown by haram means.
6. To let the body which has tasted the sweetness of sins, also taste the pain of fasting in the day and worshipping in

the night. This means that one must cleanse oneself physically and spiritually for tawba to be accepted.

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

In the Qur'an Allah says: "O my servants who have been unjust against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah, Indeed Allah forgives sins altogether."

Suratuz Zumar 39:53

In Hadith e Qudsi Allah says: The groan (of tawba) of sinners is dearer to me than the Glorifications (of me). So you should sigh and groan in these precious nights."

The following dua is quoted from Imam Husayn (A.S.) "My Master, when I look at my sins, I am overcome with fear, but when I look at your Grace, I am filled with hope."

Tawba must be done immediately. The poet Rumi tells of a man who planted a bramble bush on a public foot path. When it started growing he was asked to uproot it and he said there was no hurry for it was yet not much of a hindrance. He kept on offering the excuse year after year. The bramble bush grew thicker, and its roots grew stronger. The thorns grew sharper and more dangerous while the man grew weaker and unable to remove it. Rumi meant that sins take root rapidly. As one gets older one becomes more helpless against them. Today is better for tawba than tomorrow - In fact now is better than later.

"O you who believe, do tawba to Allah with tawbatan nasuh, maybe your Rabb will remove from you your evil and cause you to enter gardens beneath which river flow....." **Suratut Tahreem**

66:8 Tawbatan Nasuh means several things – tawbah which 'advises' people invites them to simulate and counsels - tawba

which is done solely for Allah just as pure honey free from wax is called 'asal nasuh' – nasuh is called nasahah which means tailoring because tawba sews together the body of faith torn by sins.

Last minute tawba is not acceptable as was the case of Firown. *"Finally when he began to drown, he said - I believe that there is no god except He in whom the Bani Israil believe and I am of the Muslims."* **Suratu Yunus 10:90**

As long as he was alive Firown acted like a tyrant and nothing convinced him. He tortures the Bani Israil, ridicules Prophet Musa (A.S.) and chases them as they leave. When he is at the point of drowning in the sea and there is no escape, he does tawba and expresses his belief in Allah. His tawba is only due to helplessness in a calamity. So the answer was: *"What! Now! When you previously rebelled and were one of the mischief makers?"* **Suratu Yunus 10:91**

In other words why did you not do tawba an hour before when you were quite free to do so? For then, it would have been a true change of heart. What criminal in the world is not repentant at the moment of punishment? It is only when he/she shows repentance before being caught that one can say that there is a spiritual change.

Tawba is not acceptable in the hereafter. This is because the hereafter is the fruit of the deeds of the world. Death is like the fall of the fruit from the tree. As long as the fruit was part of the tree, it is dependant on air, water and nourishment that the tree obtains. Even an hour before falling, there is a chance for the fruit to become more ripe and sweet. As soon as it falls it's chances of development come to an end for it.

Imam Ali (A.S.) is reported to have said in a hadith quoted in Usulul Kaafi - in the chapter of Tawba in the book of Eiman wal Kufr - "If I were to say - I am sorry my Rabb, God will instruct the recording angels to forget that which they have written of my sins. If I was to say - I am sorry my Rabb, I will not repeat this offence, God will instruct parts of my body to conceal my sins. If I were to rectify the consequence of my actions, God will instruct the earth to conceal the sins that I committed over it. And if I were to spiritually atone in like then when I meet God there would be nothing to give witness against me regarding any sin."

Imam Ali Zaynul Aabedeem (A.S.) in Dua Tawba says: "....Accept my tawba as You have promised and pardon my evil deeds as You have guaranteed and grant me Your love as you have laid down and you have my agreement, my Rabb - that I will never return to what You dislike and my guarantee that I will not go back to what you disapprove and my promise that I will give up all acts of disobedience to You."

A hadith from the ma'sumeen states that when all eyes will be crying on the day of Qiyama there will be two sets of eyes which will not cry. Those that cried in tawba for their sins and those that kept awake at night in ibada.

The pillar of tawba

Abu Lababa was sent for consultation to the Jewish tribe of Banu Qurayda to settle the constant treachery they displayed towards the Muslims. He betrayed his position by remarking in favour of the Jews and against the Muslims.

As he was returning to Madina he felt ashamed of his action. He went home to get a rope and went to the masjid of the Prophet (S.A.W.). There he tied himself to a pillar crying out, "O Allah! I will not untie myself until You have accepted my tawba."

