

**The Shiite Islamic School of Thought**

# Islam

Basic Understanding

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# Introduction

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. It is unfortunate that the Western World is not exposed yet to the rich ideology of Shiite Islamic school of thought. In the past thirty years many books were published in English language about Islam, but very few discuss the wisdom and essence of this school of thought.

This book covers the principles of Islam. It presents the descriptions and the acts of One God Who is our Creator all, the Prophets who He sent to guide us toward faith and better understanding of our existence in this life, the Infallible Imams who are preservers of Islam and the exemplar human beings of all time, and God's final Justice on the Day of Judgment.

The publication of this book would have been impossible without the support of my students who assisted to complete this work. A special thank would go also to all readers, and fellow writers who spark the spirit of thinking and writing in me.

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1st June 2008

**Note:** It is required in Islam, out of respect, to say: Almighty God, every time one mention the name of God. It is required too to say: peace be upon him, every time one mention the name of Prophets or Infallible Imams. The style of this book though is to say it one time, to make it easier for the readers who are unfamiliar with the Islamic texts.



## Chapter One

# The One God



## 1.1 Almighty God

In 1989 I was invited to a gathering, to speak about my book *Morality in Quran*. The speech was to be directed at the young adults of that community. My topic was morality in Islam. A group discussion followed and with each question asked, we found the dialogue returning to the subject of God. I realized then that because God is the focal point in any religion, I should begin with this topic even if my speech is about something else! Who is God in Islam?<sup>1</sup> God the Almighty is the Creator of all that exists. He existed before all life came to be and will exist after all life ceases. There is no one equal to God; He is One. He does not have a partner. He begets not, nor is He begotten.<sup>2</sup>

God is the most Knowledgeable; the Wisest, the Immortal; the Powerful, and the Needless. He is the All-hearing and the All-seeing. God is above the human need to interact with others. God does not exist in the form of a body or image. He is not restricted by time or space. Though we do not see Him in a physical form we do see His manifestation by which we are able to grasp some of the aspects of God; such aspects are His descriptions and His power. As a human being, I can be physically present in one place at a time, but God can be present in the church, in the synagogue, and in the mosque at the same time. Simply put, He can be everywhere simultaneously. Furthermore, His observation of human kind has no limitation. But how can we comprehend God Who is beyond our human comprehension?

## 1.2 The Descriptions of God

The Scriptures,<sup>3</sup> sent by God to humanity, are the sources that describe Him. These sources describe God's perfection in accordance to our capabilities of understanding Him. God describes Himself as the ultimate Beauty and the unquestionable Perfection. His absolute knowledge and absolute power are reflected in His creation. Creation is a manifestation of His power; He creates and manages the lives of His creatures by giving them sustenance according to their needs. He also imparted to us characteristics of His sovereignty and merciful qualities to His creation.

He presents His statute saying "I am the One, I am the Absolute. I beget not, nor was I begotten; there is none like Me". Moreover, He presents His attributes saying "I am your Lord, the Merciful, the Mighty, the Forgiving, the Sustainer and the Creator".

God is transcendent and omniscient. He is Love; He is Mercy. To Him belong the most beautiful Names. The Quran puts forth these names: "He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. God is He, than Whom there is no other god; The Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace (and Perfection), the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver of Safety, the Exalted in Might, the Irresistible, the Supreme. Glory to God! (High is He) above the partners they attribute to Him. He is God, the Creator, the Evolver, the Bestower of Forms (or Colours). To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names: Whatever is in the heavens and on earth, doth

declare His Praises and Glory: And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.”<sup>4</sup>

### 1.3 Divine Justice

God’s judgment in the hereafter is just and fair. He rewards righteous people for their good deeds and chastises the evildoers for their bad deeds. He neither asks us to do more than we can bare nor does He reward us with more than we deserve.

We are like vessels but, rather than objects, the weight we carry is that of thoughts, emotions, and conscience. Moreover, we also carry moral obligations. Think of the capacity a vessel can carry or hold. It will not hold more than it can tolerate. This analogy is similar to how God asks us to carry the implications of our deeds, and how He asks us to perform certain duties that fit our abilities.

Parallel to this line of justice is God’s perfect wisdom. His wisdom embeds order in the universe. He is always just and promises us that every individual will receive fair judgment. He compensates the oppressed and punishes the oppressor.

At times, people wonder how God is able to allocate fairness in this life and justice in the hereafter. God is capable of this because He has:

1. ***Absolute Knowledge*** of what people have done in the past and what they intend to do in the future. He neither forgets nor is He ignorant of the acts of His creation. This

sets the stage for perfect judgment.

2. **Absolute Will:** His justice and Divine plan can not be diverted by anyone. No one is more determined than He and no one can break His Will. This sets the implementation of justice.
3. **Absolute Power:** His fair judgment of people is not affected by human qualities such as weakness, favoritism, and bias. No one can persuade Him to change His plans or His judgment.
4. **Absolute Wisdom:** Every act is designed with a purpose. His universal design is comprehensive with specific goals in applying justice. There is no general rule that applies to everyone. Every case is judged individually since every person has different potential and ability (physically and intellectually). This is the ultimate wisdom of God.
5. **Absolute Truth:** His word is truth. Nothing was created falsely or mistakenly. For this reason we believe His promise, that we will be rewarded or chastised for our deeds, is true and imminent.

## 1.4 What does God expect from us?

As a gift one year, I bought my children a pair of birds. After sometime, I observed their morning routine to be peculiar. They first groomed their feathers then fanned their tails upon which they rubbed their heads. They then nibbled their feet. What

significance was this morning ritual? Could it be an act of worship? Could they be glorifying their Creator in their own way? According to Islam every creature praises God in its own unique manner.

God created human beings for the purpose of glorifying Him. Every living entity is directed to glorify God in its assigned way. Accordingly all things were created on earth to sustain us and awaken us to reflect on God and His signs.

Worship covers a broad area in religion. A young lady once asked me “What is defined as an act of ‘worship?’” In the law of Islam (*Sharia*) any act that pleases God is considered a form of worship. Besides obligatory acts such as praying to God (*Salat*), refraining from food and drink for a prescribed number of days from dawn to dusk (*fasting*), or performing the Pilgrimage (*Hajj*), there are other acts of worship like providing aid to the disadvantaged (*almsgiving*), acquiring knowledge, nurturing children, or striving in life to achieve excellence (*Jihad*.) These are forms of worship too.

As previously mentioned, God never asks us to do more than we are capable of. He knows our ability and He states our obligations accordingly. For example, He does not order an ill person to fast if refraining from food will prolong his illness. Likewise God does not order a mentally disabled person to carry out religious obligations. Obligatory acts such as praying and fasting are required only from individuals with a healthy mental condition. The purpose of Divine religion is to bring meaning to our lives. God granted us salvation through Divine books and His

messengers. Islam explains why we exist and where we are heading. We exist because we are part of God's design. The design is to glorify Him and live our life in harmony with other creatures. After we die, we will pass to another life that has eternal reward or retribution.

As a message, Islam is based on four elements: morality, faith, social justice, and law and order. When truly implemented, these elements allow us to live in happiness and prosperity. Thus this religion makes our life harmonious with God and society.

Through my research about theology, I found that the essence of Islam is centered on God who guides us toward righteousness. His laws are designed to discourage us from evil and shield us from harm. When God grants us permission for a practical way of life, we believe it is for our own benefit. Examples include having legitimate relationships (e.g. marriage), legitimate work (e.g. jobs that don't conflict with moral values), and ethical concepts like honesty. On the other hand when God prohibits us from immoral or harmful deeds, it is because they are not in our favor. Examples include having illegitimate relationships (e.g. adultery), illegitimate work (e.g. theft), and dishonesty.

His mercy upon us makes our lives tranquil, less distressing, and more fruitful. Furthermore, His mercy extends to everyone including those people who disobey Him. Even wrongdoers receive care and sustenance from Him in this life though they will suffer the consequences in the hereafter. In brief, Understanding religion, life, creation, and the Creator are essential for



worshipping God. He wants humanity to follow Divine religion so they can be granted happiness and prosperity in this life and a great reward in the hereafter.

## **1.5 Divine Will & Predestination**

A major question that has been raised several times is: Are we predestined or are we in full control of our destiny?

Predestination is the act whereby God is believed to have foreordained all things. Islamic texts teach that people are not predestinated. The Quran states that the Lord revealed the truth and people can choose to believe or to disbelieve<sup>5</sup>.

It is important to understand that the human will is the center core of our actions and intentions. The Almighty guides us to the right path, via religion and Messengers, and gave us the choice to act. If we presume that predestination is definite, the system of reward and retribution will be nullified and the role of the Messengers will have had no purpose.

Although God has absolute reason for every event and incident in life, still there is a natural cause-and-effect relationship between elements around us. To clarify this idea, let me present the following example: a friend of mine was involved in a car accident. He had been driving over the speed limit which we know can result in serious personal injury or death. However, it was his decision to speed. The Almighty did not inflict injury upon him rather he inflicted it upon himself. Moreover, God is aware of the decisions we make and the consequences that follow.

He gives us the freedom to choose our actions despite His knowledge of our intentions. Islam teaches us: if we choose to break the rules, we will be responsible for our choices in the hereafter. If we choose to obey the rules, we will be rewarded in the hereafter.

God does not predestine our fate. He does not permit us to do certain deeds and in return punish us for them. If this was the case there would be no justice in creation. Instead He gives us choices. For every illegal act there is a legal alternative. For example marriage is a legal alternative in place of fornication. In simple terms, for every evil act there is a virtuous (*legal*) alternative that is approved by the Almighty. Hence we are indeed accountable for the decisions we make.

On the subject of destiny, one of the great leaders of Islam, *Imam Sadiq* said: "It is neither predestination, nor absolute freedom. It is something in between"<sup>6</sup>.

## 1.6 Divinity in the Quran

One might question: Do we need another book from God while we already have the Old and New Testament? When comparing the teachings of these three Divine books: the Torah, the Bible, and the Quran, we see that each book has its own specific message. The Torah is a book of laws directed at a particular nation *Bani Israel*. The Bible was directed to the same nation but sent to lift some of the restrictions of the Torah. In

addition, the Bible stresses the importance of love and mercy<sup>7</sup>. The Quran was sent to humankind at a time when there were discrepancies between the people of the Book i.e. Christians and Jews. It addresses those issues while at the same time emphasizes the nature of Divinity, the nature of moral obligations, and the nature of civil society.

We needed a comprehensive book that explains the principles of life and death, heaven and reward, hell and retribution, the nature of good and evil, love and mercy, and the Creator and His descriptions. But most important we needed a Divine book that is protected from human alteration or change. Safeguarding the book is safeguarding the concept of the unity of God. The book of Islam is the book that has these characteristics.

The Quran was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) over a period of 23 years. It is the last word of God and is the protected source of knowledge about His Divinity. It says about God: "God! There is no god but He, - the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permitteth? He knoweth what (appeareth to His creatures as) before or after or behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He willeth. His Throne<sup>8</sup> doth extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feeleth no fatigue in guarding and preserving them for He is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory)."<sup>9</sup>

This verse explains that God has Absolute command over His

infinite creation. He is the ultimate cause of everything. Nothing can be done without His knowledge.

### God's description in the Quran:

If you want to understand Divinity in Islam, I recommend obtaining a well translated Quran. The following is a brief summary of the description of God:

1. **Absolute Creator:** God is the creator of all things<sup>10</sup>; He is the maker of Heaven and Earth<sup>11</sup>; He is Omniscient<sup>12</sup>. "All things" in the world of existence (*Alamul wujood*) pertain to *subjects* and *events*. Subjects are physical matters: prime examples are the earth, stars, galaxy, mountains, oceans, thunder, rain, plants, animals, and human beings. Events are actions that have occurred in the past or will occur in the future: physical changes to the universe, life and death, and acts committed by people are such examples. As the Quran stated, God created all things in perfect beauty; He directed them by His providence<sup>13</sup>. Divine beauty is always complemented by perfection. Beauty and perfection are the main characteristics of His creation.
2. **The Perfect Manager:** With the creation of the universe, God established universal order. The universe He created is perfect. Its every aspect is connected to another with absolute precision. The laws of causation, gravity on earth, the rotation of earth around its axis and around the sun are all part of this order. God also distributes sustenance to His

creatures through this order. He created plants as food for animals and people; He created clouds to supply the earth with rain; He created wind to help plants pollinate; He created people to serve each other. By these Divine universal laws, God manages the universe.

