

THE INTRODUCTORY TOPICS OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

THE NATURE AND MEANING OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

- ✓ Literally, the word Qur'an is derived from the Arabic word, **Qara-a**, which means to read. This implies that the holy Qur'an is a book that should be read.
- ✓ Technically, the holy Qur'an is defined as *the speech of Allah revealed to Prophet Muhammad PBUH through Angel Jibril for the guidance of mankind.*
- ✓ The message in the holy Qur'an was revealed in its precise meaning and wording. That is, it is simple and direct to the point. It is only expounded by Prophet Muhammad PBUH.
- ✓ The holy Qur'an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad PBUH in 610 AD when he was meditating in the cave of Hira at age of forty.
- ✓ The holy Qur'an is the original source of Islamic law and the real foundation on which the super structure of Islam is built.

THE NAMES/ATTRIBUTES OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

1. In various verses, the holy Qur'an calls itself different names which illustrate its importance, nature and divinity.
2. In Q (2:2), it calls itself al-Kitaab (the book) because it is a written book and complete in itself.
The above verse says; *"This is the Book; in it there is no doubt, a guide to those who fear Allah"*
3. It calls itself al-Furukaan (the criterion); because it is a yardstick between what is right and what is wrong.
Allah says in **Q (25:1)** *"Blessed is He who sent down the criterion to His servant, that it may be a warning to all creatures"*
4. Q (15:9) refers to it as al-Dhikir (the reminder); since it reminds mankind the purpose of his creation on earth.
Allah says in **Q (51:56)**; *"I did not create Jinn and man except to worship me"*
5. In Q (26:192), it is referred to as a-Ta'aziir (the revelation); because it was revealed by Allah, the Most High.
6. Mother of the book (Ummul Kitaab): This implies that the holy Qur'an is a source of Allah's commandments and a guardian over the previous scriptures.
7. It is called al-Hakiim (the judge) in Q (13:37); because it judges to what is most right.
8. In Q (17:9), it is referred to as al-Hikima (the wisdom); because it was revealed by Allah, the most Wise.

THE NEED FOR THE REVELATION OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

Before the revelation of the holy Qur'an, the world was in total darkness divided by the existing religious groups such as Christianity, Hanafism, Buddhism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism and others.

Unfortunately, the earlier revealed books had been corrupted and despite their present teachings, the world needed yet another book, a need which was fulfilled by the holy Qur'an.

REASONS FOR THE REVELATION OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

1. The holy Qur'an was revealed to guide mankind to the straight path because many people had forgotten completely the oneness of Allah.

Allah says in **Q (2:2)**; *"This is a book in which there is no doubt, a guide to the righteous"*

2. The holy Qur'an was revealed to restore Allah's message to man because the earlier scriptures had been corrupted by man's worldly desires and selfish interests. Books such as Tauret, Zabur and Injir were no longer serving the purpose for which they were revealed.

The prophet (SAW) said; *"Recitation of surat al-Fatiha summarizes the earlier revealed books."*

3. The holy Qur'an was revealed to finalize prophet hood where Prophet Muhammad PBUH is the seal of all Allah's prophets.

Allah says in **Q (33:40)**; *"He is the apostle of Allah and the last of the prophets."*

4. It was revealed to end Allah's message to man because the earlier revealed books contained prophecies of the coming of the last messenger with the final message from Allah. This was fulfilled by the revelation of the holy Qur'an.

Allah says in **Q (5:3)**; *"This day I have perfected your religion for you and completed my favour up on you. I have chosen Islam to be your religion."*

5. The holy Qur'an was revealed to act as the first source of Islamic law because it is the criteria between what is right and what is wrong.

Allah states in **Q (17:9)**; *"This Qur'an guides to what is most right..."*

6. The holy Qur'an was revealed to unite mankind who had been divided by the warring tribes in Arabia before the advent of Islam. The holy Qur'an was to act as an umbrella of unity for the various tribes which were enemies to one another before its revelation.

Allah says in **Q (49:10-13)**; *"The believers are but brothers: so make peace and reconciliation between your two brothers and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy."*

7. The holy Qur'an was revealed to remind mankind about the oneness of God. That is why Allah sent Prophet Muhammad PBUH to teach man His nature and attributes contained in Qur'an 112.