Only at the times of salaa, eating and visiting the bathroom would his daughter untie him. He spent long hours lamenting and regretting his sin. The Prophet (S.A.W.) was informed and he said, "Had he come to me I would have begged Allah to forgive him but as he has made a direct request to Allah, He will deal with him."

A few days later, the Prophet (S.A.W.) was informed by Allah that Abu Lababa was forgiven. After his forgiveness, as a sign of shukr Abu Lababa offered all his wealth to be used in the way of Allah. The Prophet (S.A.W.) accepted a third since Abu Lababa had a duty of supporting his family as well.

The pillar to which Abu Lababa tied himself is represented in the masjid of Madina today. It is called the pillar of tawba.

AYAAT 13-20

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا

What is the matter with you that you fear not the greatness of Allah?

وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَطْوَارًا

And indeed He has created you through various grades:

أَلَمْ تَرَوْا كَيْفَ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا

Do you not see how Allah has created the seven heavens, ~ one above another,

وَجَعَلَ الْقَمَرَ فِيهِنَّ نُورًا وَجَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ سِرَاجًا

And made the moon therein a light, and made the sun a lamp?

وَاللَّهُ أَنْبَتَكُمْ مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ نَبَاتًا

And Allah has made you grow out of the earth as a growth:

ثُمَّ يُعِيدُكُمْ فِيهَا وَيُخْرِجُكُمْ إِخْرَاجًا

Then He returns you to it, then will He bring you forth a (new) bringing forth:

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ بِسَاطًا

And Allah has made for you the earth a wide expanse,

لِتَسْلُكُوا مِنْهَا سُبُلًا فِجَاجًا

That you may go along therein in wide paths.

These ayaat invite the human being to understand the Greatness of Allah by reflecting over the creation of him/herself, the sun, the moon, the earth, it's herbage and it's vastness and potential.

One should set aside some time for reflection every twenty-four hours. The best time for reflection is the one in which are the least pre-occupations, worries, and more potential for the heart to be present, such as the depths of the night. Know that the state of one's religious and worldly affairs depend upon soundness of one's reflection. Anyone who has a share of it has an abundant share of everything good.

Rasulullah (S.A.W.) has said : 'An hour's reflection is better than a year's worship.'

Imam Ali (A.S.), has said: 'There is no worship like reflection.'

It is also said that reflection is the lamp of the heart; if it departs the heart will have no light.'

The first thing that a human being who reflects will do is to question and explore the things he sees around him. One who has developed a good sense of perception, will easily see that he lives in a world created flawlessly, contained within a perfect universe.

If you ponder for a moment on the environment that we are living in, one sees a world subtly planned and designed with all possible details. Even the systems in the human body alone are overwhelming in their perfection. While reading this, your heart beats constantly without fail, your skin renews itself, your lungs clean the air you inhale, your liver drains your blood, and millions of proteins are synthesised in your cells each second in order to secure the permanence of life. The human being is unaware of thousands of other activities taking place within him if he does not reflect.

And beyond there is the sun, millions of miles away from our planet, which provides the light, heat and energy that we need. The distance between the sun and the world is so finely adjusted

that this source of energy neither scorches the earth, nor freezes it to death.

When we look at the sky, we learn that apart from its aesthetic appeal, the air mass surrounding the earth also protects man and all beings from possible external threats. Had the atmosphere not existed, there would not be a single living thing on the earth.

One who reflects will sooner or later question how he himself and the universe he lives in came into existence and how they are maintained. When he investigates it, two alternative explanations will present themselves.

One of these explanations tells us that the whole universe, planets, stars and all living things came into existence on their own as a result of a series of coincidences. It claims that freely floating atoms, which are the smallest units of matter, came together by chance to form cells, humans, animals, plants, stars, and all the flawless and extremely complex structures and systems which surround and amaze us.

The second alternative tells us that everything we see is created by a creator who has superior wisdom and power over everything; that nothing could possibly have come into existence by mere chance and that all the systems around us are planned and designed by a creator. This creator is Allah.

The ways of reflection are many.