3. ***The Absolute Owner:*** Islam declares everything in existence as the property of God; the sovereignty of the Heavens and the Earth belongs to Him<sup>14</sup>. Not only does He own all living matter but He also owns the movements of this matter. For example He owns the strife of people, the flight of birds, and the movement of the sea. His dominion is unlimited. Moreover as Owner of all that exists, God granted every creature the means to live and thrive.
4. ***The Absolute Just:*** God created human beings as social creatures. In order that we live in harmony He implemented laws through this religion. These laws include rights and obligations and are designed to organize human life with fairness. Islamic social laws enjoin on us to observe the rights of others and to fulfill our obligations toward parents, grandparents, spouses, children, siblings, relatives, neighbors, and friends. We believe that the Almighty is absolute in His justice and treats everyone with fairness.
5. ***The Absolute Living:*** With the exception of God every living and non-living thing will perish. He is the Eternal. However every soul, human or non-human is mortal, and will taste death<sup>15</sup>. This sharp difference between mortality

and immortality reflects the difference between the Creator and the created.

6. **The Omniscient:** God has absolute knowledge of all that exists. This knowledge is divided into two parts: the knowledge of pre-existence and the knowledge of pro-existence. God knows the needs of creatures before they are created and knows their fate after they have been created. He is the First and He is the Last; He is the Knower of all things<sup>16</sup>.
7. **The Needless:** God is free from want. While we need food, water, and companionship for survival, God is free from these necessities. He is also needless of achievement, love, care, and sympathy, to name a few. Likewise, He is not in need of glorification, though His greatness demands our praise of Him.

## 1.7 God and Human Beings

In my personal life, from the time I wake early in the morning until I rest in the night I feel the presence of God. Before a meal I thank Him for His sustenance; when I walk in the park I praise Him for my strength and well being; when I am surrounded by nature I appreciate the power of senses He bestowed on me. He is closer to me than my mother or my father. I feel His support when I carry out good deeds, and sense His guidance in the face of evil. I feel the presence of God in every part of my soul and body. I conclude that there is always potential to have a strong

relationship between God and human beings. There are two aspects of this relationship:

### **The relationship between God and human:**

God treats us with mercy and kindness as He is:

1. **The Forgiving:** He forgives people for their sins. If I commit a sin and then repent to my Lord, He will forgive me. He has promised to forgive all sinners after repentance.
2. **The Sustainer:** God facilitates the means of livelihood. He provides us with resources so that we may grow food, clothe ourselves, and build shelter. This is called sustenance or provision.
3. **The Merciful:** God cares about the spiritual and the psychological well-being of His creatures. He offers His mercy and love at all times.
4. **The Generous:** He gives generously. He in fact gives more than what we actually need.

### **The relationship between human and God:**

I, as one of God's creature, have certain obligations towards Him:

1. I should search until I reach a conclusion that without doubt God exists. If this certainty is reached, I should submit to His authority.
2. I should never lose hope in God as He is Forgiving and

Merciful.

3. I should fear Him and the consequences of sinning.
4. I should be thankful to Him for all the generosity He has granted me.

Thus, I am always in a state of hope, fear, thanks, and gratitude.

## 1.8 Acts of God

How can we explain acts of God in this world? If God created the world with order, why do we see disasters and tragedies? So that we may be able to understand God's acts, we need to realize His wisdom and purpose. Acts of God can be understood if we believe that:

1. God is Wise and everything in the universe is managed by His Wisdom.
2. His actions are just, and since He is the Most Wise His edicts are fair.
3. Every act of God has a purpose just as everything God creates has a purpose. Sometimes we do not understand this purpose as in the case of a natural disaster, albeit we believe that the Divine purpose is wise.
4. God guides humanity towards virtue. To 'guide' is to show the path that leads to satisfaction and happiness. This is shown through this religion.
5. Pain itself has a purpose. We experience suffering and pain as an indication of our limitations as humans. This affirms



our inferiority to God.

There are three kinds of pain:

**The first** is that which we inflict upon ourselves, be it physical or emotional. An example of this is suicide, an act condemned in Islam. This pain is a matter of choice—God did not cause it.

**The second** is when one person inflicts pain on another. An example of this is a physical attack by a perpetrator. This pain should be compensated with reparation.

**The third** is pain inflicted upon us out of our control. An illness or a natural disaster is examples of this. God gives restitution to people for this pain in the hereafter<sup>17</sup>.

## Conclusion:

We can not see our Creator by the naked eye, but we can see His manifestation. We can discuss His description, but we can not discuss His essence. Although He is the All-hearing and the All-seeing, He does not exist in the form of a body or an image. Although He is the Immortal, the Powerful, and the Needless, He is not restricted by time or space. God is Just and His Justice is linked to His wisdom.

God created us for the purpose of glorifying Him. We have the freedom to choose to worship Him. Our freedom is neither absolute, nor predestined.

God is the absolute Creator, the perfect Manager, the absolute Owner, the absolute Just, the absolute Living, and the

Omniscient. He is also the Forgiving, the Sustainer, the Merciful, and the Generous.

Although the world is embedded with wisdom and purpose, we still observe natural disasters that cause suffering. Practically God promised us restitution after this life. Theoretically this suffering shows our limitations as humans.

## Texts from the Quran

These are short texts selected from the Quran, and are related to the ideas in this chapter:

1. *Description of God:* (Say: He is God, the One and Only; God, the Eternal, the Absolute. He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him)<sup>18</sup>. (God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His light is as if there were a Niche and within it a Lamp: the Lamp enclosed in Glass; the glass as it was a brilliant star: lit from a blessed Tree, an Olive, neither of the East nor of the West, Whose Oil is well-nigh luminous, though Fire scarce touched it: Light upon Light!)<sup>19</sup>.
2. *Between predestination and freedom:* (Say; it is the truth from thy Lord all. Then whosoever will. Let him believe, and whosoever will, let him disbelieve)<sup>20</sup>.
3. *The Absolute Creator:* (God is the Creator of all things and He is the Guardian and Disposer of all affairs)<sup>21</sup>, (To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth...)<sup>22</sup>, (He

created all things, and He hath full knowledge of all things)<sup>23</sup>.

4. *The Perfect Beauty*: (Glorify the name of thy Guardian-Lord Most High, Who hath created, and further, given order and proportion; Who hath ordained laws. And granted guidance)<sup>24</sup>, (...Our Lord is He Who gave to each (created) thing its form and nature, and further gave (it) guidance)<sup>25</sup>, (He Who has made everything which He has created excellently)<sup>26</sup>.
5. *The Absolute Owner*: (He to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth: no son has He begotten, nor has He a partner in His dominion: It is He Who created all things, and ordered them in due proportions.)<sup>27</sup>
6. *The Absolute Just*: (Whoever works righteousness benefits his own soul; Whoever works evil, it is against his own soul: Nor is thy Lord ever unjust (in the least) to His servants)<sup>28</sup>, (...say: Nay, God never commands what is shameful...)<sup>29</sup>, (Verily God will not deal unjustly with humans in aught: it is humans that wrong their own souls)<sup>30</sup>.
7. *The Absolute Living*: (Every soul shall have a taste of death: And only on the Day of Judgment shall you be paid your full recompense)<sup>31</sup>, (And call not, besides God, on another god. There is no god but Him. Everything (that exists) will perish except for Him. To Him belongs the command, and to Him will ye (all) be brought back.)<sup>32</sup>

8. *The Omniscient:* (Know they not that God doth know their secrets (thoughts) and their secret counsels, and that God knoweth well all things unseen?)<sup>33</sup>, (He is the First and the Last, the Evident and the Immanent: And He has full knowledge of all things)<sup>34</sup>, (Whether ye reveal anything or conceal it, verily God has full knowledge of all things.)<sup>35</sup>
9. *The Needless:* (To Him belong all that is in the heavens and on earth: For verily God, -He is free of all wants, worthy of all praise)<sup>36</sup>, (Thy Lord is Self-sufficient, full of Mercy...)<sup>37</sup>, (They say: "God hath begotten a son!" Glory be to Him! He is Self-sufficient! His are all things in the heavens and on earth...)<sup>38</sup>.
10. *The sustainer:* (How many are the creatures that carry not their own sustenance? It is God who feeds (both) them and you; For He hears and knows (all things).)<sup>39</sup>

## Glossary:

**God's Knowledge:** The absolute acquaintance of the past, the present, and the future of existence.

**The One (*ahad*):** The concept that God is One having no equal and no partners.

**Predestination:** The act whereby God is believed to have foreordained every thing. In Islam, it is neither predestination nor absolute freedom; it is rather something in between.

**Shari'a:** The law of Islam related to both individuals and society.

There are five types of legislations in Islam: obligatory *wajib*, recommended *mustahab*, forbidden *haram*, unadvisable *makruh*, and permissible *mubah*.

## Practical Notes:

1. The procedure by which God blesses any act is called the *Basmalla*. In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate (*Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim*) is a phrase that Muslims learn from childhood. Through this phrase we remember God at the beginning of each meal, before each prayer, and indeed before each act in our daily life.
2. The formula by which God is praised is the *Hamd*. Praise be to God (*al-Hamduli'llah*) is a phrase used to pay homage to God. It is an expression of gratification and is said at the end of each act and after each meal.
3. There are other phrases, which are said on different occasions, such as: glory to God (*Subhan'allah*) when one sees something of beauty; forgiveness from God (*Istaghfiru'llah*) when one makes a mistake; or to seek refuge in God (*A'authubillah*) when one is afraid.
4. Generally, it is appreciated to mention the ninety nine names of God during times of leisure.

## Notes:

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<sup>1</sup> There is a growing misconception between the terms 'God' and '*Allah*'. *Allah* is the Arabic name of God as *Dios* is the name of God in Spanish. *Allah* is the only word in Arabic language that can not be plural. i.e. a perfect word for One God Who have no resemblance.

<sup>2</sup> The Quran 112:3.

<sup>3</sup> They are the Scriptures of Noah and Abraham; also the Torah, the Bible, and the Quran.

<sup>4</sup> The Quran 59:22-24.

<sup>5</sup> The Quran 18:29

<sup>6</sup> Al-kafi, vol 1. p 160.

<sup>7</sup> We believe the modern 'Old and New Testament' are not the original.

<sup>8</sup> Throne: in Arabic called *Kursi*. The *Kursi* allegorically signifies the Divine Providence, which sustains and governs the creation: the heavens, the earth, people, angles and other creatures not comprehensible to humankind.

<sup>9</sup> The Quran 2:255.

<sup>10</sup> The Quran 39:62.

<sup>11</sup> The Quran 6:102.

<sup>12</sup> The Quran 6:103.

<sup>13</sup> The Quran 20:50.

<sup>14</sup> The Quran 25:2.

<sup>15</sup> The Quran 3:185.

<sup>16</sup> The Quran 33:54.

<sup>17</sup> Kashful Murad. Alama Al-Hilli, p 258.

<sup>18</sup> The Quran 112:1-4.

<sup>19</sup> The Quran 24:35.

<sup>20</sup> The Quran 18: 29

<sup>21</sup> The Quran 39: 62.

<sup>22</sup> The Quran 6: 102.

<sup>23</sup> The Quran 6: 102.

<sup>24</sup> The Quran 87:1-3.

<sup>25</sup> The Quran 20:50.

<sup>26</sup> The Quran 32:7.

<sup>27</sup> The Quran 25:2.

<sup>28</sup> The Quran 41:46.

<sup>29</sup> The Quran 7:28.

<sup>30</sup> The Quran 10:44.