8. It was revealed to fulfill Allah's promises and prophecies of the coming of the last Message and messenger contained in earlier scriptures.

Allah says in **Q (61:6)**; *"And remember, Jesus, the son of Mary, said; 'O children of Israel! I am the messenger of Allah sent to you, confirming the law before me, and giving glad tidings of the messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad' ..."*

9. The holy Qur'an was revealed to narrate and summarise the stories and events of earlier generations in order to offer teachings, lessons, warnings and guidance to shape human beings.

Allah says in **Q (12:111)**;

“There is, in their stories, instruction for men invested with understanding. It is not a story created but a confirmation of what went before it....”

10. It was revealed to give courage to the Prophet PBUH whenever he was offended by the Quraish Meccans. For example during the Futra period, Allah sent **Q(93:3)** to assure the Prophet PBUH that his Lord had not forsaken him nor was He displeased with him.

Allah says in **Q (93:3)**; *“Your Lord has neither forsaken you nor hates you.”*

11. It was revealed to warn transgressors of Allah’s wrath on the day of judgement and to give good tidings to the righteous. The reward for the righteous is paradise while hell is the final destination for the wrongdoers.

12. There was need to bring about a spiritual advancement in human mind so that it could correspond to the social evolution he had undergone. This is supported by the fact that the holy Qur’an is a book of all times.

13. The holy Qur’an was revealed to answer Prophet Ibrahim’s prayer found in **Q (2:129)** who upon completing the construction of the Kaaba together with his son Ismail supplicated to Allah to raise from among the descendants of Ismail (Arabs) a messenger to recite to them His signs and teach them the book of wisdom and purify them. Hence, a justification for the revelation of the holy Qur’an as a book of wisdom.

14. It was revealed to stop the wide spread of immorality especially the Jahiliyya practices since the Arabs were the worst in disbelief as per **Q (9:97)**.

15. It was revealed to act as a source of wisdom to man. Allah says in **Q (12:2)**;

“Indeed We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur’an, in order that you may learn wisdom.”

16. It was revealed to universalize Allah’s message because the earlier scriptures had been sent to particular regions and nations e.g Jesus was sent to the Israelites with the Injil while Musa was sent to the Jews with the Tauret. Therefore, there was need for a book that could univerlise Allah’s message, hence the revelation of the holy Qur’an.

Allah says in **Q (81:27)**; *“Verily! This is no less than a message to all worlds (nations)”*

17. The revelation of the holy Qur’an was aimed at curbing down the rate of illiteracy that had loomed wide in the world. That is why Allah started with an illiterate prophet and the first verses in the holy Qur’an pointed at the importance of education, not any of the prevalent Jahiliyya practices.

Allah says in **Q (96:1-5)**;

*“Read in the name of your Lord who created.
Created man from a clot of blood.
Read! And your Lord is the Most Bountiful one,
who taught by the pen, taught man what he did not know.”*

18. The holy Qur’an was revealed due to Allah’s will. This is because according to **Q (36:82)**, when He decrees a thing, He just says be and it is.

THE REVELATION OF THE HOLY QUR'AN
(Stages of Qur'anic revelation)

1. The holy Qur'an was not revealed to Prophet Muhammad PBUH as a whole but it was revealed to him in piecemeal.
2. It was revealed to the prophet for a period of 23 years, 2 months and 22 days between AD 610 and 632 in the two noble cities of Mecca and Madiina.
3. Before its revelation, the holy Qur'an was kept by Allah on the 'preserved tablet', where His revealed books were kept before being given to their recipients.

Allah says in Q (85:21-22); *"... this is a Glorious Qur'an, in a Tablet Preserved."*

4. From the Tablet Preserved in the 7th heaven, it was brought as a whole on the 1st heaven by angel Jibril, from where its verses were brought to the Prophet PBUH according to the circumstances of the time.
5. Prophet Muhammad PBUH received the 1st message at the age of forty in 610 AD in one of the nights of the month of Ramadhan while meditating in the cave of mountain Hira.
6. The night in which the holy Qur'an was revealed is described in the holy Qur'an as the '**Night of Power**'.