1. The most noble of them, is to reflect on the wonders of Allah's creation, the inward and outward signs of His Ability, and the signs He has scattered abroad in the Realm of the earth and the heavens. This kind of reflection increases your knowledge of Attributes of Allah. He has

encouraged it by saying: “ *In the earth are signs for those who have certainty, and in yourselves; can you not see?* **(51:20-21)**

2. Reflect on the favors of Allah, and His bounties. *Remember the favors of God, that you may succeed. (7:69) Should you (attempt to) number the favors of God, you would not be able to do so. (16:18)* This kind of reflection results in the heart filling with the love of Allah, thanking Him, inwardly and outwardly, in a manner that pleases and satisfies Him.
3. Reflect on His complete awareness of you, His seeing and knowing all about you. *We have created man, and We know what his soul whispers to him; and We are nearer to him than his jugular vein. (50:16)* This kind of reflection results in one feeling remorse that He sees you where He has forbidden you to be, or miss you where He has commanded you to be.
4. Reflect on your shortcomings in worshipping Him. *I created jinn and men only to worship Me. (51:56) Do you think We created you in vain, and that to Us you will not be returned? (23:115) O humanbeing! What is it that has deceived you concerning your Generous Lord? (82:6)* This kind of reflection increases taqwa (God consciousness), encourages one to reproach oneself.....
5. Reflect on the life of the world, its preoccupations, hazards, and temporal aspect and upon the hereafter, and its bounties and permanence. *Thus does God render the signs clear to you, that you may reflect on this world and*

the hereafter. (2:119-220) The life of the world is but distraction and play; while the Last Abode is indeed the Life, if but they knew. (29:64)

6. Reflect on the imminence of death and the regret and remorse which occur when it is too late. *Say: The death that you flee will indeed meet you, and you will then be returned to the Knower of the unseen and the seen, and He will inform you of that which you had been doing.(62:8) Until, when death comes to one of them he says: 'My Lord! Send me back that I may do good in that which I have left!' No! It is but a word he says. (23:99-100) O you who believe! Let not your wealth or your children distract you from the remembrance of God! up to: But God will not relieve a soul whose time has come. (63:9-11)* The benefit of this kind of reflection is that hopes become short, behavior better, and provision is gathered for the Appointed Day.

7. Finally reflection on the attributes and acts by which Allah has described His friends and His enemies, and on the immediate and delayed rewards which He has prepared for each group. *As for the one who gave, had taqwa, and believed in goodness, We shall ease him into ease, (92:5-7) **up to the end of the sura.** Hypocrite men and hypocrite women proceed one from another; they enjoy evil and forbid good, up to: God curses them, and theirs is a lasting torment.(9:67- 68) Those who do not expect to meet Us, are content with the life of the world and feel secure therein, up to: and the end of their prayer is, Praised be God, the Lord of the Worlds! (10:7-10)*

The result of this kind of reflection is that one is inclined towards the come fortunate, wanting to emulate their behavior and

taking on their qualities, and detesting those who invite His anger.

ANECDOTES ON REFLECTION

The Spinning Wheel

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) was once walking with his companions when he saw an old lady working at a spinning wheel. Whilst she was working she was praising Allah for all that He had given her.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) greeted her and asked her, "Your faith is admirable; will you tell me what made you believe in Allah?"

The woman answered, "O Messenger of Allah! If I do not move my spinning wheel, it does not spin.

If a simple thing like my spinning wheel cannot turn without help how can it be possible that the whole universe can operate so efficiently without a driving force.

There must be a Great one running it.

Someone who controls every atom.

The Great One can only be Allah, Who is the Creator and Master of everything."

The Prophet (S.A.W.) was very pleased with the old woman's reply. Turning to his companions he said,

"See how this old lady came to know about Allah through such a fine and simple way. Your faith in Allah should also be as firm as hers."

“I can’t see Allah with my eyes!”

Once there was a farmer who was a very good man. He worked hard on his farm and prayed salaa (namaz) on time every day.

One day he saw a sick man lying on the roadside. He helped him up and took him home to look after him.

The next morning when the farmer woke up to pray salaa he woke up his guest who said he did not want to pray.

The man said that he could not see Allah so how could he pray to One whom he could not see. The farmer did not say anything.

The next day the man was feeling better and wanted to go home. The farmer walked with him across the fields. Suddenly they saw footprints. The man told the farmer that they were the footprints of a tiger.

"I don't believe that ! " said the farmer . "I can't see a tiger here !"

The man looked surprised and said "Are these footprints not enough to tell you that a tiger was here?"

The farmer said, "Dear brother! When you saw the footprints you believed that a tiger had passed here; so are not the moon, the sun, the flowers, and the trees enough to make you believe that there must be One who made them?"

The man thought for a while and said, "You are right ! We cannot see Allah with our eyes but we can understand from the things he has made that He exists."

