

## **Part two**

### A Gift from Hadith

*The most excellent deed is to say, la ilaha illallah (there is no God but Allah) and the best supplication is to seek forgiveness from Allah SWT.*

Explanation:- There are two parts of this *hadith* of the Prophet SAWS. In first part, the declaration of the unity of Allah SWT is considered the most virtuous act, and in the second part of *hadith* the Prophet SAWS has taught us that the highest supplication is to seek forgiveness of Allah SWT from all our sins and mistakes. The word *ilah* means the One Who is worshipped, loved and adored. It is Allah alone Who created us and granted us not only the life itself, but He also favoured us with all the comforts and luxuries of life. Therefore, we must declare Him and only Him as our God in our practical and day to day life. We must strengthen our relationship with Him on firm grounds and supplicate Him without any association.

In the second part of the *hadith*, the Prophet SAWS has told us that the best supplication is to seek forgiveness of Allah SWT from all our sins and mischiefs. Man often commits mistakes and disobeys his Lord because he is very much deceived by worldly fascinations. If he truly and sincerely believes that Allah is the only *ilah*, then he should be ashamed of his wrongdoings and seek forgiveness from Allah SWT. Eternal salvation is not possible untill Allah SWT forgives us from all our sins. If a Muslim desires to be included among those who are dearest and beloved to Allah, he should sincerely invoke *la ilaha illallah* and *astaghfirullah* day and night.

*It is obligatory on every Muslim (man and woman) to seek knowledge.*

Explanation:- It is an inherent desire in man that he wants to know about his own self and about this cosmos. Without having knowledge, neither he can discover this world nor can he achieve the proximity of his Lord and his Master. Keeping in view this basic need and natural requirement of human beings, the Prophet SAWS has made it obligatory for every Muslim male and female to seek knowledge.

Man cannot be aware of his own status and his duties assigned to him by Allah SWT unless he struggles constantly in pursuit of knowledge. At the same time, one has to appear for accountability in the court of Allah SWT in the hereafter, so he must gain knowledge of every good and evil and virtue and vice. This knowledge will make his life successful in the world and will make it fruitful in the hereafter.

*The best of you is he who learns Quran himself and teaches it to others.*

Explanation:- Quran is the word of Allah. Its subject matter is 'man'. This book does not consist only of rituals but guides man in all spheres of life whether they are social, political or economic. It provides man with a permanent solution of all his problems in this world and supplies a correct answer to all his questions about the next world. We can never attain success in the hereafter so long as we do not mould our lives in this world according to the teachings of the Quran. In short, it is our basic need to gain the knowledge of the Quran, to have a deep understanding of it, and to follow its teachings in our practical life. Moreover, we should also convey its message to others and encourage and inspire them to practice it.

*The one who will invoke blessings on me once, Allah SWT will open for him a door of salvation.*

Explanation:- The Prophet SAWS has done great favour to mankind. He showed mankind the way of success and salvation in this world and in the hereafter. He has presented his whole life as a beautiful role model for us. It is his great favours that demand from us to love him more than anyone else. The best way to love him is to act upon his teachings and invoke blessings upon him as a sign of love and gratitude. Allah SWT says in Quran:

(Ahzab)

Through the above verse of the Quran we come to know that Allah SWT also requires us to send blessings upon the Prophet SAWS. The Prophet SAWS has himself given the glad tidings of good reward on invoking blessings for him that Allah SWT opens a door of salvation for such person.

*None of you could be a true believer unless his desire becomes in accord with what I have brought.*

Explanation:- Man has been shown both right and wrong ways. He ought to refrain from wrong path despite having the ability for it. Further, he should discipline his thoughts, feelings and emotions in accordance with the pleasure of Allah SWT and His Prophet SAWS. The Prophet SAWS is reported to have said that he who will not do so, will not be able to have the real taste of faith. In other words, this tradition of the Prophet SAWS gives a strong message of the obedience of the Prophet SAWS. Allah SWT has also declared in the Quran, “he who obeys the Prophet he indeed obeys Allah SWT”.

*He who loves for the sake of Allah and dislikes for the sake of Allah and he who gives away for the sake of Allah and withholds for the sake of Allah, he actually completes his faith.*

Explanation:- There are four principles for perfection of faith that have been mentioned in the above tradition:

1. One should love anyone only for the sake Allah SWT.
2. If one feels hatred and grudge with anybody, he should also feel it only to gain the pleasure of Allah.
3. When a person grants something to somebody, he should only intend to seek the approval of Allah SWT, through this action.
4. And sometimes a Muslim avoids spending on certain occasions, he is urged to do so only for the love of Allah SWT.

The Prophet SAWS has told us in the above *hadith* that perfection of faith is realized by these four attitudes. Allah SWT showers His love and mercy upon man constantly therefore man is also urged to make Allah a centre of all his hope, love and attachment. He should love everyone only for the sake of Allah and if he has to hate anyone he should only hate him because Allah SWT hates him. As Allah SWT does not like any arrogant and evil person why should we like him? When we give something to people, we must not give it for the sake of show off or any other worldly benefit, instead it should be given only for the sake of Allah's pleasure. So also if we refrain from giving anyone we should only refrain in case Allah SWT has commanded us to do so.

*He who is not kind on our youngsters and is not respectful toward our elders is not one of us.*

Explanation:- Man is the best creature of Allah SWT. His personality is expected to have a reflection of Allah's attributes. For this reason, man is demanded to mould his morality in accordance with his Creator and express it verbally and practically. For example, it is a great virtue of Allah SWT that He is Just, so man must do justice. Allah SWT forgives incessantly, so men should also overlook each other's faults and shortcomings. Having mercy is the most dominant virtue of Allah SWT. The Prophet SAWS has specifically stressed the virtue of mercy in this tradition. Our youngsters deserve our mercy and our elders deserve our respect. That is why the Prophet SAWS has said forcefully that he who is not kind to our youngsters and is not respectful to our elders, will deprive himself from my love.