Allah says in Q (97:1); *"We have indeed revealed this message in the Night of Power."*

He also says in Q (2:185); *"Ramadhan is the month in which was sent down the Qur'an, as a guide to mankind..."*

7. While in the cave of Mount Hira meditating, Prophet Muhammad PBUH fell asleep and suddenly heard a voice calling him "Muhammad." When he woke up, the voice told him to read.
8. Muhammad (SAW) answered that he could not read but the voice insisted that he had to read. After terribly squeezing him and confirming that he could not read, the voice told him to read thus;
*"Read in the name of your Lord who created.
Created man from a clot of blood.
Read! And your Lord is the Most Bountiful one,
who taught by the pen, taught man what he did not know."*

This was the first revelation of the holy Qur'an which is now found in **chapter 96, verses 1-5** of the holy Qur'an.

9. The experience of this revelation shook and stunned the prophet and hurried to his wife Khadijah whom he asked to cover him with a blanket. When he recovered his composure, he narrated to her the story of his experience.
10. He was concerned that he was hallucinated or had lost his mind but Khadijah assured him that he was balanced and that his experience had some super natural explanation.
11. She took him to her friend, **Waraq ibn Naufal**, who had knowledge of previous scriptures. Waraq confirmed that Muhammad's experience resembled that of Moses and other prophets and, therefore, he had also become a prophet of Allah.

12. Between the first and second revelation, there was a period of recess of three years called **FUTRA PERIOD** without any message coming to the prophet, during which the Meccans mocked the prophet that Allah had forsaken him until when **Q74:1-4** was revealed.
13. In the beginning, verses came to the prophet PBUH in intervals and in small bits but as time went by, it grew both in frequency and volume until when it almost came like a continuous stream.
14. Furthermore, revelations came over the remaining thirteen years of the prophet's life in Mecca and ten years in Madiina.
15. By the time of his death, the revelation composed of 114 chapters. The last chapter being Surat al-Taubah (Repentance) numbered 9th while the last verse believed to be **Q (5:3)**.

Q (5:3) says: *“Today I have completed for you your religion, fulfilled upon you my favours, and approved for you Islam as your religion.”*

WHAT EVIDENCE IS THERE TO SHOW THAT THE HOLY QUR'AN WAS REVEALED IN STAGES?

1. Prior to its revelation, the holy Qur'an was on the Tablet Preserved where all the revealed scriptures of Allah were kept before they were given to their recipients as Allah shows in **Qur'an (85:21-22)**.
2. It should also be noted that it descended from the seventh heaven to the first heaven as a whole in one of the nights of the month of Ramadhan brought by angel Jibril.
3. From the first heaven, it was revealed to Prophet Muhammad PBUH in portions according to conditions of the time.
4. There is ample evidence both in the holy Qur'an and traditions to support the fact that Prophet Muhammad PBUH did not receive the holy Qur'an as a whole.
5. The first evidence comes from **Q(76:23)** where Allah says;

“It is We Who have sent down the Qur'an to you by stages.”
6. When the unbelievers asked themselves as to why the holy Qur'an was not revealed in wholesome if it was from Allah, Allah answered them in **Q(25:32)** which says;

“Those who reject the faith say ‘why was the Qur'an not revealed to him all at once’ thus, it is revealed that We may strengthen your heart thereby and We have rehearseditto you inslow well-arrangedstages, gradually.”
7. It is generally believed that **Q (96:1-5)** was the first message to be received by the prophet (PBUH) while in the cave of Mount Hira and that the second message **Q (74:1-4)** found him covered in his bed. This means that if the holy Qur'an was revealed all at once, these two scenarios would not happen.
8. The existence of the Futra period justifies the fact that the holy Qur'an was revealed in bits. The prophet PBUH spent three years without any revelation from Allah after the first message in the cave of Mount Hira.
9. The concept of abrogation also gives evidence that holy Qur'an was not revealed as a log of wood. Some verses could be changed and then replaced with better ones, an indication that they were not all sent at once.