<sup>31</sup> The Quran 3:185.

<sup>32</sup> The Quran 28:88.

<sup>33</sup> The Quran 9:78.

<sup>34</sup> The Quran 57:3.

<sup>35</sup> The Quran 33:54.

<sup>36</sup> The Quran 22:64.

<sup>37</sup> The Quran 6:133.

<sup>38</sup> The Quran 10:68.

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 29:60.

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Chapter Two

The prophets of  
God

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We finalized our discussion about God in chapter one, concluding that God is One and there is no one equal to Him. This chapter will discuss how we connect with Him through Prophets.

## 2.1 Prophet-hood

It is essential that we know our Creator, know about God's creation and why things came to be, and be able to differentiate between right and wrong, or good and evil in this life. It takes a unique individual to inform us about these fundamental teachings. These unique individuals are prophets.

Prophets are highly pious people selected and sent by God to guide people. Prophets are not chosen by people – they are chosen by God<sup>39</sup>. They have a unique duty that can be done by no one else, specifically to guide humanity. Because this responsibility is monumental, it requires individuals of exceptional character to carry it out. They have to be ones who will never disobey God, never err in the teachings of religion, never forget what was revealed by God, and possess full knowledge of every aspect of religion (*asmah*). Prophets are also self-sacrificing, brave and generous, and worship God in every possible opportunity they have. Furthermore they never receive wages for

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their work other than a promise of reward in the hereafter. This is prophet-hood.

Since the meaning of life and the purpose of existence is obscure, Prophets were sent to clear its vagueness. Prophet-hood is an act of mercy and salvation. This concept is consistent with God's Justice and Wisdom.

There are two categories in prophet-hood: Prophets and Messengers. Both share the same responsibility for guiding humanity. Messengers differ from Prophets in that they have a universal message, a Divine Scripture<sup>39</sup>, while Prophets were appointed by God to carry out local missions to guide their nations or tribes. (Refer to Table 1).

<b>A prophet</b>	<b>A messenger</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Responsibility to guide people.</li> <li>2. Had a local mission, not necessarily with a Divine scripture.</li> <li>3. Held one title namely: Prophet.</li> <li>4. Examples are: Job, David, Solomon, and Zachariah.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Responsibility to guide people.</li> <li>2. Had a universal message, with a Divine scripture.</li> <li>3. Held two titles namely: Prophet and Messenger.</li> <li>4. Examples are: Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad.</li> </ol>

**Table 1:** *The differences between a prophet and a messenger*

Islam teaches us that all Messengers are honest and truthful. We believe their Scriptures are true because they all have a common message (i.e. calling for the belief in one God, the Creator). Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are the three monotheistic religions in the world. Islam embraces the original texts of the Torah and the Bible, but affirms distortion of these scriptures from their original message. In Judaism for example Ezra (*Uzayr*) was claimed, by a group of Jews, to be the son of God. What is more, the New Testament has gone a step further. The notion of One God has been lost in the concept of the Trinity.

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According to Islam, God neither had a son, or a spirit, and nor is He a father. There is only One God and Ezra and Jesus were mortal Prophets sent by Him. Muhammad was a mortal Prophet too.

## 2.2 Characteristics of a Prophet-hood

A Prophet or a Messenger of God has the following characteristics:

**Revelation:** There must be a connection between a prophet and God. This connection may be a revelation, a vision, or by inspiration. Arch-angel Gabriel was the bearer of the revelation to Prophet Mohammad.

Angels are dignified creatures. They are a medium between God and the materialistic world. They convey messages from Him to prophets. They are highly disciplined. The sole purpose of their creation is to worship their Creator. They never disobey God. They do exactly as they are commanded<sup>39</sup>.

**Infallibility:** Infallibility is a prerequisite for prophet-hood. An infallible person is one who does not make mistakes, is not ignorant, does not forget religious concepts, and does not disobey God:

- **Prophets do not make mistakes** regarding the principles and rules of the religion they represent. Otherwise the credibility of that message comes under doubt.

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- **Prophets are not ignorant** of the principles and rules of religion. They comprehend all aspects of religion. Hypothetically an ignorant prophet will lead to the destruction of the Divine message.
  - **Prophets do not forget** the principles and rules of religion. Their teachings are never inconsistent or contradictory. The revelation is instilled in their minds and can never be disregarded.
  - **Prophets do not disobey God.** They never commit sin<sup>39</sup>. If prophets committed sin, followers will have the right to justify their disobedience to God.

***The Perfect Human Character:*** At all times, a prophet has a healthy mind, a vision for humanity, strong determination, and is decisive. He also has a healthy body, is courageous and patient, skilled in social management, trustworthy and truthful. All prophets descend from a pure line of heritage starting with Adam, the first, and ending with Mohammad, the last prophet on earth.

***Miracles:*** A miracle is an extraordinary phenomenon or an act which transcends the conceivable or the rational. Miracles are essential for anyone who claims an extraordinary relationship with God. They are signs that identify prophet-hood. Different miracles were performed by different Prophets.

In order for miracles to have an impact, they had to relate to contemporary norms of the relevant eras. For example, during the time of Moses, many people engaged in magic. Moses' miracle of

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transforming his cane into a living creature, a snake, was beyond the ability of magicians. Taken by surprise, they gave up their trickery and declared their belief in his Divine message.

The era of Jesus was known for the spread of disease such as leprosy; curing the ill and raising the dead through religious blessings were beyond the physicians' abilities. Such miracles gained Jesus a following in his message.

Prophet Mohammad likewise produced a miracle— the Quran. During his time, literature and poetry were the essence of pre-Islamic Arab culture. However he was illiterate. The Quran was revealed as an eternal-living miracle. In the textual sense it is inconceivably rich. Many have tried to create verses with deep meaning similar to those of the Quran. All such attempts have failed. Fourteen hundred years have passed since the revelation of the Quran, and to this day no one has been able to successfully duplicate its style, meaning, and structure. This is what makes this miracle so unique.

## **2.3 The Purpose of sending Prophets**

The following question may come to mind: since we have philosophers and thinkers, why did God send prophets to us? Prophets have a higher understanding of God and His creation than do philosophers and thinkers. Prophets differ from philosophers and thinkers in that their knowledge has been inspired by God. Their knowledge is neither empirical nor

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hypothetical. There are a number of reasons why God sends prophets:

- To guide humanity to believe in the existence of God. If there were more than one god, each one would send his own prophet and each prophet would compete for his authority. Since all prophets throughout history reveal that there is only one God, we conclude that their messages come from the same source.
- Human knowledge is bound to our limited sphere, therefore God sent prophets to inform us about our relationship with Him. It is vital that we understand the nature of the unseen world like Judgment Day, angels, Heaven and Hell. It is equally vital that we understand virtues and morality and the system of reward and retribution. Prophets teach us how to distinguish right from wrong and how to implement law and order in society. On the other hand, philosophers and thinkers are limited and can not fully comprehend the complete knowledge of the seen and the unseen worlds.
- Five major Messengers<sup>39</sup> were sent with Divine scriptures. Books of Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammad are Divine scriptures. The original texts of these scriptures have one theme in common—submission to the Magnificent Creator.
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## 2.4 Why are Prophets essential?

Prophets taught us social balance and the meaning of mercy and compassion for our fellow beings. In what condition would the world be if there were no prophets, no Divine books, and no religion? The powerful will suppress the weak; the poor will neither seek nor receive help; greed and corruption would dominate; and morality will be in decline.

In order to prevent this, and make life exist coherently, we need prophets and religion to bring balance to our lives. Prophets teach us to help the poor; to have ethical relationships; to be kind to our parents, relatives, and neighbors; to pray to God who created us; and to be satisfied with having little. The physical presence of the prophet is important to allow humankind to see the practicality of religion in its perfect form.

There is also a desire to understand the unseen world. Our life is filled with and based on unseen concepts. Angels, Heaven and Hell, life after death, and the spirit are elements of the unseen world. Prophets are instrumental in informing us about these worlds. Therefore, the prophet's role in teaching us about the unseen world is equally important to teaching us about our present world.

God created us with the ability to think and make choices. Since there is constant conflict between good and evil, we need the presence of prophets to teach us to choose right from wrong and truth from falsehood.



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## 2.5 Prophet Mohammad: The seal of all Divine Prophets

Prophet Muhammad was the last prophet and messenger of God<sup>39</sup>. His moral and physical human character was perfect. Furthermore he was infallible. Although Prophet Muhammad brought good tidings for believers, he was also a 'Warner' to evildoers<sup>39</sup>.

Mohammad is the seal of all prophets. He was brave and pious, and spent his entire life worshipping God. He had the means to live a lavish life but chose to live modestly. It is said of him that he is the ideal man<sup>39</sup>. We will present aspects of his life later in this chapter and in other chapters of this book.

## 2.6 Messengers in human history

As stated before, there were five major Messengers in history: Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammad.

### Prophet Noah

Prophet Noah is considered the father of all prophets. He was the longest living prophet on earth; he lived fifteen hundred years. Of those, nine hundred and fifty years was spent calling his people to believe in God. According to the Quran, he called his

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people to practice good deeds, to worship their Creator, to be just and honest in their commitments, and not to commit evil. Few people believed in his message. The rest were defiant and caused disorder in the land. The non-believers were destroyed by means of a flood while Noah and his followers were saved from death. When the water recessed and the people of the arc settled on land with God's blessing, the community repopulated with believers who worshipped God.

Prophet Noah had a universal message. His scripture, the Book of Noah, directed humanity during that period. Although historical evidence of the Book does not exist today, the Quran states that it contained religious laws and moral codes. The Quran also described Prophet Noah as having been righteous<sup>39</sup>, believing<sup>39</sup>, and chosen<sup>39</sup>. He is quoted as asking his Lord for forgiveness for himself, his parents, and all people of faith<sup>39</sup>.

### **Prophet Abraham**

The message of Prophet Noah lasted for some time, but people again deviated from the idea of one God and returned to their worship of idols and statues. Prophet Abraham was sent to Ur, a place in present day Iraq. Its people worshipped idols and other celestial bodies like the sun and stars. Abraham used rationale dialogue to reason with them about the validity of an unseen God. He attempted to persuade them that God is far greater than the static objects they worshiped. They justified their

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worship of idols as being the tradition of forefathers.

While people were at a festival one day, Abraham destroyed all but the largest idol. He placed the axe he used to destroy them near the idol. When people returned and saw this destruction, they confronted Abraham. He was the only one who did not attend the festival. When questioned, he told them to ask the only remaining idol. They answered "How can we ask as it is unable to speak?"<sup>39</sup> Abraham replied "How can you worship something that can not communicate? Is it not better to worship God who has created you, given you life and sustained you"?

This was a great symbolic act by Abraham. He wanted people to denounce their worship of statues and in turn, worship the One God who have the power to create and give sustenance. Abraham was tried and sentenced to death by incineration. God ordered the fire to be cool thereby saving Abraham. Even this miracle did not convince the people of Ur about their ignorance. Abraham, nonetheless, was exiled by the ruler.

Abraham left the 'idol-loving' city to a broader audience where he was able to invite people to believe in God. He frequently traveled between the Holy Land and the dessert (now known as *Mecca*). God ordered him to build the cubic structure (the *Ka'ba*) in *Mecca* with the help of his son Ismael. This structure is considered to be the first blessed site of worship. His followers were asked to visit the *Ka'ba*, which was designed to be the largest gathering centre for worshippers and the most peaceful

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place on earth.

After the Ka'ba was built, Abraham had a vision wherein God ordered him to sacrifice his son. Both Abraham and Ismael were prepared to obey God. However at the moment of this sacrifice, God sent Gabriel to hold the hand of Abraham halting the sacrifice of his son. He asked him instead to sacrifice a sheep. This was Abraham's major test in life.

Muslims are required to visit the cubic structure in Mecca at least once in a life-time. This visitation is called pilgrimage (*Hajj*). Pilgrims must sacrifice an animal to symbolize the sacrifice of Prophet Abraham and his son Ismael.