*The one who gives bribe and the one who takes it both are in hell-fire.*

Explanation:- When a society is devoid of justice, bribery prevails in it. When the rights of the people are usurped, bribery becomes the order of the day. Due to social injustice a community suffers from the worst situation. Such a society cannot be peaceful where power and authority is misused and human rights are violated. For this reason, the Prophet SAWS has said that the one who gives bribe and the one who takes both of them are in hell-fire. The most important point in this *hadith* is that the Prophet SAWS mentioned first the one who is the giver. It means that he is equally sinful and liable to be punished.

*A man who helps his community unlawfully is like one whose camel has fallen in a well and he is pulling it through its tale (thus he himself falls in the well).*

Explanation:- In this *hadith* the Prophet SAWS has pointed out a major cause of destruction of Islamic society and Muslim unity. He who supports his own community

wrongfully, he exposes himself to destruction alongwith his community. We should always keep ourselves committed to the truth without any distinction or discrimination of nation, race, or language. And we should never support anyone in his wrongdoings even if he belongs to our own family or tribe.

*The best of the believers is he who has high morals.*

Explanation:- A human personality cannot be seen through a mirror so clearly as it can be seen through its moral behaviour. When a person deals another person with good morals his whole personality is vivified with all its inward and outward aspects.

Sometimes, not only hatred is converted into deep love through good morals but also the heart of the enemy can be won. The Prophet SAWS, throughout his mission generally and during the Makkan period of his life particularly, won over the worst of his enemies through the same weapon of his excellent morals. Although every human being must know the significance of moral values, but the Prophet SAWS has specially impressed upon the Muslims the fact that one could attain the perfection of faith only through good morals. Morality means that a person behaves with Allah SWT, His Messenger, his own self and Allah's creatures. If this behaviour and conduct is good and in accordance with the dictates of *Shari'ah*, then it is considered good morals, and if it is the vice-versa then it is called bad morals.

*Prayer is pillar of Din. He who establishes it, he has indeed established his Din, and he who demolishes it he indeed has demolished his Din.*

Explanation:- In this *hadith* *Din* has been likened to a building. Its pillar is prayer. He who will keep this pillar standing, will keep the whole building intact. And he who demolishes this pillar, he actually demolished the whole building of his *Din*. Thus the

Prophet SAWS has elaborated the significance of prayer. Every Muslim's faith is tested five times a day. When the *muazzin* calls for prayer, he calls every Muslim towards prayer and success. When a Muslim responds to this call, he testifies that he is true in his declaration of faith. Furthermore, it is only prayer through which he links himself with Allah SWT, otherwise this relationship is weakened.

*If you speak to your companion and even if you just said 'be quiet' while the Imam was delivering Friday sermon, so your talk is idle and un-wanted.*

Explanation:- It is an etiquette of seeking knowledge that it should be received quietly and attentively. In order to benefit from any sermon or good advice it is very important that it should be listened very carefully. If we are not attentive then it is very difficult for us to understand it. And once we do not understand, how can we act upon it. Therefore, it is very much pertinent to attend Friday sermon and listen to it carefully as it is a source of guidance to Islamic teachings. This *hadith* also indicates that during Friday sermon, one is not allowed even to stop someone who is speaking. Even the shortest conversation may disturb others and may interrupt their process of hearing and learning.

*He who jumps over the shoulders of people in Friday congregation, he is in fact drawn towards hell.*

Explanation:- This *hadith* draws our attention to a number of things like manners and etiquettes of Friday congregation, manners of general gathering, human dignity, culture and civilization and social discipline. Here is a very comprehensive teaching that highlights so many social virtues under the heading of congregational prayer. When Friday sermon is delivered the late-comers should not try to go forward jumping over the shoulders of those who are sitting there already; instead they should have take their seats

behind; that is more polite and dignified way. Jumping over the shoulders of people is against the manners of gathering, against human dignity and against requirements of culture and civilization.

*When congregational prayer is commenced, it is not nice to come running but it is more dignified to come walking gracefully. Perform your prayer with congregation as much you can and whatever is missed you may complete it afterwards.*

Explanation:- This *hadith* directs us towards observing the manners of congregational prayer. The most important thing is that we should go to mosque before time, in order to perform the congregational prayer so that we may participate in the first *takbeer*. If one is late due to any reason, and prayer is started, he should not try to run to mosque and attend the prayer haphazardly, instead he should go peacefully. Whatever units of prayer he finds, he should perform them with congregation, and whatever is missed, he should complete it later. Running fastly towards mosque is such an uncivilized and uncultured act that neither Allah SWT likes it, nor does it befit with the honour of mosque. Moreover, it militates against human dignity.

*He who fasts in the days of Ramadan and stands praying through its nights – seeking reward, all his sins are forgiven.*

Explanation:- Fasting is an important pillar of Islam. This month brings a spiritual atmosphere. During this month, one is trained in the virtues of abstinence and righteousness. This month is also called the spring of righteousness. Fasting is obligatory throughout the whole month of Ramadan. Now whosoever will fast in this month and

will stand before his Lord in the nights with full spirit of faith and hoping for a reward from Allah SWT, all of his past sins will be forgiven.

*There are two occasions of happiness for the one who is fasting. One is that when he breaks his fast and the other when he will meet his Lord.*

Explanation:- Fasting apparently seems to be difficult and tiresome. But as a matter of fact, it is a pleasure in this world and blessing in the hereafter. During the fasting one refrains from eating and drinking just to obey his Sustainer. Then he breaks his fast and enjoys the bounties of Allah SWT after enduring intense hunger and thirst. This is an occasion of a marvelous happiness and tremendous pleasure. And there is another occasion when he will see his Lord and his gladness will have no limits.

*He who performed all the rites and rituals of pilgrimage while Muslims have been safe from the mischief of his tongue and his hands he is forgiven all his past sins.*

Explanation:- Pilgrimage is also a pillar of Islam. It is obligatory on every Muslim man and woman who can afford to perform it once in lifetime. On this occasion, Muslims gather in the city of Makkah from every nook and corner and a huge and incredible gathering is seen there. This demands a high level of abstinence, forgiveness and self sacrifice. One must constrain himself from hurting others by his word or action. This *hadith* highlights the same point that is ‘whosoever will perform his pilgrimage with its true spirit, all his past sins will be forgiven’.