The blind worm

Prophet Sulayman (A.S.) was sitting by the seashore when he saw an ant carrying a grain going towards the water.

He watched as a frog appeared, opened its mouth as the ant approached and entered its mouth. The frog dived into the waters.

Prophet Sulayman (A.S.) was reflecting on what he had just seen when he saw the frog reappear. It opened its mouth and the ant walked out without the grain.

Prophet Sulayman (A.S.) called her and asked her where she had been.

She said, “ Ya Nabiyallah! In the bottom of the sea is a hollow rock where lives a blind worm. Allah assigned the task of carrying its food. The frog is assigned to me the task of carrying me so the water does not harm me.”

Prophet Sulayman (A.S.) asked her, “Do you ever hear the worm praise Allah?”

The ant replied, “Yes.” The worm says, “O one who does not forget me in the depth of this rock, in the midst of this water, I plead to You by Your sustaining me not to forget Your believing ibaad (pl of abd) and to include them in Your Mercy.”

The ant in the Red Sea

Prophet Musa (A.S.) knew that he would soon have to leave the world. As he looked at his family his attention fell on his young daughter. He thought to himself, "Who will look after her when I am gone?"

Allah sent an angel to direct him back to the Red Sea. Prophet Musa (A.S.) was asked to strike the water with his staff again. A dry path appeared. He was ordered to walk to the centre and pick up a particular stone.

"What do you see Musa?"

"I see a stone with a hole in it!" Prophet Musa (A.S.) replied "In the hole there is a tiny ant with a grain of food in its mouth"

Allah revealed to him, "O Musa! If I can look after an ant in a stone at the bottom of the sea; can I not look after your daughter?"

AYAAT 21 - 27

قَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ إِنَّهُمْ عَصَوْنِي وَاتَّبَعُوا مَنْ لَمْ يَزِدْهُ مَالَهُ
وَوَلَدَهُ إِلَّا خَسَارًا

Nuh said: My Lord! surely they have disobeyed me and followed him whose wealth and children have added to him nothing but loss.

وَمَكَّرُوا مَكْرًا كَبِيرًا

And they have planned a very great plan.

وَقَالُوا لَا تَدْرُنَّ آلِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا تَدْرُنَّ وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا
يَعُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا

And they say: By no means leave your gods, nor leave Wadd, nor Suwa; nor Yaghus, and Yauq and Nasr.

وَقَدْ أَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا ضَلَالًا

And indeed they have led astray many, and do not increase the unjust in aught but error.

مِمَّا خَطَبَاتِهِمْ أُغْرِقُوا فَأَدْخِلُوا نَارًا فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا لَهُمْ مِّنْ
دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْصَارًا

Because of their wrongs they were drowned, then made to enter fire, so they did not find any helpers besides Allah.

وَقَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ
دَيَّارًا

And Nuh said: My Lord! leave not upon the land any dweller from among the unbelievers:

إِنَّكَ إِن تَذَرَهُمْ يُضِلُّوا عِبَادَكَ وَلَا يَلِدُوا إِلَّا فَاجِرًا كَفَّارًا

For surely if Thou leave them they will lead astray Thy servants,
and will not beget any but immoral, ungrateful (children)

In these ayaat we find the qualities of those who denied the truth and who did not reflect and were thus subject to the punishment of drowning and jahannam.

1. Disobedience towards the messenger of Allah
2. Followed one who used to ne'ma of Allah (wealth and children) for destruction of the self rather than enhancement.
3. Refused to leave idol worshipping.
4. Led others astray encouraging injustice.

Those who do not reflect cannot have the same awareness of reaching their full potential however intelligent they may be. Contrary to its common use, wisdom is a different concept to intelligence. E.g. A scientist may carry out very detailed research about the cell for years. He may even be the best in his field. However, if he is lacking in wisdom, he will only retain fragments of knowledge. He will not be able to fit these fragments together to form a whole. In other words, he will not be able to draw correct conclusions from this body of information.

A man with wisdom and reflection, however, perceives the miraculous aspects and perfect details of a cell, and acknowledges the Creator, a designer with a superior wisdom. In the Qur'an, there is the example of Prophet Ibrahim (A.S.):

When night covered him he saw a star and said, 'This is my Lord!' Then when it set he said, 'I do not love what sets.' Then when he saw the moon come up he said, 'This is my Lord!' Then when it

set he said, 'If my Lord does not guide me, I will be one of the misguided people.' Then when he saw the sun come up he said, 'This is my Lord! This is greater!' Then when it set he said, 'My people, I am free of what you associate with Allah! I have turned my face to Him Who brought the heavens and earth into being, a pure natural believer. Never shall I give partners to Allah.