Allah says in **Q (2:106)**; *“None of our verses do we abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but we substitute something better or similar...”*

10. Another evidence comes from the prophet’s tradition where he discouraged his companions not to write anything from him apart from the holy Qur’an. It is reported that the prophet found his companions writing his traditions and questioned what they were writing and warned them not to write anything from him apart from the holy Qur’an. This instruction shows that verses did not come all at once.
11. The existence of Meccan and Medinan chapters is yet another evidence to show that the holy Qur’an was revealed in portions. The prophet (PBUH) spent thirteen years in Mecca and later migrated to Medina where he stayed for ten years. Out of 114 chapters in the holy Qur’an, 92 were revealed in Mecca while he received 22 chapters in Medina.
12. Furthermore, the presence of the first and last verses in the holy Qur’an simply means that the prophet PBUH did not receive the holy Qur’an wholly. It is generally believed that **Q(96:1-5)** was the first verse in the holy Qur’an and that despite the arguments surrounding the last verse, most of the Muslim scholars believe that it was **Q(5:3)** which says;

“Today I have completed for you your religion, fulfilled up on you my favours, and approved for you Islam as your religion.”

13. The prophet’s words also give clear evidence that he did not receive the holy Qur’an at ago. While answering a question about his experience on reception of a Qur’anic verse, the prophet PBUH said;

“And sometime the angel could come to me in a shape of a man, talk to me and grasp whatever he said to me”

The expression *“And sometime the angel could come to me”* is enough to show that it was not coming to the prophet PBUH regularly and so and used to receive the message in bits.

14. Lastly, using simple logic, it is clear that the prophet PBUH spent 23 years of messengership during which he was subjected to untold torture by the Quraish Meccans. To any sensible person, he can deduce that he did not receive the holy Qur’an all at once.

REASONS FOR THE REVELATION OF THE HOLY QUR’AN IN STAGES

1. Firstly, Allah wanted to strengthen the prophet PBUH during the difficult and challenging moments as per **Q (25:32)**. He could use the received verses to win the confidence of the people depending on the circumstances of the time.
2. The interval between the different revelations gave chance to the believers to witness the fulfillment of the prophecies contained in the already revealed verses. Thus, fortifying their faith.
3. It was intended to give the prophet PBUH answers to the questions raised by the disbelievers on different issues. For example, when he was asked to describe the nature of his God, chapter 112 was sent to him.
4. The holy Qur’an was revealed in stages to counter some of the methods employed by the disbelievers to deter the prophet PBUH from spreading Islam. A case in point is when they tricked him to worship their idols first so that they worship Allah in turn. **Chapter 109** was then revealed disregarding the mixture of truth with falsehood.

5. It was revealed in portions to meet the demands of the time among the Muslims and enable the prophet PBUH solve a dilemma he was facing. For example, he did not know how to deal with the accusation against his wife Aisha and Allah revealed **Q (24:11)** that enabled him to deal with the accusers.
6. The holy Qur'an was revealed in piecemeal to give the believers enough time to grasp what they had learnt from the prophet PBUH. It would be difficult for them to understand the divine message if it had been revealed to them all at once.
7. There was need to refute the assumption by the disbelievers that the Prophet PBUH had got the holy Qur'an prepared by somebody else or himself if it had come as a complete book.
8. Allah wanted to give the Quraish Meccans enough time to discard the Jahiliyya practices. This is because evils such as zina, infanticide, obscenity, alcoholism e.t.c had strongly entrenched among the Jahiliyya Arabs such that it would be hard for them to discard them in short while.
9. Furthermore, the holy Qur'an was revealed in stages to enable the Muslims commit it to memory. It would be hard for them to memorize 114 chapters all at once.
10. Allah wanted to expose the hypocrites. This is because every time the verses of the holy Qur'an were revealed, the hypocrites would buckle under pressure and they could not keep up with the commandments of Allah.
11. Allah wanted to challenge the non-believers. Thus Allah says in **Q(2:23)**;

“And if you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down to our slave, then produce a chapter of the like thereof and call your witnesses besides Allah, if you are truthful.”
12. It was revealed in stages to inform the Muslims about the behaviours that hurt the holy Prophet PBUH. For example Allah revealed **Q (33:53)** to prevent the prophet's companions from entering his house anyhow.