*A Muslim who travels in the cause of Allah and faces sufferings in this way, Allah SWT will save him from the torment of Fire.*

Explanation:- Whatever sufferings and pains a servant of Allah faces in order to seek the pleasure of Allah, he is indeed rewarded for that. Each step that he takes for the cause of Allah SWT brings him forgiveness and grants him a high station in the proximity of Allah SWT. Seeking knowledge, performing prayer and helping and easing a Muslim, are such a great virtues whereby one may attain eternal success and permanent salvation, even if his feet were covered with dust in this way. When a Muslim comes out of his house to spread the message of Islam, he is highly rewarded on each step that he takes for this purpose. Travelling for the cause of Islam is also liked by Allah SWT so much that he loves those feet which are covered with dust in this way, and He saves them from hell-fire.

*Everyone of you is a responsible being and each of you is accountable to Allah SWT for his sphere responsibilities.*

Explanation:- Responsibility and obligation is not forgivable for anyone. A ruler is responsible for the welfare of his public and for securing their rights. Parents are responsible for the education and up-bringing of their children. Even a peon working in an office is responsible for his duties and will be accountable to Allah SWT in this regard. Now it becomes obvious that we must fulfill all our duties and perform our obligations with full commitment.

*The best of all the people is the one who serves the people.*

Explanation:- Quran teaches us that everlasting well-being and honour is the lot of those who serve and benefit others and strive for the well-being and welfare of humanity. The above *hadith* elaborates this teaching very effectively. We should also devote our lives

for this noble cause. This is the only way that we may include ourselves among 'the best of mankind'. It is a key to our worldly gain and bliss in the hereafter.

### Part 3

## Subject Study

### Quran Majeed: Introduction, Preservation and Merits

**Introduction:** Allah SWT created man and fulfilled all his physical and natural needs. He also fulfilled his spiritual requirements and provided complete guidance to his intellect and spirit. He granted him the ability to make a distinction between good and bad and blessed him with consciousness. In addition to that, Allah SWT raised His Messengers and revealed His books in order to complete His guidance for man. Our Prophet Mohamad SAWS is the last Messenger of this chain. Allah SWT revealed the Quran to him. It is the last Book of Allah SWT. It is a fountain of guidance for mankind that will always irrigate them. It testifies previous Divine Books.

Allah SWT had also raised His Messengers for the guidance of the past nations. Some of them had also received Divine Books from Allah SWT. But their revealed books and their teachings were not preserved in their original condition. Allah says:

(al-Maidah-48)

“To thee We sent the Scripture in truth, conforming to the Scripture that came before it, and guarding it in safety”.

In the above verse of the Quran Allah SWT has used a word *muhammadin*, which is one of the names of the Quran. This means that the Quran is a guard over all those fundamentals and teachings of past Scriptures that could not be preserved safely. The teachings of the Quran are very practical in every age of life and can be acted upon with full trust and complete satisfaction.

The Quran guides us in all spheres of life. It unveils the reality of life, vice and virtue, lawful and imparts and educates moral values for every facet of human life. It also shows us a glimpse of human life in the hereafter. The Quran projects the significance of man's existence on this earth very effectively and impressively. The Quran presents a very comprehensive set of rules for man in every aspect of life whether it is individual or social, economic or political, national or international. It is a package of man's duties and rights. We should consider it a valuable treasure for us for it did not miss to instruct us towards every small benefit and warn us against every minor loss. It brings to us all knowledge clearly which is indispensable for us to build our worldly career. There is no way of finding truth available to man other than the Quran.

**Preservation:** The noble Quran is revealed from Allah SWT and He Himself has undertaken its preservation. Allah SWT says:

“We have, without doubt, sent down the message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)”. Al-Hijr-9

We have seen how adequately Allah SWT has kept His promise to guard the noble Quran. Today one fails to trace any minor difference of even a single vowel in the scripts of the Quran that are available in the whole world.

The Quran was not revealed to the Prophet SAWS all at once. It was rather revealed gradually during the span of twenty-three years. As soon as the verses of the Quran were revealed, the Prophet SAWS sent for his special scribe and commanded him to write down the verses. He would also indicate where those verses would be added and before or after which Surah those would be included. There was a specific place in the mosque of the Prophet SAWS where the scripture was kept. The companions of the Prophet SAWS would copy it from there and memorized it. They used to recite these verses during their prayers and tried to acquire a deep understanding of them, and then

conformed to them in practice. In this way, the Quran was continuously being revealed, written and memorized. Not only men but also women were engaged in this sublime activity. So much so that the whole Quran was completely memorized by many wives of the Holy Prophet SAWS, his family members and other male and female companions during his lifetime. A number of companions had also prepared copies of the full text of the Quran for themselves.

After the demise of the Prophet SAWS Abu Bakr Siddique RTA got a special copy of the Quran prepared. It was according to the same order in which the Prophet SAWS had dictated it. For the first time, the scattered pieces of the Quran were compiled in a book form. Later ‘Uthman RTA ordered to prepare various copies of the volume in his era and sent a copy to every provincial capital.

**Merits of the Quran:** The message of the Quran is based on truth and reality and there is indeed no doubt in it. This Divine Book contains full guidance for people of every age and every area. Man’s true success and well-being in both the worlds depend only in following the teachings of the Quran. The Quran is a Book which is full of virtues. As this discourse (i.e. the Quran) is the greatest of all discourses similarly that person is the best of all persons who seeks its knowledge himself and teaches it to others. The Prophet SAWS has said:

“The best of you is he who learnt Quran himself and taught to others”. Therefore, we must realize the importance of learning Quran and should make every possible effort for this great purpose.

Reciting the Quran is a virtue of the highest standard. Allah SWT has promised to grant us ten virtues on the recital of each word. And on practicing its teachings, He assures us a great honour and high station in this world and in the next. Those who will

turn away from it will be disgraced and humiliated. History is witness to the fact that as long as the Muslims held fast to the teachings of the Quran, they ruled over the world and when they neglected it, they were deprived of all dignity and honour. The Prophet SAWS had already forewarned that Allah SWT will elevate many nations due to their practice of the Quran and will cause the decline of many people because of their negligence of the Quran. This is briefly to say that we should recite the Quran with full understanding and an earnest effort to act according to its dictates.