6:76-79

He realised that all the things he saw around him could only be beings that are created, and that the Creator is far superior to the created beings. Everyone who reflects without involving his passions, and only by employing his conscience, can comprehend the existence and glory of Allah.

Those who reject the existence of Allah do so not because they really do not believe in Him, but because they want to avoid the moral code they would have to observe as believers. One who insists on rejecting despite his awareness of these facts, does so because accepting this great fact is not in compliance with his interests and the feeling of superiority inside him. Allah says: "They reject them wrongly and with pride, in spite of their own certainty about them. See the final fate of the corrupters." **27:14**

The people of Prophet Ibrahim worshipped idols. Prophet Ibrahim destroyed the idols to show his people that the idols they worshipped were just objects having no power over anything. Allah says in **Suratul Ambiya : 56-64:**

He said, 'Far from it! Your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, He Who brought them into being. I am one of those

who bear witness to that. By Allah, I will devise some scheme against your idols when your backs are turned. '

He broke them in piece, except for the biggest one, so that they would have it to consult!

They said, 'Who has done this to our gods? He is definitely one of the wrongdoers!' They said, 'We heard a young man mentioning them. They call him Ibrahim.' They said, 'Bring him before the people's eyes so that they can be witnesses.' They said, 'Did you do this to our gods, Ibrahim?' He said, 'No, this one, the biggest of them, did it. Ask them if they are able to speak!'

Then they turned to themselves and said (to the idols), 'It is you yourselves who are wrongdoers.'

However, it was not long before they were restored to their old state. They haughtily and arrogantly denied it and when they relapsed back into their disbelief: 'You known full well these idols cannot talk.' He said, 'Do you then worship, instead of Allah, what cannot help or harm you in any way? Shame on you and what you worship besides Allah! Will you not use your intellect? **Suratul Ambiya: 65-67**

Their truth having been exposed, those who deny fall into dismay, and strongly resist what their soul has accepted. We find the same pattern with the people of Nuh (A.S.).

A human being may be a distinguished scientist, a successful businessman. He may also be rich, cultivated and intelligent. However, instead of reflecting on Allah, glorify His power, and

thank Him for giving him the chance to see and understand these things, he only becomes proud and boastful of his intelligence and discoveries, and the money he has earned. He never thinks that none of these will be of any use to him after he dies. Allah describes those who transgress in pursuit of their own interests and passions:

Have you seen him who takes his whims and desires to be his god – whom Allah has misguided knowingly, sealing up his hearing and his heart and placing a blindfold over his eyes? Who then will guide him after Allah? So will you not pay heed? They say, 'There is nothing but our existence in the life of this world. We die and we live and nothing destroys us except for time.' They have no knowledge of that. They are only conjecturing.

Suratul Jaathiya: 23-24

AYA 28

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِمَنْ دَخَلَ بَيْتِي مُؤْمِنًا
وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا تَبَارًا

My Lord! forgive me and my parents and him who enters my house believing, and the believing men and the believing women; and do not increase the unjust in aught but destruction!

FORGIVING OTHERS

We all make mistakes. Everyone has grumpy days. Most people say things they don't mean now and then. We all need to forgive and to be forgiven. No relationship can be sustained over a long period of time without forgiveness. Even though some people may find it difficult to apologize, forgiveness is crucial in marriage.

People who hold on to old hurts, disappointments, petty annoyances, betrayals, insensitivity, and anger are wasting both time and energy. Lack of forgiveness can wear a person down. Additionally, it is not good for both physical and mental well being. Nursing a perceived hurt can eventually make it in to something more - hate and extreme bitterness.

How to Forgive or Ask for Forgiveness:

- Be open.
- To forgive takes a decision.
- Don't throw an error back in someone's face at a later date. Don't use it as ammunition in an argument.
- Don't seek revenge or retribution. It will only extend the pain.
- Try and understand the reason for the transgression.
- Remember that forgiveness doesn't mean you condone the hurtful behavior.
- Show true remorse for the pain that you've caused.

- e willing to make a commitment to not hurt your spouse in the same way again.
- Accept the consequences of the action that created the hurt.
- Be open to making amends.
- Be patient. Being able to forgive often takes time.