Prophet Abraham is highly praised in the Quran as being a man of truth<sup>39</sup>, having a mind free from sins<sup>39</sup>, and imploring and penitent<sup>39</sup>. His impact on humanity is significant. His sincerity and sacrifice spread the word of God on earth.

### **Prophet Moses**

Prophet Moses was born at a time of great oppression against the Israelites in Egypt by the ruler, Pharaoh. A prophet had been prophesized at the time of Moses' birth. The Pharaoh ordered every infant born to Israelite parents to be killed. To save Moses from this merciless act, his mother put him in a basket which she placed in the Nile River. With God's guidance, the Pharaoh's wife found the basket. When she saw baby Moses, she instantly felt great love for him. She persuaded the Pharaoh

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to adopt him as their son. Moses spent his childhood and early adulthood in the Pharaoh's palace.

Later in his adult life, there was a confrontation between Moses and one of Pharaoh's soldiers. Moses was forced to leave Egypt. He went to the desert where he met Prophet *Shuaib*. Moses later married his daughter. While Moses traveled with his wife, they lost their way in the desert when he saw a fire in the distance. When he approached the fire, God called on him to be His messenger to the Israelites and to confront the Pharaoh.

Pharaoh did not believe in God thus was defiant against Moses' message. Even after Moses revealed his miracles, the Pharaoh remained defiant. God warned Pharaoh and his people of a Divine punishment of different intensities. Each time the Egyptians were afflicted with a punishment, they promised to believe in Moses' cause. When their requests were granted they disregarded their promise.

Prophet Moses was ordered to take the Israelites to the Sinai Desert by crossing the red sea. Moses used his staff to split the sea in half allowing the Israelites a safe passage. The Pharaoh and his army were in pursuit of the Israelites. While they crossed the sea-bed, the walls of water collapsed and drowned the entire army along with the Pharaoh.

After the Israelites were saved from Pharaoh, they resided in the Desert for a period of time. Moses used his miraculous staff to open water wells for twelve tribes. These tribes were prosperous

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and the time came for them to live by God's law.

God informed Moses that he would receive the revelation of the Torah in forty days. Moses chose seventy people to accompany him to the top of Mt. Sinai to witness God's revelation. However, these witnesses were not satisfied by the revelation alone and requested to see God with their naked eyes. The wrath of God showered them with lightning. God gave them death then He gave them life.

During his absence the Israelites, who were left behind, deviated from worshipping God. Instead they took a calf, made of gold, to worship. When Moses returned to them, he destroyed the calf and ordered that they repent to God for their sins.

Prophet Moses was the third major Messenger. His message was universal for that particular era. His name is mentioned in the Quran one hundred sixty six times and his story is mentioned in thirty four chapters. The Quran praises Prophet Moses as the chosen messenger of God<sup>39</sup>.

The Torah is described in the Quran as being a Divine book of mercy<sup>39</sup>, light<sup>39</sup>, and guidance<sup>39</sup>. The Quran states that the Israelites altered the contents of the Torah thus we believe its accuracy is disputable "Can ye (O ye men of Faith) entertain the hope that they (Jews) will believe in you? – seeing that a party of them heard the Word of God, and perverted it knowingly after they understood it."<sup>39</sup>

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## Prophet Jesus

Prophet Jesus is the fourth major Messenger whom God sent to humanity. He is a highly respected prophet. He is described in the Quran as a man of righteousness<sup>39</sup> to whom was taught the Scripture, the wisdom, the Torah, and the Gospel<sup>39</sup>.

Two aspects of Jesus' life are controversial: his birth and his death.

**The Birth of Prophet Jesus:** Jesus was conceived miraculously without a father. His mother, Mary, was an orphan who came under the guardianship of Prophet Zachariah. She was pure and infallible.

Mary communicated with the unseen world through angels. Angel Gabriel informed her that she would carry a son. Her pregnancy of the baby Jesus was miraculous since she was untouched by any man. After his birth, people questioned her chastity. Mary asked baby Jesus to speak. As revealed in the Quran, Jesus said: "I am indeed a servant of God: He hath given me revelation and made me a prophet; And He hath made me blessed wheresoever I be, and hath enjoined on me prayer and charity as long as I live; He hath made kind to my mother, and not overbearing or miserable; so peace is on me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day that I shall be raised up to life (again)!"<sup>39</sup>

Prophet Jesus was sent by God to revive Moses' original doctrine that had been diverted by *Bani Israel*. He invited them to

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believe in One God as Prophet Moses did before. Jesus predicted that another prophet would be sent after him by the name of Ahmad (a nickname for Prophet Muhammad). The Israelites did not believe in his message. He then selected a group of his closest students, the Disciples, to spread his message universally.

**The death of Prophet Jesus:** The Israelites conspired against Jesus and attempts were made to crucify him. However, according to Islam, Jesus was not crucified. People were confused concerning the events. Some believed he was killed while others believed he was crucified. He was neither crucified nor killed. The Quran states that Prophet Jesus had ascended to God<sup>39</sup> and was not crucified.

**Prophet Jesus—the mortal man:** Jesus was a mortal man. He was miraculously born and chosen by God to be a messenger for humankind. He ordered people to worship God and follow His message. This is clearly emphasized in the Quran “O People of the Book! Commit no excesses in your religion: nor say of God aught but the truth. Christ Jesus the son of Mary was (no more than) an apostle of God, and His Word, which He bestowed on Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him: so believe in God and His apostles. Say not: ‘Trinity’: desist: It will be better for you: For God is One God: Glory be to Him: (Far Exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belong all things in the heavens and on earth. And enough is God as a Disposer of affairs.”<sup>39</sup>



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Prophet Jesus was a human being and had human needs. He ate and slept and possessed human emotion. He was born and experienced aging. If we apply the description of God discussed in Chapter One to Prophet Jesus, we understand that Jesus was a mortal man. He can neither be God nor His son.

### Prophet Muhammad

Prophet Muhammad was born in Mecca 570 A.D. within the tribe of *Quraish*. His father Abdullah died before he was born. Prophet Muhammad's mother Aminah died when he was six years old. He passed into the care of his grandfather and then to his uncle Abu Talib. He resided in Mecca until he was 53 years old at which time he immigrated to Medina, a city 200 miles from Mecca. This occasion was significant as it marks the beginning the Islamic Calendar known as the *Hijra*.

**Before the Revelation:** Prophet Muhammad was known for his honesty and truthfulness before Islam was revealed to him. It is not surprising that people left their possessions with him when they traveled, or that he was chosen to solve disputes between inhabitants of the city. The people of Mecca recognized in Muhammad honesty and truthfulness. For this reason he was called *al-Amin* 'the righteous man'. Everyone who met him before the revelation loved him and predicted that he will eventually play a significant role in Arabia and the world.

Prophet Muhammad married Khadejah in 596 when he was

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25 years old (she was 40 years old). She came from an honorable family, was beautiful, wealthy, and knowledgeable. They had a daughter named Fatima who was born on 613. Khadejah died in 621. They were married for 25 years.

**The Revelation:** Muhammad was declared a Prophet by Angel Gabriel when he was 40 years old. He fulfilled the task of other monotheistic prophets. Being the last Messenger of God, Muhammad is referred to as the 'Seal of the Prophets'. "Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Apostle of God and the Seal of the prophets"<sup>39</sup>.

The first verse that was revealed to him declared that God is the magnificent Creator: "In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Proclaim! (Read!) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created. Created human, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood: Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful, He Who taught (the use of) the Pen. (He Who) taught human which he (or she) knew not."<sup>39</sup>

**After the Revelation:** The revelation of the Quran to the prophet spanned twenty three years. His wife, Khadejah, was the first woman to embrace Islam. She had strong faith in him and sponsored his activities to promote this new religion. His cousin Ali was the first young man to believe in his message. He was an eloquent speaker, an inspiring leader, and a brave fighter. People who believe in Prophet Muhammad's message are called Muslims.

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His main supporters, in his call to one God, besides Khadejah and Ali, were:

- His uncle, Abu Talib, was the Chief of *Bani Hashim*. He gave up his status and prestige to support Prophet Muhammad against the disbelievers of Mecca.
- His daughter Fatima and her sons Hassan and Hussein.
- Ammar, Al-Muqdad, Abu Dhar, and Salman, among others, who were close companions of the Prophet.
- Other Arabs who became Muslims, such as Abu Baker and Ummar, became companions of the Prophet.

The elite status of the ruler of Mecca were threatened by the following that Prophet Muhammad was gaining. As a strategy to discourage more conversion to the Prophet's call, his most sincere followers were imprisoned and tortured. In response to this injustice, the Prophet ordered some of his followers to immigrate to Ethiopia (Abyssinia), an African nation ruled by a Christian king. The King of Ethiopia was inspired by Islam and allowed Muslims to seek refuge in his country.

In Mecca the oppression against Muslims continued. Ultimately, they were exiled into a valley in Mecca known as *Sha'b*. While the rulers attempted to diminish Islam, this new religion nevertheless found new followers in a different city, *Yathreb*, later called *Medina*. Muslims of *Yathreb* invited the Prophet and his followers to immigrate and settle in that city.

Prophet Muhammad ordered all Muslims in Mecca, and

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elsewhere, to immigrate to Medina. The Prophet, and later Ali, was the last to depart from Mecca.

Medina became the capital city of Islam. The power of Muslims increased dramatically. They eventually conquered Mecca. After the Prophet's death on 8<sup>th</sup> of June 632, the message of Islam spread to other regions around the globe: Europe, India, China, Russia, and Africa.

Prophet Muhammad is praised in the Quran as a Messenger of God<sup>39</sup>, who lived with the highest morality<sup>39</sup>.

## 2.7 Prophets with local missions

While the purpose of messengers was to guide every nation, there were other prophets who had local missions. The duty of these prophets was to inform and educate people in their local areas about the existence of One God. Among the narrations of the prophets mentioned in the Quran, the following are examples of their difference in scope:

- Job suffered miserably during his calling. He lost his wealth and his children, and he suffered from long term illnesses. Despite this he was patient and always thankful to God. He begged his Lord to ease him from his suffering. God later answered all his prayers. Despite his personal grief he persevered with his mission.
- Prophet Solomon, like his father Prophet David, was the

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king of his nation. He had extraordinary powers. He was able to command the movement of wind, communicate with animals, and even made the nation of Jinn<sup>39</sup> serve him. This extraordinary power did not divert him from his mission.

- Prophet Zachariah was the guardian of Mary, mother of Prophet Jesus. He was pious and devoted his lifetime to worshipping God. Because his wife was barren he did not have children. When he saw how dignified Mary was treated in the synagogue,<sup>39</sup> he asked God to bless him with a son. God accepted his prayer, and his wife gave birth to a son named John. Zachariah completed his mission despite the events surrounding Jesus' birth.

## Conclusion:

So that we may know our Creator, God appointed prophets to guide humankind. Prophets have unique characteristics. They are blessed with miracles, infallibility, and revelation. Their main goal is to call people to believe in God. Likewise, they explain to us the unexplainable concerning the unseen world. Their ethical message is equally important in making our lives harmonious with others and with the Creator.

There were five messengers in the history of humanity. They had a universal message—worship One God. They each came with a scripture and a miracle.

Throughout history prophets taught humanity to understand

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the existence and the description of God, the nature of the unseen world, Judgment Day, Angels, Heaven and Hell, and the system of reward and retribution. Their mission has helped us understand the meaning of life on earth.