### EXERCISE

1. Give a brief introduction to the Quran.
2. What do you know about the preservation of the Quran. Describe!
3. Write a note on the merits of the Quran.

## Love and Obedience of Allah SWT and His Messenger SAWS

When a man reflects in his own being and the countless diverse phenomena of this universe, he easily finds out the One Who is All Powerful, Sustainer and Wise. It is discovered by him that there is a Being Who is ruling over all, providing energy to everything and giving it the ability to grow. He is All Powerful. He is the Creator and the Sustainer. Furthermore, He is also All Wise that He is nurturing the whole cosmos with full wisdom. Man is forced to think that even a chair, a table or a bowl cannot be made without a maker; so the earth, the sky, the moon and the sun with all its meticulous existence must have been created by the power, care and wisdom of a Creator. The whole phenomena is a proof of His existence. When we acknowledge Him then alone we can understand the reality of human life and the purpose of this universe. It is only Allah's creation that is manifest everywhere. Man's honour and pride lies in the acknowledgement of his Creator. He should be deeply drowned in the love of his Creator and should accept His mastery over him. The Quran draws our attention to the same thing:

“O people! Worship your Lord Who created you”. Being a servant of Allah, we should obey Him alone because He is the One Who has created us. He favoured us with eyes, therefore, we should see as He pleases. He has granted us faculty of hearing so we should hear as He wants. And He has blessed us with reason and intellect, therefore, we must ponder over His power and authority and His injunctions.

**Love with Allah SWT:** The right way of thinking invites us to love Allah SWT. If someone favours us on a very small level, we naturally feel obliged to him. Why then should we not feel deepest love for Him Who has bestowed upon us this life itself and all its comforts. In this regard, Allah SWT says:

“But those of faith are overflowing in their love for Allah”.

The perfection of faith is not possible without love. A good action that is devoid of love is hollow. It is said that we obey only him whom we love. Our faith in Allah demands that we should love Him alone. And our love with Him demands that we should accept all His teachings whole-heartedly and practice them consistently. It is a sign of Allah’s mercy that He never left man alone, but He raised a chain of Messengers in every age of history for man’s guidance. He crowned these blessed personalities with His books, scriptures and commandments. Our Prophet Mohammad SAWS is the last messenger of this chain. The Quran is a book of guidance which is eternal and revealed to Prophet Mohammad SAWS. It is the last call to humanity on this earth from their Lord. It is an open invitation to every human-being who desires to succeed in this life and in the life after death.

**Love with the Prophet SAWS:** Love with the Prophet SAWS is a part of faith. The Quran has mentioned this love in this manner:

“The Prophet is closer to the believers than their own selves”.

If a believer has to choose either love of Prophet SAWS or love of his own self, he should keep the bond of the first love by sacrificing his own self. Allah SWT further says:

“Put not yourselves forward before Allah and His Messenger”.

We cannot attain righteousness unless we learn manners of speech, concord in our words and actions and obey Allah SWT in our daily behaviour. For this purpose, we must

be aware of how Allah and His Messenger want us to behave. The Prophet SAWS has said:

“None of you can be a true believer unless I become dearer to him than his father, his children and all the people”.

He also has said:

“None of you can be a true believer unless he matches his own desires with what I have brought”.

It shows that love demands these things:

1. No one should share the love of Allah and His Messenger SAWS.
2. Love of the Prophet SAWS should supercede all relations belongings –, and – concerns.
3. Love of the Prophet SAWS should only result in preferring his dictates over all personal likes and dislikes.

Regarding the same thing Allah SWT says:

“Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and make not vain your deeds”. This means that without obedience deeds are vain.

**Obedience:** We can claim that we love Allah but how can we prove it? This question may arise in everyone’s mind. It is Allah’s kindness that He Himself has shown this way also.

“Say: if you do love Allah, follow me, Allah will love you and forgive your sins. For Allah is oft-Forgiving and most Merciful”.

Love of Allah means following the footsteps of the Prophet SAWS. Obedience results in self surrender. There must be a spirit of strong love in all our deeds, otherwise these would become hypocritical. Allah SWT warns:

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no (real) faith until they make you judge in all disputes between them. And find in their souls no resistance against your decisions, but accept them with the fullest conviction”.

When we obey the Prophet then only we can prove ourselves true in our declaration of faith and will deserve the blessings of Allah.

**Seal of Prophethood:** The world was blessed with the presence of the Prophet SAWS. He delivered a code of life to humanity. With his advent the mission of Prophethood was completed and concluded. Allah SWT announced:

“This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion”.

This is a proclamation that the Prophet SAWS is the last messenger and there is no prophet after him. Now the teachings of Islam have become perfect, Allah’s favour is completed and He has chosen for us the *din* of Islam. The Quran is the only way of life till hereafter and the beautiful pattern of the Prophet SAWS is to be followed for ever. It is indeed an honour for mankind that it was blessed by Divine address. Before the Prophet SAWS, messengership was confined only to certain areas, tribes and nations and

Muslim community was very limited. The Prophet SAWS was raised for the whole universe. Now the Muslim community entered a universal era. He, for the first time, gave the concept of universality. Human race was initiated into a unity. It got one centre, one pattern and one Scripture. The Quran says:

“Say: O Men! I am sent unto you all, as the Messenger of Allah”.

And it further says:

“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets”.

Now man will find the right path from one direction. He will not have to wait for the search of Truth. Everyone has to have faith in Allah. Everyone has to place the jewel of love in the crown of his faith. And everyone has to regulate his worldly life according to the dictates of Allah SWT obeying the Prophet SAWS with deep love and dedication. This will guarantee his success in this world and salvation in the next world.

### EXERCISE

1. What is the meaning of the love of Allah?
2. Why the obedience of the Prophet SAWS is obligatory?
3. Explain the meaning of the seal of Prophethood with reference to any verse of the Quran.