**PARENTS – WAALIDAYN
(FOCUS ON THE MOTHER)**

In Suratul Bani Israil 17:23,24 Allah says:

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۚ أُمَّا
يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٌّ
وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا لَّيْسًا
وَإِخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ
ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا

“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) “Uf” 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.”

"Sitting with your parents for one hour is better than going for jihad. Even if only a word is spoken with a view to pleasing the parents, Allah is pleased."

"Allah's pleasure is the pleasure of one's parents and His anger is their anger."

“He who wishes to enter Janna through its best door must please his parents”.

Rasulullah (S.A.W.)

In Hadithe Qudsi; “If one does the duas performed by the Prophets, they will be of no use if he/she has been cursed by his/her parents”.

Rasulullah (S.A.W.) was asked; “What are the responsibilities of a child?” He replied; “

1. He doesn't call his parents by name.
2. He doesn't walk ahead of them.
3. He doesn't sit whilst they are standing.
4. He doesn't do anything by which a finger would be pointed at them.

“I advise my present and future umma up till Qiyama to treat parents with kindness even if they have to walk for 2 years”.

Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.) has said: “Do not even say a word of contempt to your parents for Allah has forbidden it – even a mean look – No salaa will be accepted even if they oppressed him”.

The love of a mother is love with no pretence. Rasulullah (S.A.W.) said: “Janna lies under the feet of your mothers”. A mother is a unique entity. She does not just have the responsibility of giving birth, but the subsequent tarbiyat (Upbringing) of a child. There are many incidents from history that show us the importance of a mother.

- “I have committed innumerable sine in my life. Is the door of tawba open for me? And will Allah accept my tawba?” the Prophet (S.A.W.) was asked by a young man. The Prophet asked him to go and do good to his parents. He said his father was alive and when he left the Prophet (S.A.W.) said “I wish that his mum were alive.”
- A man once came to the Prophet (S.A.W.) and said: "Ya Rasulullah! I am healthy and want to take part in jihad for Islam. However, my mother does not like me being separated from her and going for battle." The Prophet (S.A.W.) replied: "Go and stay with Your mother. I swear by

Him who has appointed me as His messenger that the thawaab for your spending one night in the service of your mother and her being happy is greater than you performing jihad for a whole year."

- Shaykh Murtaza Ansari wept when his mother died. One of his student said to him that it was not appropriate behaviour for someone in his position. The great scholar raised his head and said; "It appears that you are not aware of her status. Her training and hardship have elevated me in the world of ilm.
- Thomas Edison- inventor of the light bulb. When he was a young boy and his mother sent him to school, he only went for 3 months. His teachers called him an 'idiot' as he had a large head and appeared dull. His mother took on his education. She did not know much but taught herself and her son. Before he was 9 years of age, she had taught him Plato and Shakespeare. He grew up to be one of the most important inventors. It took 2000 attempts before he invented the correct filament for the light bulb. He didn't say I can't do it but instead said I can't do it yet. He said; "I am here because my mother believed in me".

There are also examples of mothers at the opposite end of the scale.

There was a young man and his mother. They did not have much income and ate from what grew on their farm. One day when the son was still very young, he brought home a good amount of money, but his mother didn't ask him where he got it from. She was just happy that he had brought the money. In this way, for some time, the son kept on bringing in the money and they became wealthy. One day the authorities knocked on the woman's door to tell her that they had arrested for murder. When

he was sentenced to death, he was asked for his last wish. He asked to see his mother. He asked her to show him her tongue. When she did, he bit it hard. When asked why he said that she never asked him where the money was from and thus never attempted to stop him.

When selecting a spouse ensuring that the choice is based on a long term vision; one must know that the spouse will be the future parent of his/her children.

In his Charter of Rights, Imam Ali Zaynul aabedeem (A.S.) says:
"The right of your mother is that you know that she carried you where no one has carried you. She gave to you the fruit of her heart which she has not given to anyone else. She did not care if she went hungry/thirsty as long as you you quenched your hunger and thirst. You will not be able to show her gratitude, other than through Allah's help."

"The right of your father is that you know that he is your root. Without him you would not be here. If you see something good within yourself, you should know that it is because of your father."