## Texts from the Quran

The following are selected phrases from the Quran, related to the contents of this chapter:

1. *God chooses Prophets:* (God knoweth best with whom to place His message.)<sup>39</sup>
2. *Angles are obedient:* ([Angels] Stern (and) severe, who flinch not (from executing) the Commands they receive from God, but do (precisely) what they are commanded.)<sup>39</sup>
3. *Prophet Noah:* (God sets forth, for an example to the Unbelievers, the wife of Noah and the wife of Lut: they were (respectively) under two of our righteous servants, but they were false to their husbands....)<sup>39</sup>
4. *Prophet Abraham:* (Also mention in the Book (the story of) Abraham: He was a man of Truth, a prophet)<sup>39</sup>, (Behold, he approached his Lord with a sound heart)<sup>39</sup>, (For Abraham was, without doubt, forbearing (of faults), compassionate, and given to look to God)<sup>39</sup>, (And He made it as a Word to endure among those who came after him (Abraham's seed) that they may turn back (to God).)<sup>39</sup>

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5. *Prophet Moses:* (Again, (of old,) we bestowed Our favor on Moses and Aaron)<sup>39</sup>, (Peace and salutation to Moses and Aaron)<sup>39</sup>, (Also mention in the Book (the story of) Moses: For he was specially chosen, and he was a apostle (and) a prophet.)<sup>39</sup>
  6. *The Torah:* (And before this, was the Book of Moses as a guide and a mercy)<sup>39</sup>, (In the past We granted to Moses and Aaron the Criterion (for judgment), and a Light and a Message for those who would do right. Those who fear their Lord in their most secret thoughts, and who hold the moment (of judgment) in awe)<sup>39</sup>, (It was We who revealed the Law (the Torah to Moses): therein was guidance and light ....)<sup>39</sup>
  7. *Prophet Jesus:* (And in their footsteps We sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the Torah that had come before him: We sent him the Gospel: therein was guidance and light)<sup>39</sup>, (And remember, Jesus, the son of Mary, said: 'O Children of Israel! I am the apostle of God (sent) to you, confirming the Torah (which came) before me, and giving glad tidings of an Apostle to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad')<sup>39</sup>, (And (appoint him [Jesus]), an apostle to the Children of Israel)<sup>39</sup>, (And God will teach him the Book and Wisdom, the Law (Torah) and the Gospel)<sup>39</sup>, (As (we did) from thee: From Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus the son of Mary: We took from them a solemn Covenant)<sup>39</sup>, (the

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righteous)<sup>39</sup>.

8. *Prophet Jesus' death*: (That they said (in boast), "We killed Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, the Apostle of God"; - But they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for a surety they killed him not: Nay, God raised him up unto Himself; and God is Exalted in Power, Wise.)<sup>39</sup>
9. *Prophet Muhammad*: (Muhammad is no more than an Apostle: many were the Apostles that passed away before him)<sup>39</sup>, (And thou (stands) on exalted standard of character)<sup>39</sup>, (Muhammad is the Apostle of God; and those who are with him are strong against unbelievers, (but) compassionate amongst each other. Thou wilt see them bow and prostrate themselves (in prayer), seeking Grace from God and (His) Good Pleasure. On their faces are their marks, (being) the traces of their prostration)<sup>39</sup>, (But those, who believe and work deeds of righteousness, and believe in the (Revelation) sent down to Muhammad – for it is the Truth from their Lord, He will remove from them their ills and improve their condition.)<sup>39</sup>

## Glossary:

**Prophet-hood**: A calling performed by individuals chosen by God,



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of perfect human character, to guide people toward goodness, spiritual awareness, and knowledge.

**Infallibility** *Esmah*: The inherent ability to be free from ignorance and forgetfulness of religious rules, to be free from err in religious concepts, and having the will not to disobey God. It is a prerequisite for any prophet. Likewise, it is a prerequisite for Infallible Imams (see chapter 3).

**Miracle**: An extraordinary event in the physical world that surpasses the law of nature and all known human powers. In religion, it is considered a work of God. The miracle of Islam is the Quran.

**Hijra**: Marks the migration of Muslims from Mecca to Medina on September 622 A.D.

## Practical Notes:

1. The name 'Muhammad' in European texts may vary: Mahomet, Mahommed, Mehmet, Mahound, Mahowne and Machomet. The nick name of the Prophet is *Ahmad*.
2. It is recommended that Muslims name their children after the Prophet or his daughter or her children, such as: Muhammad, Fatima, Ali, Hassan, Hussain, and Zainab.

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## Notes:

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 6:125

<sup>39</sup> Most of the original scriptures have been lost, except the Quran.

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 66:6

<sup>39</sup> The issue of Adam and Eve will be discussed later in this series.

<sup>39</sup> There are five Major messengers who came with a universal message to humanity: Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammad. Other prophets had local tasks to guide local communities. It is believed that the total number of prophets sent since Adam is 124,000.

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 33:40

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 27:72

<sup>39</sup> His daughter Fatima is the ideal woman.

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 66:10

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 37:81

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 3:33

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 71:28

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 21:65

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 19:41

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 37:84

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 11:75

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 19:51

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 46:12

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 21:48-49

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 5:44

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 2:75

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 6:86

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 3:48

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 19:31-33

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 4:157-158

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 4:171

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 33:40

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 96:1-5

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 48:29

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 68:4

<sup>39</sup> The Quran speak of two worlds of living being: human and Jinn.

<sup>39</sup> When Mary was in the synagogue, Prophet Zachariah found her with fruits. When he asked where the fruit came from she told him that angels brought it to her.

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 6:124

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 66:6

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 66:10

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 19:41

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 37:84

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- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 11:75
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 43:28
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 37:114
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 37:120
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 19:51
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 46:12
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 21:48-49
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 5:47
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 5:49
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 61:6
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 3:49
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 3:48
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 33:7
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 6:86
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 4:157-158
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 3:144
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 68:4
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 48:29
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 47:2



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Chapter Three

**Infallible Leaders**  
*(Imams)*

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### 3.1 The Meaning of *Imam*

*Imam* in Arabic terminology means leader. A leader may be one who guides people towards knowledge and goodness, *Imamul Huda*, or may be one who misguides people towards ignorance and evil, *Imamul Dhalal*. In either case, each leader will lead his or her followers towards their destiny. This chapter will focus on the *Imamul Huda*.

Leadership has three levels. The simplest level is the leader of the prayer. If you see a man standing alone in front of a group of people performing an Islamic prayer, you must assume that he is the leader of the prayer.<sup>39</sup> He is often called *Imamul Jama'a*. Any person, who is pious, sane, and knows the rules of prayers is eligible to lead a prayer.

The next level of leadership is one who leads a community. Any male can declare leadership of an Islamic community if he has the religious knowledge and the wisdom to maintain justice and social order. An entrusted scholar that holds a title of *Mujtahid* is an example of a leader of a nation.

The highest level of leadership is the *Infallible* leader. An *Infallible Imam* is a leader appointed by Prophet Muhammad to teach humankind the rules and principles of Islam. The concept of infallible leadership is called *Comprehensive Imamah*. Prophet Muhammad, his daughter Fatima, and the twelve Imams are all

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infallibles. They are referred to as the *Ahlul-Bayt*. These fourteen persons were the most pure, humble, and sinless persons on earth.

## 3.2 The Infallible Leader

Like the role of a school's Deputy Principal, who carries out the responsibilities of the principal while he or she is absent, the Infallible Imam continues the role of the Prophet.

When Prophet Muhammad predicted his departure from this world, he chose his cousin *Ali bin Abi Talib* to assume responsibility. He was the closest companion to the Prophet, the most knowledgeable about Islam, and the most qualified person for the role.

Seventy days before Prophet Muhammad died in 663, he appointed Ali as Imam. His presence was essential for believers. The Muslim community needed an appropriate leader to continue the Prophet's mission after his death.

There are differences between Prophets and Imams. These differences are listed in Table 2.

The period of *Comprehensive Imamah*, from the first Imam to the eleventh Imam, spanned less than three centuries (663-910). The twelfth Imam went into occultation on 911. He is expected to reappear when supporters are ready to sustain his cause, which is to implement Justice.



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By knowing the current Imam, a Muslim is more aware of his or her faith. As long as people live on this earth there must be such leadership, as the Quran says: "...To every folk there is a guide."<sup>39</sup>

The duty of the Infallible Imam is to complete the mission of the Prophet. The Prophet brings the message to people, while the Imam administrates this message after the Prophet's death. The purpose of such leadership is to assure that the march of Islam continues and the Islamic doctrine will not be adjusted or deviated from its originality. Hence, the role of the Imam is to correct any religious errors its followers may commit, and to clarify any misunderstandings they may face.

<b>A Prophet</b>	<b>Infallible Imam</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revelation is received from God through angels or a vision.</li> <li>2. Inspired by God.</li> <li>3. A scripture is revealed to him.</li> <li>4. Prophet Muhammad is the Seal of all Prophets. There are no prophets after him.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No revelation is received.</li> <li>2. Must be taught by the Prophet or a previous Imam. Must be from the bloodline of the Prophet.</li> <li>3. His role is to explain the scripture and Islamic teachings.</li> <li>4. There are twelve Imams. Fatima Al-Zahra is the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad is infallible.</li> </ol>

**Table 2:** *Differences between a prophet and an Infallible Imam*

Can any individual claim to be an infallible Imam? Though David or John may have studied religion comprehensively, they cannot become an Infallible Imam. An Infallible Imam is appointed only by Prophet Muhammad who received his instruction from God. The Prophet appointed the twelve Imams as commanders. Indeed, in some instances, he prophesized their names and their destinies.

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### 3.3 The Characteristics of Comprehensive Leadership (*Al- Imamatul Kubra*)

I love history and enjoy reading biographies of distinguished persons of all faiths and cultures. In my research, I have discovered that no one declared he or she is infallible except Ahlul-Bayt. These fourteen individuals asserted their infallibleness and, in fact, proved that they were truly without fault. Along with Fatima, the Prophet's daughter, all Imams possessed the prerequisites for infallible leadership.<sup>39</sup> What are the characteristics of being infallible? The main characteristics can be summarized in the following:

1. Infallibles are exemplar human beings of their time. There was no one better than them in knowledge and morality.
2. Infallibles do not sin. A sinner is one who disobeys God<sup>39</sup>.
3. Infallibles are from a pure bloodline i.e. the heritage of the Prophet.
4. There is only one Infallible Imam in command at a given time.

The personality and traits of the Infallible Imams are identical to that of the Prophet. The Imam has an understanding and knowledge about God that elevates him to the highest form of worship. Like the prophet, he has complete knowledge of religion. Thus Imams are highly respected individuals because their

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followers see in them the ideals of Islam.

Since Islam is the final Divine message, there must be an existing Infallible Imam to preserve it to the last day. The last Imam is currently in occultation, as I mentioned before.

### 3.4 The sources of Islamic knowledge

There are two sources of knowledge about Islam, specifically the Quran and the tradition of the Prophet *Sunnah*. The Glorious Quran was revealed to the Prophet. It is considered the prime source of basic Islamic knowledge. Within its scripture we learn the existence and description of God, the reasons for creation, the aspects of the hereafter, the angels, the body and soul, historic narratives of prophets and their communities, and the general rules of Islam concerning worship and social interaction.

The *Sunnah* involves the actions and the sayings of the Prophet, from the moment of the revelation to the moment of his death. This covers a period of 23 years. This knowledge is preserved by the Infallible Imams. The actions and sayings of the Imams are repetitions and continuations of the traditions of the Prophet. The Infallibles were assigned, primarily, to preserve the teachings of Islam. Each Imam took the role of leadership after the death of the previous Imam.

In addition, there are up-holders of this information, active scholars, who sieve and present this knowledge to the community.

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Scholars are researchers. They have the means of obtaining knowledge through research and analysis. Unlike Imams, their conclusions have the potential for error and are sometimes objectionable. We have already discussed the difference between the Prophet and the Imams. Likewise there is a difference between an Imam and a scholar. See Table 3. To simplify the subject let us look at three types of leaders in Islam:

- **Prophet:** a man who had connections with God through a medium, usually angels. A Divine book, such as the Quran, was revealed to him.
- **Infallible Imam:** A vicegerent of the Prophet after his passing. He is virtuous, has vast knowledge about religion, and possesses unique characteristics.
- **Scholar:** is an ordinary person who obtained religious knowledge through study and research.