## The Virtue of Knowledge and its Significance

Knowledge means to know something or to be aware of something. Allah SWT has greatly favoured His servants. One of His great favours is that He gave His servants the treasure of knowledge. The very first revelation that came down was:

“Read in the name of your Lord the Cherisher, Who created. Created man out of a clot. Proclaim! And your Lord is most Bountiful. He Who taught (the use) of the pen. Taught man that which he did not know”.

The Prophet SAWS has said:

*Every Muslim, male or female, must gain knowledge and he should not miss an opportunity for that.*

**Importance of Knowledge:** Man is Allah’s vicegerent on earth. He is superior to all creatures of Allah because he is a knowledgeable being. In order to prove his superiority over all creatures, Allah SWT had ordained the angels to bow down before him as a mark of respect. Obviously man’s greatness was acknowledged there on the grounds of his knowledge. Once the Prophet SAWS told about himself,

*I have been sent as a teacher.* He used to supplicate Allah SWT to increase his knowledge with these words:

*My Lord! Increase me in knowledge.*

### **Dissemination of Knowledge in the Priod of the Prophet SAWS:**

The Prophet SAWS always emphasized to seek knowledge. And he made every effort to spread knowledge. After the battle of Badr, some disbelievers were captured by the Muslims. They failed to pay any ransom for their freedom. The Prophet SAWS asked each prisoner of war to teach ten Muslim children to read and write and in return they all were to be freed. He also urged and inspired women to seek knowledge. As he said that seeking knowledge was obligatory for every man and woman. He also said that knowledge and wisdom was the lost property of a believer, hence he should get it wherever he finds it, since he is the one who deserves it most.

**Importance of Seeking Knowledge:** A Muslim must strive to seek knowledge and should be very attentive for this purpose. The Quran gives inspiration to us to master ourselves in sciences, as well as such other disciplines as History, Philosophy, Physics, Chemistry etc. acquire. Earning lawfully is also a part of the teachings of Islam. Therefore, Muslims should also have their own expertise in Economics and other sciences related to it. The sole purpose of a Muslim's life is to obtain righteousness and pleasure of Allah SWT. Quran speaks:

*Those truly fear Allah among His servants who have knowledge.*

It is also a duty of a Muslim to share his knowledge with others and spread it largely. The Prophet SAWS ordered his followers:

*Whatever you hear from me, convey it to others.*

Similarly, addressing his companions on the last pilgrimage, he said:

*He who is present here may convey my teachings to those who are not present here.*

One can gain knowledge anytime anywhere. There is no age limit. There is a *hadith* of the Prophet SAWS:

*Seek knowledge from infancy till the grave.*

He also said that a believer always feels thirst for knowledge till he reaches the Garden.

**Virtue of Knowledge:** Knowledge is a source of greatness and a key to one's elevation. The people of knowledge become closer to Allah SWT because knowledge is an attribute of Allah SWT. A learned man and an ignorant one are not equal in the estimation of Allah SWT. There is a verse of the Quran that says:

“Are they equal who know and who know not?”

Those who illuminate their hearts with the light of knowledge Allah SWT says about them:

“Allah will raise up to (suitable) ranks (and degrees), those of you who believe and who have been granted knowledge”.

Once the Prophet SAWS entered the mosque. There were two circles. One was doing *dhikr* and the other was engaged in an academic activity. He appreciated both the circles, then he himself participated in the academic circle and said, “this group is better than the other”. Once the Prophet SAWS said, “when you pass by the orchards of the Garden, get its fruits”. The companions asked, “Where the orchards of the Garden are found”? He said, “these are the circles of knowledge”.

The importance of knowledge becomes more clearly evident from the following narrations:

*Seek knowledge. It is righteousness to seek knowledge for the pleasure of Allah SWT. Striving for knowledge is a way of devotion. Making every effort for it is like performing jihad. Teaching is charity. Knowledge is a very good companion of every lone, a guide to every misled and a sincere friend to everyone. It leads to Paradise. Allah SWT exalt peoples because of their knowledge. When people follow the footprints of those who have knowledge, then everything in this world prays for them. Knowledge gives man a noble life. It is a light that shows the right way. It provides power and strength. Through knowledge, man has been assigned a rank that is higher than angels. We cannot worship and obey Allah without knowledge. It helps man to recognize his Creator. It instructs man to fulfill his duties to Allah and to people. It is a leader. It generates good deeds. The most fortunate ones are those who gain it, and the most unlucky ones are those who are deprived of it.*

Islam inspires and encourages its followers to travel widely in search of knowledge and attain it wherever they find it. Muslims ruled over the world only because they had advanced themselves in knowledge. When they gave up the teachings of the Quran, they were left far behind in knowledge and thus fell in decline. One of the Prophet’s daily supplications was:

*O my Lord! increase me in knowledge.*

# ZAKAT

## Obligation and Importance

**Obligation:** The literal meaning of Zakat is to cleanse, to grow and to increase. It is a pillar of Islam. Zakat is obligatory for a Muslim who has certain amount of wealth out of which he is required to pay a specific portion. It is very blissful to pay Zakat for one gets tremendous reward for that in the hereafter. Negligence of this part of Islam is a major sin. There are a number of verses of the Quran which speak about prayer and zakah altogether and highlight their importance. It is an oft-repeated verse of the Quran,

“Establish prayers and pay Zakat”.

**Importance:** Once a group of people came to Prophet SAWS and enquired about the teachings of Islam. He taught them about prayer and zakat before any other deed.

After the demise of the Prophet SAWS, some people refused to pay zakat. Abu Bakr Siddique RTA launched a campaign against them and fought them. The Quran warns those who are not ready to pay zakat very sternly. For instance,

“And there are those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah: announce unto them a most grievous chastisement – on the day when it will be heated in the fire of hell and with it will be branded their foreheads, their flanks and their backs – this is the treasure which you hoarded for yourselves: taste you, then, the (treasures) you hoarded”. (Al-Taubah, 34-35).

Zakat is the best means of achieving social welfare. It gives support to those who are deprived and destitute. This act augments mutual love, sympathy and respect of each other in the society. Hatred and revenge do not take place in a society where system of zakat is established properly. Those who give zakat, they feel in their hearts the love of Allah more than the love of wealth. They are more sympathetic to the poor. As the wealth circulates the economic condition of people gets better.