AHADITH ON PARENTS

RAsulullah (S.A.W.) says: "Goodness and benevolence towards parents is superior to prayers, fasting, Hajj, Umra and jihad and carries a greater recompense"

"Two doors of Janna are opened for a person whose day commences

when his parents are pleased with him"

"Two doors of Jahanam are opened towards a person who causes the wrath of his parents"

"Be afraid of being disobedient to your parents or becoming the

object of their wrath because the fragrance of paradise covers a distance of five hundred years' time and reaches the nostrils of a man but does not reach at all those with whom their parents are annoyed"

Imam Ja'far Sadiq, (A.S.) , says: "If the Lord had considered anything to be lower than 'Uf' (word of disgust) he would have prohibited it. One of the stages of disobedience is that one should cast a fierce glance on his parents"

GUESTS

Rasulullah (S.A.W.)

“A guest is a guide who leads to the path of Janna”.

“When Allah wishes to do good to a family he sends it gift to it. That gift is a guest who comes with his sustenance and carries away the sins of the family with him.”

Imam Ali (A.S.) has said: “On the Day of Judgement a hospitable believer will arise from his grave in such a condition that his face will be shining like the disc of the moon. The people will wonder and think within themselves as to whether he is a Prophet.

However, the angel accompanying him will introduce him and say: “He is the man who was hospitable and entertained his guests and thus he has no way other than that of entering Janna”.

Imam Ja'far Sadiq (A.S.) has said: “If a brother-in-faith of yours arrives at your place serve him whatever is available. However, if you invite him to meals entertain him properly”.

Rasulullah (S.A.W.)

“The host should begin eating first and should finish it last of all so that the guests may eat with complete freedom and get satiated”.

“One of the rights of the guest on the host is that he should escort him from the room to the gate of the house”.

MU'MINEEN

In relationship with mu'mineen there are 30 responsibilities which are incumbent upon one mu'min towards another. The Prophet (S.A.W.) has said: "Every mu'min has 30 obligations towards another mu'min which cannot be absolved until he/she fulfils them or is forgiven for them"

- i) Forgive their mistakes
- ii) Mercy towards them when they are in a strange land or situation
- iii) Guard their secrets
- iv) Give them a hand when about to fall
- v) Accept their apologies
- vi) Discourage gheeba about them
- vii) Persist in giving them good advice
- viii) Treasure their friendship
- ix) Fulfil their trust
- x) Visit them when ill
- xi) Being with them at their time of death
- xii) Accepting their invitations
- xiii) Returning their favours in kind
- xiv) Thanking them for their favours
- xv) Being grateful for their assistance
- xvi) Protecting their honour and property
- xvii) Helping them meet their needs
- xviii) Making an effort to solve their problems
- xix) Guiding them to what they have lost
- xx) Answering their greeting
- xxi) Taking them at their word
- xxii) Accepting their gifts
- xxiii) Confirming them if they swear to something
- xxiv) Inclining towards them

- xxv) Helping them when they are being unjust (by turning them away from it)
- xxvi) Helping them when they are victims of injustice
- xxvii) Refraining from feeling bored with them
- xxviii) Not forsaking them in times of trouble
- xxix) Whatever good you like to like for them
- xxx) Whatever evil you dislike to dislike for them

ANECDOTES ON PARENTS, GUESTS & MU'MINEEN

The world of dreams

He had only one wish. To be able to see the Prophet (S.A.W.) with his own eyes.

Often he would see the Prophet (S.A.W.) in his dreams. Days would pass, and as he would tend to the camels, his mind would think about Allah.

Madina, that blessed city, where he wanted to go was far far away. Above all, he had an elderly mother to look after who did not like to be parted from him

One day, his only wish was granted. His mum sensed his wanting, and asked him herself to go for a half a day. Thus as a freed bird, with joy he went to Madina.

Eagerly wanting to meet the Prophet (S.A.W.) he reached Madina, and asked for the way to his house.

Soon he found himself at the door of the friend of his heart. Just as he was taught, he knocked sending salaams on those in the house. Umme Salma asked him who he was!

“Uways from Qaran” he replied

Umme Salma had heard the Prophet talk of him.

But the Prophet wasn't home, nor was he to be back soon.

The shadow of sadness showed on his face. He could not stay longer for he had promised his mum and with a heavy heart he left for Yemen.

When the prophet returned from his journey, with joy of one who has found a lost one, he said

"I sense the smell of my friend from Qaran", only to find out that his faithful friend has proved to be a perfect Muslim, kind and considerate to his mother, a keeper of his promises.

They never met in person, yet Uways-e Qarani is one the companions, their meeting place was the wonderful world of dreams.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) said:

“You are in Yemen, yet you are near me; you are near me, yet you are in Yemen.”

And my mum....

Zakariyya came to Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.) and said: "I was a Christian but have now become a Muslim."