An Imam	A Scholar
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No revelation is received.</li> <li>2. From the bloodline of the Prophet. Either taught by a Prophet or by previous Imam.</li> <li>3. His role is to explain the Quran and <i>Sunnah</i>.</li> <li>4. There are twelve Imams. Only one is in command at a given time.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No revelation is received.</li> <li>2. An ordinary person taught in a school of theology. He has the authority to issue religious verdicts.</li> <li>3. His role is to filter and present rules of Islam based on the teachings of the Quran, the Prophet, and the Imams.</li> <li>4. There are hundreds of scholars at any given time.</li> </ol>

**Table 3:** *The differences between an Imam and a scholar.*

### 3.5 The Leadership after the Prophet

There were four individuals who were very close to the Prophet: Ali Bin Abi Talib (his cousin), Fatima (his daughter), and Hassan and Hussein (his grandsons). These four family members are unique in that they are acknowledged in the Quran.<sup>39</sup> They assumed the roles of leadership after the Prophet's death.

Ali was a companion of the Prophet for thirty years. Indeed he

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was trained by the Prophet himself from the age of six. He is known for his bravery and defense for Islam. For this reason he was recognized as the right-hand of the Prophet. Prophet Muhammad acknowledged Ali's infallibility and his role as Imam on many occasions. He described Ali, figuratively, as a safe ship in turbulent water, and an entrance gate for a city, and a bridge between the Quran and the practicality of life. Literally, he described Ali as the ideal man for believers to emulate. The following are the sayings of the Prophet:

1. "The Ahlul-Bayt is like Noah's arc, whoever is on board is safe and whoever is not will drown."<sup>39</sup>
2. "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate. If you want to enter you must enter through the gate."<sup>39</sup>
3. "O People, I am mortal and death is approaching me. I leave with you two precious things: the Quran, and the Ahlul-Bayt. These two will never separate. To avoid God's anger do not abandon them. Do not underestimate the wisdom of Ahlul-Bayt as they are more knowledgeable than you. In the hereafter I will ask how you treated them."<sup>39</sup>
4. "If one wants to live the way I live and die the way I die, he must follow Ali."<sup>39</sup>

## **The Last Verse of the Quran**

Ali was declared the Prophet's successor at Gahdir-Khum, which is nearly 100Km from Mecca. This was during the last

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pilgrimage of the Prophet in 634. During this occasion he declared: "Of whomsoever I am the guardian [in faith] Ali is his guardian."<sup>39</sup> These words clearly indicated Ali's role as ruler of all Muslims. According to this proclamation, made at Gahdir-Khum, Ali had been invested with the authority over Muslims, as the Prophet himself had held it.

Immediately after this pronouncement the last verse of the Quran was revealed: "This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion."<sup>39</sup>

This verse refers to the completion of the message that was to continue with the active presence of an infallible leader after the Prophet's death. The Prophet died two months later, making this last verse the seal of the Quran. Immediately after the Prophet's death, Imam Ali was opposed by a group of Muslims who desired to rule the Islamic community themselves. The course of history changed dramatically by removing Ali from his post that was assigned to him by the Prophet publicly.

### **3.6 The Ahlul-Bayt**

The significance of the Infallibles and the reasons that Muslims follow them is stated in the Quran, "Verily, Verily God intend but to keep off from you (every kind of) uncleanness O' ye the People of the House [Ahlul-Bayt], and purify you (with) a



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thorough purification.”<sup>39</sup> This verse covers several aspects regarding Ahlul-Bayt which needs clarifications:

- (a) **The Will of God:** God willed Ahlul-Bayt to be free from sin and ignorance, making them exemplary models to humanity.
- (b) **The members of Ahlul-Bayt:** There were fourteen members.
1. **Prophet Muhammad** (570-632) is the foundation of the Ahlul-Bayt. He lived 23 years after his mission was declared. He died a martyr at the age 63 in Medina. His martyrdom was caused by poison.<sup>39</sup>
  2. **Imam Ali** (600-663), a cousin of the Prophet, was the closest companion of the Prophet. He married Fatima. He was martyred at the age of 63 in Kufa, Iraq.
  3. **Fatima** (615-633), the daughter of the Prophet, was married to Imam Ali. She was martyred at the age of eighteen in Medina, less than three months after her father's death.
  4. **Imam Hassan** (626-673), the son of Imam Ali and Fatima, was martyred when he was 47 years old in Medina.
  5. **Imam Hussein** (627-677), the brother of Imam Hassan, was 57 years old when he was martyred in Kerbala, where a heroic battle against the Umayyad Army took place.
  6. **Imam Sajad** (661-718), son of Imam Hussein, was 58 years old when he was martyred in Medina by Umayyad ruler. He witnessed the battle of Kerbala where seventy-two

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members of his family and his father's supporters were killed. He survived the battle due to illness.

7. **Imam Baqir** (680-733), son of Imam Sajad, was 57 years old when he was martyred in Medina. He was known for his vast knowledge and numerous students.
8. **Imam Sadiq** (706-771), son of Imam Baqir, was martyred at the age of 65 in Medina. He was known for establishing the first school of thought in Shiite Islam. He trained many students in the Islamic creed.
9. **Imam Khadum** (751-806), son of Imam Sadiq, was martyred in prison in Baghdad at 55 years of age. He was imprisoned by the ruler of Baghdad, Haroon Al-Rasheed, for seven years.
10. **Imam Redha** (771-826), son of Imam Khadum, was martyred at the age of 55 in Khurasan, Iran by the ruler of Baghdad, Al-Mamoon.
11. **Imam Jawad** (818-843), son of Imam Redha, was martyred in Baghdad when he was 25 years old.
12. **Imam Hadi** (835-876), son of Imam Jawad, was 41 years when he was martyred in Samara, Iraq.
13. **Imam Askari** (855-883), son of Imam Hadi, was martyred in Samara, Iraq at the age of 28.
14. **Imam Mehdi**, son of Imam Askari, was born on 878. He went into occultation when he was five years old. When he reappears, he will establish peace and justice on earth.

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- (c) **The Purification of Ahlul-Bayt:** Ignorance and desire can lead to sin. People commit sins because their desires overcome their reasoning. Ahlul-Bayt was above this human trait. God shielded them from the path of sin and bestowed on them comprehensive knowledge through which their will and determination was directed to serve God. As they are not hindered by desire, their role as servants of God is clear to them. For them, there is nothing grey; everything is black or white.
- (d) **The Historical Proof:** In Islamic history, only the Ahlul-Bayt declared themselves to be Infallible. For centuries their status has been challenged by political rivals, yet they proved themselves rightful beholders of their titles. Neither of them committed a sin nor were they negligent in religious obligations.

The Infallibles were truthful. They did not manipulate religious rulings for personal gains. This assures us that the source of Islam is kept true. This is important for our system of belief. If we are certain of the source our mind and heart will be free from doubt about this Divine message.

### 3.7 The task of Infallible Imams

You may ask: if we agree that there must be an Infallible Imam to guide people, what exactly is the role of Imam in the 21<sup>st</sup>

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century? Imams, regardless of era, have three tasks:

1. To inform followers about the original teachings of Prophet Muhammad.
2. To lead an exemplar life-style that inspires believers to follow in their foot steps.
3. To implement justice in society. Currently this is the role of the last Imam, Imam Mahdi, who we believe will bring justice to humanity.

## **Conclusion:**

The Infallible Imam is a leader who is appointed and taught by Prophet Muhammad (or previous Imam) to administrate Islam after the Prophet's death. His role is to explain the Quran and Islamic rules, regulations, morality, and ethics; and to assure that this religion will not be altered or deviated from its originality. There are twelve Infallible Imams (Fatima, though infallible, was not an Imam but was an archetype leader for women). These Infallibles are exemplar human beings of their time. It is the Will of God that Ahlul-bayt be free from sin and ignorance, making them moral models to humanity.

## **Texts from the Quran**

The following are selected phrases from the Quran, related to the contents of this chapter:

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1. *The need for the Infallibles:* (...To every folk is a guide)<sup>39</sup>,  
(Verily We have sent thee in truth, as a bearer of glad tidings, and as a Warner; and there never was a people, without a Warner having lived among them (in the past).)<sup>39</sup>
  2. *The Infallibles are not wrongdoer:* (And remember that Abraham was tried by his Lord with certain Commands, which he fulfilled: He said: "I will make thee an Imam to the Nations." He pleaded: "And also (Imams) from my offspring!" He answered: "But My Promise is not within the reach of evil-doers".)<sup>39</sup>
  3. *The Ahlul-Bayt:* (Verily, Verily God intend but to keep off from you (every kind of) uncleanness O' ye the People of the House [Ahlul-Bayt], and purify you (with) a thorough purification.)<sup>39</sup>

## Glossary:

**Ahlul-bayt (People of the House):** Fourteen Infallible leaders: Prophet Muhammad, Fatima, and the twelve Imams are called the Ahlul-bayt.

**Hadith:** A body of texts that consists of all the reported speeches, thoughts, and observations made by the Prophet which are authenticated by members of Ahlul-Bayt.

**Imamah:** An Infallible leadership that is Divinely chosen. It is characterized by religious knowledge and a pious life-style.

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**Imamul Dhalal:** A leader who misguides his followers towards ignorance and evil.

**Imamul Huda:** A leader who guides his followers towards knowledge and goodness.

**Imamul Jamaha:** A Muslim who leads the group prayer. He is not an infallible.

**Infallibles:** Fourteen highly respected persons: Prophet Muhammad, Fatima, and the twelve Imams.

**Infallible Imam:** Any of the twelve Imams appointed by the Prophet Muhammad. The concept of this type of leadership is called the comprehensive Imamah.

**Scholar:** Any person taught in a school of theology, and has the authority to issue religious verdicts. A scholar can hold a title of *Mujtahid*.

**Sunnah:** The actions and sayings of Prophet Muhammad from the time he became a prophet to the time of his death (peace be upon him).

## Practical Notes:

1. The hadiths of the Prophet were recorded during his lifetime. In early ninth century A.D. they were classified into collections. Four of these collections are recognized today as references: *Al-Kafi* (The Sufficient) of Sheik Kulaini (864-940), *Al-Faqih* (In the Absence of Jurisprudent) of Sheik

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Sadduq (917-991), and *Istibsar* (The Enlightenment) and *Tahtheeb* (Refining the Rules) of Sheik Tusi (995-1067). Muslims who follow Ahlul-Bayt revere scholarly theologians of the ninth century: Sheik Al-Mufeed, Al-Murtada, and Ibn Aqeel and Al-Numani.

2. Muslims are encouraged to visit the burial sites of Ahlul-Bayt. These sites of burial were converted into Mosques where Muslims pray and supplicate to God.
3. Most Muslims visit Prophet Muhammad's tomb in Medina, Saudi Arabia during pilgrimage (Hajj). Visiting Imam Ali's tomb in Najaf and Imam Hussein in Kerbala, Iraq, and Imam Redha in Mashhad, Iran, is encouraged, especially on the annual occasion of their martyrdom. The burial sites of other Imams such as Imam Khadum and Imam Jawad in Khadimia, (Baghdad), and Imam Hadi and Imam Askari in Samara, Iraq are likewise encouraged to visit. The burial sites of Imam Hassan, Sajad, Baqer, Sadeq, and Fatima are located in Madina, Saudi Arabia, and are not constructed.

The purpose of building mosques at their burial sites is to acknowledge that the principles of these leaders are still alive and that their struggle to spread Islam, while maintaining their principles, will not be forgotten. By visiting their sites, not only do we declare our commitment to their message but also emphasize our common thread with other followers.

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## Notes:

<sup>39</sup> A woman can lead prayers for other women.

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 13:7.

<sup>39</sup> Fatima was called 'The lady of the women of the world'. Though she was not an Imam, she was infallible.

<sup>39</sup> Al-Mufradat. Al-Ragheb vol. 3 p. 40.

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 33:33.

<sup>39</sup> Mustadrak ala sahihain. Al-Hakim al-Nishapouri. Vol. 2 p. 343.

<sup>39</sup> Usud al-ghaba (The Lions of the Jungle) – Ibn al-Ather al-Juzeri. Vol. 4 p. 22.