The Quran has mentioned eight categories of people who deserve zakat:

“Alms are for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer the (funds), for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to truth), for those in bondage and debt, in the cause of Allah, and for the wayfarers, this is ordained by Allah. And Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom”.

In the light of above verse, eight categories of those people are determined, who deserve zakat and they are as follows: 1. Poor (2) needy (3) employees in the department of Zakat (4) for reconciliation (5) those who are in bondage (6) those who are in debt (7) in the cause of Allah (8) wayfarers.

While distributing zakat, one should prefer his close relatives over those who are outside the family. Also it is more appropriate to pay zakat to those who have self-respect and refrain from begging.

#### EXERCISE

1. Explain the meaning of zakat and its obligatory character in Islam.
2. Write a note on the importance of zakat.
3. Describe those who deserve to receive zakat in the light of teachings of the Quran.
4. What is the warning that the Quran issues against those who refuse to pay zakat?

## Physical Cleanliness and Purity

Islam is a complete code of life and it is the natural pattern. Allah SWT educates man through this pattern of nature about all minor and major requirements of his life. He sent Prophet Mohammad SAWS as the last Messenger to teach this way of life practically. Quran guides us to physical purity and cleanliness:

“And your garments keep free from stain and all abomination shun”.

The Prophet SAWS who embodied the teachings of the Quran said,

*Physical cleanliness and purity is a part of faith.*

*Taharah* is the term employed in Islamic Shariah for physical purity and cleanliness. In the present age, although cleanliness is observed, but the real meaning of *taharah* is not commonly understood. It is far above than mere cleanliness. If the body is not clean according to the rules of Islamic Shariah, then there is no *taharah*. And if there is no *taharah* then ‘ibadah’ is not acceptable.

*Taharah* consists of two things: (1) Performing ablution (2) taking bath

It is compulsory to perform ablution, before offering the prayers, provided both the body and the dress are pure. If body and dress are not pure then it is compulsory to take bath and purify the dress first.

**Ablution:** There are four obligations (*fraiz*) for the validity of ablution: (1) Washing face (2) washing hands, arms and elbows (3) wiping head (*mash*) (4) washing feet with ankles.

Whatever is other than that, is *sunnah* and *mustahab*. How to perform ablution according to the practice of the Prophet SAWS?

(1) washing hands properly (2) rinsing mouth three times (3) rinsing nose three times (4) washing face from forehead to chin and from one ear to the other ear three times (5) washing arms with elbows three times (6) wiping the head (7) washing feet along with ankles (8) during ablution the right limb should be washed before the left limb (9) and all the limbs should be washed three times.

**Taking Bath:** Taking bath in Islamic terminology is called *ghusl*. If body is not pure, then one must perform *ghusl* before ablution and it is *wajib*. In addition to that, a Muslim is very much urged to perform *ghusl* in order to keep himself clean and tidy from every kind of filth. The Prophet SAWS has greatly emphasized that Muslims should have bath before performing the congregational prayer on Friday. Similarly, it has been his practice to have bath on the days of both the Ids and before wearing *ihram* for ‘Umrah and Hajj. These are the occasions on which having *ghusl* is considered better and most appropriate. Whereas, in certain cases having *ghusl* is obligatory (*wajib*) and if one did not have it, he will be very sinful and none of his acts of worship will be accepted.

How did the Prophet SAWS perform his *ghusl*? It is necessary to wash the unclean part of body before starting *ghusl* and this is the practice of the Prophet SAWS. Afterwards, he performed ablution and later he washed the whole body three times pouring water on the right part of the body first and then on the left. He used to clean his body very thoroughly.

It is compulsory for men and women that no part of their bodies, not even a single hair, should remain dry while performing the obligatory *ghusl*. But extravagance is not allowed and water should not be wasted. It is strongly emphasized to take bath in a separate place. If such a place is not available, then only men are allowed to take bath

publicly. Women must seek a private room for this purpose. It is prohibited to talk or sing during the bath.

Islamic injunctions are not such as would put man in trouble. These are rather meant for his benefit and comfort. When he performs ablution five times a day, he feels physical and mental relief. Thus he keeps himself clean and feels fresh all the day. Frequent bathing keeps his body pure from every dirt and filth. He saves himself from a number of diseases. Bath and ablution provide him with the required physical and spiritual cleanliness. He enjoys his worship and daily activities. His worship is better acknowledged and working ability is increased.

#### EXERCISE

1. Write a brief note on *taharah* in the light of Quran and *Hadith*.
2. Describe the manners of performing ablution.
3. How the Prophet SAWS used to take bath?
4. Write one verse of the Quran and one *hadith* concerning *taharah*.
5. What are the advantages of *taharah*?
6. Fill in the blanks with proper words:
  - a. It is ..... to take bath on Friday.
  - b. It is .....to take bath on Id.
  - c. While having bath, the whole body should be rinsed.....
  - d. Water should be used in ..... quantity.
  - e. Prayer is not acceptable ..... *taharah*.

## Perseverance and Gratitude In The Context of our individual and Social life

Perseverance and gratitude are such great human qualities that make a Muslim perfect in his faith. These virtues make a person behave in both prosperity and distress according to will of Allah SWT. An attitude completely based on perseverance and gratitude, suits one's faith and matches with one's belief. Every man in this world faces both pleasant and unpleasant things. In both the cases, a faithful is supposed to react positively; perseverance and gratitude are the most positive qualities. These two qualities play a very important role in our personal and social life.

Perseverance (*Sabr*) literally means tolerance and self control. It means that one should control himself and remain steadfast during all unpleasant situations instead of giving way to anxiety and distress. A true believer proves himself to be strong and steadfast during any grief, pain or hardship. For he keeps all his trust in his Lord.

Gratitude (*shukr*) literally means admiring others for their favour, being grateful to them and acknowledging their favours open-heartedly. For this reason, we must be grateful to Allah SWT more than anyone else. All praises are due to Allah alone Who has granted to us everything what we own. We must, therefore, bow down ourselves in all gratitude to Him. There are three ways to express our feelings of thankfulness to Allah SWT:

- (a) expressing words of thanks
- (b) feeling deeply the greatness of Allah SWT our humility before Him, and our servitude to Him
- (c) and obedience to Allah SWT and self surrender to Him.