“It was the Qur’an that convinced me!”

Imam told Zakariyya:

"Indeed Allah has guided you to Islam and made your heart shine with it's light."

“But my parents are not Muslims, Ya Imam!” Zakariyya said.

Imam replied:

"Take care of your mother. Be good and kind to her...."

When he returned home he looked after his mother, being even more gentle and kind to her than before. His mum noticed the change in her sons' behaviour and said:

"What is the reason of you honouring me so much after you have become a Muslim?"

Zakariyya told her what Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.) had said.

She replied: "My son! Your religion is better than mine. Guide me so that I may become a Muslim."

Zakariyya taught her the basis of Islam and she became a Muslim. She offered the Dhuhr, 'Asr, Maghrib & Eisha Salaa of that day as taught to her by her son and died a Muslim at midnight on that day.

Who is my neighbour in Janna?

The young man heard a knock on the door!

“Who is it?” he asked

“I am a stranger from a far away place.” Came the reply.

He had been taught that guests were a rahma (mercy) from Allah, so he invited the stranger in making him feel welcome.

Every now and then, the young man would ask permission to be excused for a while. He would disappear for a moment or two and would return to attend to the guest. It happened many times.

The guest asked of his excuse for these frequent disappearances. The young man told him that it was his mum who was old and not very well who he went to attend to.

The guest asked whether he could say salaam to the young man’s mum.

“Of course, you can” said the young man “I’m sure she’ll be very pleased.”

The guest saw an old and weak woman in bed who had no strength in her. The only thing that was moving was her mouth, silently saying something he could not understand.

The guest asked the young man whether the young man knew what his mum was saying.

The young man nodded and said: “From a young age, she has always prayed for me, whenever I would do something for her, she would say -May Allah make your home in the neighbourhood of His messengers”.

The guest smiled and said:

"Tell her that her prayer has been granted. I am Musa! I asked Allah who my neighbour would be in Janna and He gave me your address.”

“I asked of him how this person becomes a neighbour of the prophets. He told me to come and see for myself.”

Guests are special

A father and son were once the guests of Imam Ali (A.S.). Imam made them comfortable and sat opposite them talking to them. It was time for the meal to be served.

After food had been served and eaten, Imam's servant Qambar brought a basin and a jug of water for the guests to wash their hands.

Imam took the jug himself and asked the father to extend his hands so he could pour the water.

The guest said:

"How can it be that my Imam serves me! It should be the other way?"

Imam Ali (A.S.) replied:

"Here is your brother in Islam, eager to serve his brother and earn the pleasure of Allah. Why do you prevent it?"

The guest extended his hands.

Imam told him:

"Wash your hands thoroughly. Do not hurry thinking that I should be free of this duty quickly."

When it was the son's turn to wash his hands Imam told his son Muhammad Hanafiyya to hold the jug and wash the sons' hands.

Imam then told him:

"I washed your fathers' hands. My son washed your hands. If your father had not been my guest today, I would have washed your hands myself. But Allah loves to see that when a father and son are present in a place, the father enjoys a privilege and a priority."

The Prophet (S.A.W.) has also said:

"A guest is a guide who leads one to the path to Janna."

The neighbour

There was once a great Mujtahid called Syed Jawad Ameli. He was having his dinner one day when there was a knock on the door. It was a messenger from his teacher Syed Mahdi Bahrul Uloom.

"Your teacher has sent for you immediately. He refuses to eat his dinner until he sees you"

Syed Jawad left his dinner and quickly rushed to his teachers' house. When he entered the house he saw that his teacher was looking very upset. As soon as he saw Syed Jawad he said:

"...Don't you feel ashamed of yourself...Do you not respect Allah...???"

Syed Jawad was confused! He did not know what he had done wrong so he asked his teacher to tell him.

Syed Mahdi said:

"It is now a whole week that your neighbour and his family are without food. Your neighbour asked a grocer for some dates saying they would pay him when they had the money but the grocer would not agree. Your neighbour returned home empty handed without any food for his family"

Syed Jawad said he did not know about this.

"That is why I am upset with you. How can you not know (not care) about your neighbour? They have had seven days of difficulty and you do not know about it! Well! if you had known and not done anything then you would not even be a Muslim"

Syed Mahdi said. Then Syed Mahdi told him to take all the food that was before him to his neighbour .

"Sit with him to eat so he does not feel shy and take this money for him and put it under a cushion or rug so he does not feel embarrassed. When you have done this let me know for I will not eat until then.