<sup>39</sup> Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol. 3 p. 14, and 217. and Sahih Muslim vol.7 p. 122. section of Ali's preference.

<sup>39</sup> Mustadrak ala sahihain. Vol. 3 p. 128.

<sup>39</sup> Al-Musnad. Ahmad Bin Hanbal. Vol. 1 p. 119.

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 5:4.

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 33:33.

<sup>39</sup> It is widely believed that he was poisoned by a woman of the Jewish faith.

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 13:7.

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 35:24.

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 2: 124.

<sup>39</sup> The Quran 33:33.



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Chapter Four

The Day of  
Judgment

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## 4.1 The Possibility of a Different Life in the Hereafter

In 1989 while I was lecturing in an Islamic Seminary, I fell ill and was admitted to a local hospital. During my seven day stay, I underwent many tests only to be released with the diagnosis “fever of unknown origin”. It was quite an experience. While I was in the intensive care unit, I drifted in and out of conscious. In my semi-awaking moment I felt my soul being pulled away and ready to separate itself from my body, yet it was unable to. There was something preventing this separation. I did not know what it was. All I knew was that before me stood a huge glass window with magnificent scenery. There in the vast landscape stood green trees, peace, and satisfaction. Suddenly, I felt a hand shaking my body. I regained conscious and realized that the hand belonged to the nurse.

That experience caused me to reflect on the afterlife and the nature of that life. Is it possible that we move to another life after death? Islam teaches that there is life after death. Judaism and Christianity also teach this. The Quran emphasizes that there is life after death and that life is based on reward and retribution resulting in either eternal bliss or eternal remorse.

Returning to my hospital experience, I felt remorse for every sin I committed and every intentional mistake I made in my life. In

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truth, I witnessed my life from childhood until that moment. It was as if I watched a replay of my life which focused on major deeds I carried out – both the good and the bad deeds.

According to Islam there will be a moment when all life on this earth will cease. Everything will vanish. People will die. Then all of us will be resurrected on a day called the Day of Judgment. Had I passed away in my hospital bed on that day, my body would have been buried while my soul was set free. However, my body and soul would reunite on the Day of Judgment for questioning where it will receive the ultimate reward or the ultimate retribution. The Quran affirms when people die, their souls are kept alive while their bodies gradually decompose. At the moment of resurrection, God orders each soul to merge with its physical body and the human being will become its original form once again<sup>39</sup>. Indeed, the Quran narrates the story of Prophet Abraham who asked His Lord how people are brought back to life.<sup>39</sup> God showed Abraham that dead creatures can indeed return to their state of living at his command. Consequently, the Prophet understood how God resurrects people on the Day of Judgment.

## 4.2 The Necessity of Judgment Day

The judgment of human beings must take place for three reasons:

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1. God assured us that there will be a Day of Judgment. We believe that God's promise is true and individuals will be rewarded for their good deeds and punished for their bad deeds.
  2. Justice must be served. It is essential to have a day to implement comprehensive justice on every living creature. There are times when we commit injustice against people and times when others commit injustice against us.
  3. Divine Integrity must be upheld. At times, natural disasters force individuals to encounter pain and suffering. God will compensate those individuals for their misfortunes.

### 4.3 The System of Moral Code

A Muslim's daily practices revolve around five types of deeds, namely: obligatory, recommended, forbidden, unadvisable, and permissible. It is in these deeds that God will judge people on the Day of Judgment. See Table 4.

Following the moral code is considered a faithful way of life. Disregarding this moral code is considered a sin. Sins are forbidden acts done with intent. They are judged differently and fall into two categories:

- 1- Sins that do not directly harm others. These have the potential to be forgiven. Avoiding prayer to God the Almighty is considered a sin that does not harm others. If repentance is initiated, God will forgive the sinner.

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<b>Obligatory (Wajib)</b>	<b>Recommended (Mustahab)</b>	<b>Forbidden (Haram)</b>	<b>Un- advisable (Makruh)</b>	<b>Permissible (Mubah)</b>
Acts that must be done, such as daily prayers, fasting, almsgiving, pilgrimage, etc.	Deeds which are recommended but not obligatory, such as mentioning the name of God before every act, showing kindness to neighbors.	Deeds which are not allowed such as murder, adultery, fornication, stealing, and gossip.	Deeds which are unadvisable to do such as delaying prayers, being vain, and wasting time.	Deeds which are permissible, such as recreation.

**Table 4:** Moral Code in Islam.

**2-** Sins committed by an individual that harm others. These will be forgiven pending the victim's decision. An example of this is gossip. This is a grave sin that hurts others to the extent that the victim's decision is taken into account in the judging process.

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## 4.4 The System of Reward and Retribution

Parallel to the system of moral code, Islam introduced a system of reward and retribution to be implemented in the hereafter. Reward is based on complying with the rules of this system. Retribution is based on breaking the code. See Table 5. We believe that God is absolute in His justice and thus the ultimate Judge of reward and punishment. It is rational to have such a system because:

1. God's design, based on reward and punishment, encourages people to do good deeds and avoid bad deeds. People need to be constantly reminded of this.
2. Acknowledging people for their good deeds is part of the structure of religion. It sets the example for others to emulate.
3. People may be able to escape human justice but they cannot escape Divine justice. For example a murderer might not be convicted by the judicial system due to lack of evidence, but the perpetrator must answer to God on the Day of Judgment.

## 4.5 Is it possible to avoid Divine Retribution?

Sometimes we find ourselves staring justice in the face and ask: Is it possible to avoid the consequences of our own actions?

It is possible to avoid chastisement through: the sinner's repentance, God's forgiveness, and the Prophet's intercession.

Obligatory ( <i>Wajeb</i> )	Recommend- ed ( <i>Mustahab</i> )	Forbidden ( <i>Haram</i> )	Un-advisable ( <i>Makruh</i> )	Permissible ( <i>Mubah</i> )
<b>Reward:</b> For performing the obligatory duties.	<b>Reward:</b> For performing the recommended duties.	<b>Reward:</b> When the forbidden acts are observed.	<b>Reward:</b> When the unadvisable acts are observed.	<b>No Reward:</b> If the permissible acts are observed.
<b>Retribution:</b> For not performing the obligatory duties.	<b>No Retribution:</b> If it is not performed.	<b>Retribution:</b> When the forbidden acts are not observed.	<b>No Retribution:</b> When the unadvisable acts are not observed.	<b>No Retribution:</b> If the permissible acts are not observed.

**Table 5:** Reward and Retribution in Islam.

**Sinner's Repentance:** An individual who breaks the moral code of God and regrets his or her actions, intending never to repeat



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them again, is repentant. Repentance applies to almost all sins and can lift retribution. True repentance should be felt from the heart i.e. there should be genuine remorse after committing sinful acts.

**God's Forgiveness:** As God has promised us in the scriptures, He will forgive people who repent before they die. God forgives believers who commit minor sins.<sup>39</sup> This gives hope to sinners to strive to be righteous. He warned people of the consequences of their actions. We have the freedom to choose between right or wrong. Still, make no mistake God does not forgive people who believe He has partners or associates. People who do not believe in His existence will share the same fate. They will only be forgiven if they repent and believe in One God.

**Prophet's Intercession:** There is another way for sinners to be forgiven on Judgment Day. It is called intercession. Intercession is an act of the Prophet and other members of Ahlul-bayt to save followers from their sins, by a prayer or petition to God on their behalf. The Quran describes the Prophet's intercession as the status of Praise and Glory.<sup>39</sup> It is clear in Islam that Ahlul-Bayt's intercession is accepted by God. This intercession has two outcomes: for sinners it is the ultimate hope to be saved from retribution, and for the Prophet it is the moment of glory by saving as many followers as he can. Intercession is the last opportunity for our good deeds to outweigh our bad deeds. If a follower is in need, the Prophet will intervene by asking God to waive his or her

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sins.

## 4.6 The Philosophy of Reward and Punishment

One evening, I received a phone call from a member of our congregation. He was agitated. His car had been stolen while on a business trip. After reporting the theft to the police, he found himself stranded alone in the city. His distress quickly turned to bitterness. I detected revenge in his tone. He told me that if he caught the thief he would take vengeance. I sympathized with his pain, but also stressed the importance of law and order in society.

A question was raised in my mind: what is the philosophy of reward and punishment? Reward and punishment is necessary for social order. It is essential to reward law abiding individuals who obey the rules. This is for the common good of all. By the same token, it is important to punish evil-doers. Evil can be any act that breaks the universal moral code.

To serve justice, the guilty must go through two stages: firstly, evidence must be brought forth to prove he or she is guilty. Secondly, if the proof is compelling, a punishment that suits the crime, will be allocated.

The process of reward and retribution has two stages: characterization (*Wasf*) and implementation (*Iqaa*).

*Characterization* is a verbal description wherein individuals are characterized by their actions. There are thieves, murderers,

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or cheaters. Likewise there are charitable, kind, and law-abiding. Characterization in itself is considered as a punishment or reward. To chastise a dishonest businessman is to brand him as untrustworthy. To reward an honest businessman is to call him a truthful merchant. This language is common in Islamic text and is called: rational reward *Al-Jaza' Al-Thehni*. At this level, reward is commendation. God acknowledges individuals who believe and act according to the principles of their faith as being: "the people of truth"<sup>39</sup>, "the righteous"<sup>39</sup>, "the sincere ones."<sup>39</sup> He describes individuals who disobey as being: "the ignorant"<sup>39</sup>, "the guilty"<sup>39</sup>, and "the ones who tell lies."<sup>39</sup>

*Implementation* is the practical process of reward and retribution which takes place in the hereafter. It is called: the actual reward *Al-Jaza' Al-Fa'li*. Heaven is the reward and Hell is the punishment. As in Judaism and Christianity, Heaven and Hell are important elements in Islamic eschatology and thought.

**Exceptional Cases:** While visiting an elementary school I encountered a familiar question asked by youngsters: does God punish children? My answer to them, as always, is categorically: no. God does not punish children. Neither does He question the mentally disabled nor does He ask people to do more than they can bear, both physically and emotionally. The responsibility of obeying Islamic rules lay on the shoulders of sane, healthy, and capable adults. Thus, the standard of judging people follows two conditions.

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1. Mentally or physically ill individuals are not obliged to follow the same rules that apply to healthy individuals. This rule also applies to children until they reach the age of puberty.
  2. People under unbearable circumstances are permitted to do prohibited acts such eating during days of obligatory fasting, or eating unlawful food during starvation.

## 4.7 Description of the Day of Judgment

To comprehend that there will be a Day of Judgment, wherein all people will stand before God to answer for what they did in their lives, is difficult. As human beings we love recreation, wealth, fulfilling our desires, and reclining on a notion of hope – tomorrow will be better than today. We dislike unfavorable news; we dread poverty, sickness, and death. If it were left to our choice, we will choose to be rich and immortal.

The reality is we are mortal, limited, and weak. We will eventually die. Since death is inevitable, we must understand what life will be after death. According to Islam, there will be a day that all people will be risen and questioned for their deeds regardless of whom they are or when they died. Some people will enter Heaven while others will enter Hell, according to their deeds. There are three issues concerning that day:

1. **The Timing of the Day:** The time of that day is only known to God. It is a knowledge that is hidden from any human or

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non-human. We do know that when the day comes, it will be a profound shock to all in the world.

- 2. The character of the Day:** The day is characterized by 'The Call'. The call, metaphorically described as a trumpet horn, will sound twice. With the first sound everything will vanish (including people), and with the second sound all people will be resurrected. The resurrection is a Day of Testimony <sup>39</sup>, where all human kind will gather for questioning in front of their Lord.
- 3. The Consequences of the Day:** There will be eternal consequences for the deeds of each individual. Rewards will be granted for good deeds and retribution will be exacted for evil deeds.