The Quran greatly stresses on thankfulness and gratitude. Those who are grateful, they only gain. Allah SWT has promised such people great reward in these words:

“If you are grateful, I will add more favours unto you”.

If a Muslim suffers from any trouble, he should take it as a test from Allah SWT. It is Allah alone Who can relieve one from all these troubles. It is not proper to one become intemperate in any case. It is highly appreciated to seek help from Allah SWT. On such occasion, those who resort to tolerance and perseverance, self control and steadfastness are promised to be greatly rewarded. It is an opportunity for a Muslim to build up his character and Allah SWT through His mercy saves him from every kind of negative feeling.

Perseverance also brings fruitful results for Muslims’ social life. When nations face worse situation they can only handle it with courage and will power. If they will show weakness, disorder and disorganization, they will decline. Such nations will never gain a high status and honourable place in the world. Allah’s help and support is destined for those who are perseverant. Allah SWT assures them His proximity:

“Allah SWT is with those who maintain perseverance”.

Allah SWT commanded Prophet Ayub to be patient. He followed the word of Allah SWT so incredibly that he became a symbol of patience for ever. Allah SWT praised him in the Quran in these words,                      What a good servant! Moreover, in Surah Ahqaf, verse No. 35, Allah SWT has told us that patience and perseverance has been the practice of all His Messengers.

The real and the eternal bliss in this world and in the hereafter is the fate of only those who chose to be patient. Allah SWT says: “and give glad tidings to those who are patient”.

We should also practice patience and steadfastness in every difficult situation and should always be grateful to Allah SWT for all His favours and blessings. It will guarantee our success in both phases of life.

### EXERCISE

1. Why patience (Sabr) is stressed in Islamic teachings?
2. What is the significance of thankfulness (*Shukr*) in the Quran and the Sunnah?

## Importance of Family Life

Man spends all his life with his family. Family members are very much attached to each other and they have different kinds of relations with each other. Family system is the basis of human culture and its existence is essential for its proper development. Family is the basic unit of a society and it plays an effective role in building the society. If a family is pursuing Islamic values, the society will have a good impression of it. Islam has underlined the importance of establishing of a strong family system in human society.

**Relationship of Spouses:** Allah SWT says:

Marital bond is the foundation of family life. A very beautiful relationship is formed strengthened thereby between husband and wife. The Quran calls it *Ihsan* which means, “being protected in a fortress”. Marital bond is like a fortress wherein spouses protect themselves. They get a strong boundary which secures them from every indecency. They both are sincere and loving toward each other and they share each other’s worries and problems and are always helpful to one another. They feel relaxed and relieved. Mutual consultation increases their mental level and ability. The joy of life goes to its climax when a couple is favoured with children. They strengthen their parents’ relationship. Sentiments of love and respect are seen from both sides. Home looks like paradise.

The main objective of family life in the sight of Allah is raising human race and its healthy growth. The only way that leads to a pure life is marriage; otherwise this sublime objective can never be achieved. A society is based on true relationship of a husband and wife and a pure family system. When this foundation is shaken, the whole society is collapsed. For this reason Allah SWT directs us very forcefully toward the strength and growth of family life. To Him this bond is required to be based on mere love and mercy:

“And among His signs is this that He created for you mates from among yourselves that you may dwell in tranquility with them. And He has put love and mercy between your hearts”.

On the one hand, spouses fulfill their natural desire from one another and on the other –, they built up/promote love, mercy and trust between each other. The both are co-travellers in their journey of life. They are sympathetic to each other due to the sanctity of the solemn contract which they have entered. Allah SWT has bestowed upon them equal rights:

“And women shall have rights similar to the obligations upon them, according to what is equitable”.

**Rights and Duties of Spouses:** According to the teachings of Islam, it is man’s obligation to maintain his family. It is his duty to provide for food, dressing, accommodation and other necessary needs to his family, keeping in view his financial position. He should allow his wife to keep her own money and her belongings with her. If she wants to run a business, she should be permitted for that within certain limits. He should treat her well and must not behave wrongfully. He should fear Allah concerning his attitude to her and behave justly. He should also give her the right of inheritance. Allah SWT says:

“therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient and guard in (the husband’s absence) what Allah would them have guard”.

A wife is dutiful to guard the belongings of her husband in his absence. She should not disclose her husband’s secrets to others. She is also obliged to guard his honour and to protect his off-springs.

The family life of the Prophet SAWS is a fountainhead of light for us. He said:

*The best of you is he who is well behaving with his family and I am the most well-behaved among you with my family.*

The Prophet SAWS said, *a good wife has three qualities: (1) when her husband looks at her he feels glad (2) when he orders her, she obeys and (3) when he is absent she guards her chastity and his belongings.*

**Duties and Rights of Children:** Islam prescribes children's rights that devolve on their parents. Allah SWT says:

“O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from Fire”.

Parents' duty is to upbringing, educate and train their children with love and affection. They should arrange their marriage and should maintain equality and justice among them. The children who are righteous they are like a continuing charity for their parents after their death.

It is children's obligation to obey their parents provided it is not in conflict with the obedience of Allah. They should behave toward them with love, affection and tenderness. Their opinion should be respected. Particularly, when the parents reach the age of oldness –, their emotions and feelings must be cared for. They must specify a portion of time from their daily routine for their parents. They should serve them to the best of their ability. And should always seek forgiveness from Allah SWT after their demise, as Allah SWT dictates, “Say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them but

address them in terms of honour. And out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility and say: My Lord! Bestow on them your mercy as they cherished me in childhood”.

### EXERCISE

1. What is the meaning of family life?
2. Write a note on the significance of family system.
3. What are the duties and rights of spouses?
4. What do you know about the duties and rights of children?