**The signs of the Day of Judgment:** There are a clear signs that distinguish that remarkable Day:

- 1. The Destruction of the World:** The first trumpet will sound and the living will die. The sun, the stars, the oceans, and the sky will experience a violent end. The sun will be folded up; the stars will fall and lose their luster; the mountains will vanish; the oceans will boil over with a swell<sup>39</sup>; the planet earth will shake; and the graves will be unearthed.<sup>39</sup>
- 2. The Changing of the Earth:** The Earth will take on a new form to accommodate all people who have died since the time of Adam.

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3. **Resurrection from grave:** When the second trumpet is sounded the dead will emerge from their graves and each soul will reunite with its body. Each individual will be accompanied with two angels; one who leads the way and the other who witnessed all deeds individuals performed in their earthly life.<sup>39</sup>
  4. **The new earth will shine with God's glory:** All people will be summoned for judgment. Their record of deeds will be presented. Prophets and witnesses will be brought forth, and a just decision will be pronounced concerning each soul.<sup>39</sup>
  5. **Judgment** is based on the following factors:
    - (a) Each individual is judged independently. Each of us will be questioned about our deeds from the age of maturity to death.
    - (b) Each individual will defend his or her own self and will have the opportunity to argue, explain, and justify each action.
    - (c) All disputes between people, oppressors and oppressed, will be settled.
    - (d) There will be intercession for believers.
  6. **The Gates of Heaven and Hell will open:** Lastly, the gates of Heaven and Hell will open. People who deserve Heaven will be welcomed by angels with dignity and respect. Angels will greet them saying 'Peace be upon you! Well have ye done! Enter ye here, to dwell therein.'<sup>39</sup> On the other hand people who are condemned will be dragged

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with humiliation to Hell.<sup>39</sup>

**Heaven:** This paradise is described in the Quran as an eternal garden of peace and security. Inhabitants will be dressed in fine silk and rich brocade<sup>39</sup>; their hearts will be cleansed from greed, jealousy, and corruption. In this paradise there are fruit and drink, rivers and trees, handsome men and beautiful women, happiness and satisfaction. Its dwellers will never experience disease or death. This is the ultimate achievement.

**Hell:** This place is described as an eternal fire in utter darkness. Sinners will be fed from the Tree of *Zaqqum* which produces bitter fruit<sup>39</sup>. There will be undesirable food to eat and boiled water to drink. With all its brutal guardians and constant torture, there will not be death.

## Conclusion:

There is life after death. There will be a moment when life on this earth will cease. All things will vanish, and we all will be resurrected on a day called the Day of Judgment. It is the time that justice will be served, and Divine Integrity will be upheld. However, it is possible to avoid retribution through repentance, God's forgiveness, and the Prophet and Ahlul-bayt's intercession.

The Day of Judgment has descriptions and signs. It is described to be the day that God will show absolute justice on all

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His creation. Some of its signs are: universal disruption to living order, all people who died will be resurrected, their souls and bodies will be reunited, and every person will be judged according to his or her deeds. The doors of Heaven and Hell will be open to welcome its new inhabitants. Then absolute Justice will have been served.

## Texts from the Quran

The following are selected phrases from the Quran, related to the contents of this chapter:

1. *The Creator of the Heavens and the Earth:* (See they not that God, Who created the heavens and the earth, has power to create the like of them (anew)? Only He has decreed a term appointed, of which there is no doubt)<sup>39</sup>, (Is not He who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like thereof?" - Yea, indeed! For He is the Creator Supreme, of skill and knowledge (infinite!)<sup>39</sup>
2. *Every thing vanishes except God:* (And call not, besides God, on another god. There is no god but He. Everything (that exists) will perish except him [His own Face]. To Him belongs the Command, and to Him will ye (all) be brought back)<sup>39</sup>, (All that is on earth will perish: But will abide (for ever) the Face of thy Lord, - full of Majesty, Bounty and



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Honor)<sup>39</sup>, (He is the First and the Last.)<sup>39</sup>

3. *The nature of resurrection:* (It is God Who sends forth the Winds, so that they raise up the Clouds, and We drive them to a land that is dead, and revive the earth therewith after its death: even so (will be) the Resurrection!)<sup>39</sup>
4. *The deed and the resurrection:* (On that Day will human proceed in companies sorted out, to be shown the deeds that they (had done); Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good, see it! ; And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it.)<sup>39</sup>
5. *God forgives people:* (...But verily thy Lord is full of forgiveness for human kind for their wrong-doing, and verily thy Lord is (also) strict in punishment)<sup>39</sup>, (Say: "O my Servants who have transgressed against their souls! Despair not of the Mercy of God. For God forgives all sins: for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)<sup>39</sup>
6. *But He does not forgive those who set up partners with Him:* (God forgiveth not that partners should be set up with Him; but He forgiveth anything else, to whom He pleaseth; to set up partners with God is to devise a sin most heinous indeed.)<sup>39</sup>
7. *Prophet Muhammad's intercession is accepted:* (And pray in the small watches of the morning: (it would be) an additional prayer (or spiritual profit) for thee: soon will thy Lord raise thee to a Station of Praise and Glory! ; Say: "O my Lord!

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Let my entry be by the Gate of Truth and Honor, and likewise my exit by the Gate of Truth and Honor; and grant me from Thy Presence an authority to aid (me).")<sup>39</sup>, (Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permitteth?)<sup>39</sup>, (And those whom they invoke besides God have no power of intercession; only he who bears witness to the Truth, and they know (him).)<sup>39</sup>

8. *God accept repentance:* (Say: "O my Servants who have transgressed against their souls! Despair not of the Mercy of God. For God forgives all sins: for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)<sup>39</sup>
9. *The reward and the punishment hereafter:* (To those who do right is a goodly (reward)- Yea, more (than in measure)! Neither darkness nor shame shall cover their faces! They are companions of the garden; they will abide therein (for aye)! ; But those who have earned evil will have a reward of like evil: ignominy will cover their (faces): No defender will they have from (the wrath of) God. Their faces will be covered, as it were, with pieces from the depth of the darkness of night: they are companions of the Fire: they will abide therein (for aye)!)<sup>39</sup>, (That human can have nothing but what he strives for; That (the fruit of) his striving will soon come in sight: Then will he be rewarded with a reward complete; That to thy Lord is the final Goal.)<sup>39</sup>
10. *Judgment Day:* (In that is a Sign for those who fear the

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penalty of the Hereafter: that is a Day for which human kind will be gathered together: that will be a Day of Testimony. Nor shall We delay it but for a term appointed. The day it arrives, no soul shall speak except by His leave: of those (gathered) some will be wretched and some will be blessed.)<sup>39</sup>

11. *Destruction of the universe:* (When the sun (with its spacious light) is folded up; When the stars fall, losing their luster; When the mountains vanish (like a mirage); When the she-camels, ten months with young, are left untended; When the wild beasts are herded together (in the human habitations); When the oceans boil over with a swell; When the souls are sorted out, (being joined, like with like)<sup>39</sup>, (When the Sky is cleft asunder; When the Stars are scattered; When the Oceans are suffered to burst forth; And when the Graves are turned upside down; (Then) shall each soul know what it hath sent forward and (what it hath) kept back.)<sup>39</sup>
12. *Changing of the earth planet:* (One day the earth will be changed to a different earth, and so will be the heavens and (human) will be marshaled forth, before God, the One, the Irresistible.)<sup>39</sup>
13. *People resurrect from graves:* (And the Trumpet shall be blown: that will be the Day whereof Warning (had been given); and there will come forth every soul: with each will be an (angel)

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to drive and an (angel) to bear witness)<sup>39</sup>, (They say: "What! When we are reduced to bones and dust, should we really be raised up (to be) a new creation? ; Say: "(Nay!) Be ye stones or iron; "Or created matter which, in your minds, is hardest (to be raised up),- (Yet shall ye be raised up)!" then will they say: "Who will cause us to return?" Say: "He who created you first!" Then will they wag their heads towards thee, and say, "When will that be?" Say, "May be it will be quite soon!")<sup>39</sup>

14. *New earth planet shines with God's glory:* (The Trumpet will (just) be sounded, when all that are in the heavens and on earth will swoon, except such as it will please God (to exempt). Then will a second one be sounded, when, behold, they will be standing and looking on! ; And the Earth will shine with the Glory of its Lord: the Record (of Deeds) will be placed (open); the prophets and the witnesses will be brought forward and a just decision pronounced between them; and they will not be wronged (in the least); And to every soul will be paid in full (the fruit) of its Deeds; and (God) knoweth best all that they do.)<sup>39</sup>
15. *Doors of Heaven open:* (And those who feared their Lord will be led to the Garden in crowds: until behold, they arrive there; its gates will be opened; and its keepers will say: "Peace be upon you! Well have ye done! enter ye here, to dwell therein"; They will say: "Praise be to God, Who has

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truly fulfilled His Promise to us, and has given us (this) land in heritage: We can dwell in the Garden as we will: how excellent a reward for those who work (righteousness!)")<sup>39</sup>, (As to the Righteous (they will be) in a position of Security; Among Gardens and Springs; Dressed in fine silk and in rich brocade, they will face each other; So; and We shall join them to Companions with beautiful, big, and lustrous eyes; There can they call for every kind of fruit in peace and security; Nor will they there taste Death, except the first death; and He will preserve them from the Penalty of the Blazing Fire; As a Bounty from thy Lord! that will be the supreme achievement!)<sup>39</sup>

- 16.** *Doors of Hell open:* (The Unbelievers will be led to Hell in crowd: until, when they arrive, there, its gates will be opened. And its keepers will say, "Did not apostles come to you from among yourselves, rehearsing to you the Signs of your Lord, and warning you of the Meeting of This Day of yours?" The answer will be: "True: but the Decree of Punishment has been proved true against the Unbelievers!" (To them) will be said: "Enter ye the gates of Hell, to dwell therein: and evil is (this) Abode of the Arrogant!")<sup>39</sup>, (Verily the tree of Zaqqum [a tree has bad smell and its fruit make the human body swollen]; Will be the food of the Sinful; Like molten brass; it will boil in their insides; Like the boiling of scalding water; A voice will cry: "Seize ye him and drag him

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into the midst of the Blazing Fire!” Then pour over his head the Penalty of Boiling Water.)<sup>39</sup>

## Glossary:

**Eschatology:** The branch of theology that is concerned with the final things, such as death or the destiny of human beings.

**Intercession *Shafa'a*:** An act of Prophet Muhammad and other members of Ahlul-bayt to save followers, from their sin, by a prayer or petition to God on their behalf.

**Judgment Day:** The Day when the fate of all creatures of God will be decreed according to the good and evil deeds they committed during their earthly life.

**Repentance:** An act of remorse that is sincerely felt by the sinner who vows to never repeat that sin again.

**Resurrection:** The act of the rising of the dead on Judgment Day, and uniting their souls with their bodies. This act is characterized by *the call*, which is metaphorically described as a trumpet horn. This trumpet will sound twice. With the first sound all living things will vanish. With the second sound all people will be resurrected.

## Practical Notes:

- 1- Islam advises believers to perform their moral duties in life to gain Heaven in hereafter. A clean record from sins will guarantee an entrance to eternal paradise. Our goal should

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be to strive until our good deeds outweigh our bad deeds  
on the scale of balance.

## Notes:

- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 81:7.
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 2:260.
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 39:53
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 2:255
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 2:177
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 21:105
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 59:8
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 39:64
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 30: 12
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 16:105
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 11:103-105
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 81:1-6
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 82:1-5
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 50:20-21
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 39:68-70
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 39:73-74
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 39:71-72
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 44:51-57
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 44: 43-49
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 17:99
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 36:81
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 28:88
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 55:26-27.
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 57:3.
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 35:9
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 99:6-8
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 13:6
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 39:53
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 4:48
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 17:79-80
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 2:255
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 43:86
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 39:53
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 10:26-27
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 53:39-42
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 11:103-105
- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 81:1-6

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- <sup>39</sup> The Quran 82:1-5
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 14:48
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 50:20-21
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 17:49-51
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 39:68-70
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 39:73-74
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 44:51-57
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 39:71-72
  - <sup>39</sup> The Quran 44: 43-49



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