## Hijrah and Jihad (Migration and Fighting in the way of Allah)

**Migration:** In Islamic terminology, *hijrah* means moving from one place to another for serving the cause of Islam. That is, if Muslims are suppressed, wronged and they are not allowed to practice Islam or they have to face sufferings in this way in a particular place, they should move to another land. But if they have no resources to migrate, or they cannot move from that place due to any restriction, then it may be hoped that Allah SWT will forgive them. Allah SWT said,

“When angels take the souls of those who die in sin against their souls. They say: “in what (plight) were you?” They reply “weak and oppressed were we in the earth”. They say: “Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to move yourselves away (from evil)? Such men will find their abode in Hell – what an evil refuge! Except those who are (really) weak and oppressed – men, women and children who have no means in their power, nor can they find a way (to escape). For these, there is hope that Allah will forgive. For Allah does blot out (sins) and forgives again and again. He who forsakes his home in the cause of Allah, finds in the earth many a refuge and abundance. Should he die as a refugee to Allah and His Messenger, his reward becomes due and sure with Allah. And Allah is oft-forgiving and most Merciful”.

It is assured through these verses of the Quran that *hijrah* brings fruitful results for a Muslim in this world and in the next. Allah SWT promised in these words:

“To those who leave their homes in the cause of Allah, after suffering oppression, We will assuredly give a goodly home in this world. But truly the reward of the hereafter will be greater, if they only realized (this)!”

In the same way, Allah SWT showers His mercy upon those who migrate:

“But verily your Lord – to those who leave their homes after trials and persecutions. And who thereafter strive and fight for the faith and patiently persevere – indeed your Lord, after all this is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful”.

Allah SWT promised His forgiveness, blissful life and the highest reward for those who migrate. He assures in the Quran His eternal pleasure for them:

“And their Lord has accepted of them and answered them” ‘never will I let to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female. You are members, one of another. Those who have left their homes and were driven out there from and suffered harm in My cause and fought and were slain. Verily, I will blot out from them their iniquities and admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing beneath – a reward from Allah and from Allah is the best of rewards”.

Hijrah is an act of great sublimity provided that it is performed in order to practice Islam, spread its message and seek pleasure and approval of Allah.

**Jihad:** The word ‘jihad’ literally means to work hard, to strive and struggle. In the Islamic terminology, it is to struggle for the establishment of Truth, to make every effort for this noble and sublime goal and to sacrifice one’s own life, family and nation, to spend all mental and physical powers for the cause of the Truth. And to frustrate efforts of all those who promote falsehood, to make their devil plans and devices ineffective and

defend their attacks strongly even if one has to fight them face to face in the battlefield. This is the reason why Islam places ‘jihad’ at the highest level of devotion.

Jihad is a struggle which is very disciplined and organized. Its rules and regulations are settled. If any individual or group of people attacks another group and starts fighting with its own accord and without any leader it is never called ‘jihad’.

“Jihad is to be declared by Islamic State. The people of knowledge and understanding are to announce its feasibility and necessity after considering all the circumstances and surveying the whole situation. The sole purpose of ‘jihad’ is to help and support those Muslims who are oppressed, to counter all those trials and obstacles that hinder propagation of Islam and to achieve Allah’s approval and His acknowledgement.

The concept of ‘jihad’ is very vast. In the opinion of Islamic scholars, the highest category of ‘jihad’ is to fight against one’s own self. They call it ‘Jihad-e-Akbar’, the greatest Jihad. Some verses of the Quran and a few traditions of the Prophet SAWS also support the same view. For example, Allah SWT said:

“And those who strive in Our (cause) – We will certainly guide them to Our Paths”. For verily Allah is with those who do right”.

There is another category of ‘jihad’ and that is ‘Jihad bil ‘Ilm’, i.e. to struggle with the weapon of knowledge. Ignorance is the root cause of all wrong and mischief in the world and it is very essential to fight against it. If a person is gifted with knowledge, awareness and intellect, he is obliged to share it with others. The Quran clearly elaborates:

“Invite (all) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching. And argue with them in ways that are best”.

Spreading the message of Allah is another kind of ‘jihad’. Its utility is very important and far reaching. It is named ‘Jihad-e-Kabeer’ in Quran.

‘Jihad bil Mal’ is also one of the categories of jihad. Allah SWT has bestowed upon man so much wealth and riches. Its main objective is to spend it, in accordance with the will of Allah. It is the best use and the most proper way to invest money for the sake of upholding the Truth. This fact has been explained in the Quran with these words:

“Those who believed, migrated and struggled for the cause of Allah with their wealth and their own selves, they are on the highest station in the proximity of Allah SWT. On the other hand, those who prefer to hoard their wealth and are never inclined to spend it for others, are forewarned a painful torment”.

“And as for those who hoard gold and silver and do not tend to spend it for the noble cause of Allah, warn them with a grievous penalty”.

A further kind of jihad is fighting in the battlefield against the enemy of Allah, it is commonly known as ‘jihad’ and the Quran calls it *qital*. In this kind of jihad, a servant of Allah resolves to fight against the enemy of his Master till the end of his life, and he desires wholeheartedly to drop the last blood of his body, proving his utmost love, true faith and sincere friendship with Allah SWT. Allah SWT has ordered Muslims to

maintain military power and strength. He also forbade us to call those ‘dead’ who laid their lives in upholding the Truth. Allah SWT has informed us in the Quran that they are being sustained in the nearness of Allah and are enjoying a life full of joy. Allah SWT , out of His mercy, gave them a word of promise for the highest reward and the most blissful life.

Another category of ‘jihad’ is to utilize all physical, spiritual and intellectual abilities in the fulfillment of every obligation and in the performance of every good deed. Once a group of women appeared to the Prophet SAWS and sought his permission to go to battlefield. The Prophet SAWS answered them: *your jihad is performing pilgrimage*.

A companion came to Prophet SAWS and expressed his desire to participate in jihad. The Prophet SAWS asked him whether his parents were alive. He replied in the affirmative. The Prophet SAWS advised him to serve his parents and he should consider it a ‘jihad’ on his part. So also, on one occasion, Prophet SAWS said, “the biggest jihad is to pronounce a word of truth and justice to a ruler who is tyrant”. The Prophet SAWS also on another occasion, exclaimed that jihad was going to continue till the hereafter.

### EXERCISE

1. Write an essay about Hijrah?
2. What is the meaning of Jihad?
3. Describe the categories of Jihad with full details