“O you who believe! Do not enter the prophet's houses until leave is given to you ... that shall be an enormity in Allah's sight!”
13. There was need by Allah to tip-off the Prophet PBUH about an imminent scenario. For example **Q (48:11)** was revealed to inform the Prophet PBUH what the hypocrites were planning to say to him when he returned to Medina after refusing to march with him to Hudaibiyah while in **Q (48:15)** Allah wanted to inform the Prophet PBUH that he was going to conquer Khybar.
14. The holy Qur'an was revealed in stages to eradicate superstitions that had cropped up among the believers. There was a superstition among the Jews that if you impregnate the wife while in doggy style, the baby will be born with a squinted eyes. **Q (2:223)** was revealed to tell the Muslims that they can make love to their wives in any position except sodomy.
15. It was revealed in stages because some verses were intended to abrogate others while later verses could confirm or throw more light on earlier revealed messages. For example, Q (2:240) and Q (2:234) which specify the time a widow stays in her deceased's property.
16. In conclusion, the revelation of the holy Qur'an in stages was due to Allah's will as He states in **Q (36:82)** that when He intends a thing, He just says be and it is.

MODES OF REVELATION

1. According to the holy Qur'an, revelation refers to the message from Allah containing guidance to His people. It can be an individual message or for a common lot.
2. Modes of revelation refer to the ways through which revelation (message) from Allah reaches His creation/people.
3. According to the holy Qur'an, it is not right for man to speak to Allah directly except through stipulated ways.

Allah says in Q (42:51); *“It is not fitting for a man that Allah should speak to him except by inspiration, or from behind a veil, or by the sending of a messenger...”*

4. From the above verse, three modes of revelation are mentioned i.e inspiration, speaking from behind a veil and messengership.
5. **Inspiration**; this is a mode of revelation where Allah's message is thrown into the heart of a righteous person or prophet or messenger to enable him deal with a given situation.
6. The message contained in this mode of revelation can be a command from Allah or a suggestion or a prohibition or an explanation of the great truth.
7. Inspiration is not a message in words but simply an idea which comes like a flash and clears up a doubtful or hard situation.
8. Important to note also is that inspiration does not come as a result of meditation. That is, a person to receive Allah's message through this mode does not have to seek for it from Allah.
9. Prophet Ibrahim (AS) received Allah's message through this mode. While asleep, he had a voice telling him to fulfill his promise to Allah of sacrificing his son, Ismail.
10. In Q (37:99-103), Prophet Ibrahim accepted to offer his son as a sacrifice but as he tried to slaughter him several times and failed, Allah substituted him with a sheep which he finally sacrificed. This finally gave rise to Eid al-Adhuha in Islam.
11. Another example of inspiration came from Prophet Musa's mother. When pharaoh vowed to kill every male child born in Misiri to save his power, Musa was still in his infancy and he was among pharaoh's targets.
12. According to Q (28:7-14), to save Musa, Allah revealed (inspired) to her mother the secrets of pharaoh and gave her ways of protecting her son by putting him down the stream.
13. Prophet Muhammad PBUH also provided a solution on how to replace the 'Black Stone' after repairing the Kaaba before his messengership. The wisdom he used to bring together the Quraish tribes that were about to shed blood was inspired in him by Allah.
14. Inspiration is regarded as inner revelation. This is confirmed by the traditions of Prophet Muhammad PBUH such as where he said; "The holy spirit has inspired this into my heart"
15. **Speaking from behind a veil**; this is a means of revelation where Allah's message is communicated directly to a righteous person in form of words.

16. This form of revelation is common to both prophets and righteous men. The message is brought in form of words being spoken to a chosen person but behind a veil.
17. The veil referred to here is a mystic veil of light but not material veil where the speech of Allah comes from. The recipient of the message is neither asleep nor fully awake.
18. According to Islam, only three people have ever spoken to Allah directly under this mode of revelation i.e Prophet Adam (AS), Prophet Musa (AS) and Prophet Muhammad PBUH.
19. According to Q (2:30-38), Prophet Adam (AS) spoke to Allah when he was being taught the names of all Allah's creatures in the universe and during the time he was being condemned by Allah for eating the forbidden fruit.
20. According to Q (27:7-14), Prophet Musa (AS) spoke to Allah on Mount Sinai and he was given a mission to go and liberate the Israelites from Misiri. He wanted to see Allah but he was barred by the mystical light.
21. Q (17:1) speaks about Prophet Muhammad PBUH on the Night journey. It was during this journey that he spoke to Allah when he was being given the five daily prayers.
22. However, it should be noted that none of these three prophets has ever seen Allah with their naked eyes. They spoke to Him from behind a veil.
23. **Messengership**; this is a mode of revelation in which the messenger bearing Allah's message is sent to the recipient and delivered in words.
24. This is the highest form of divine revelation which is sometimes referred to as revelation that is recited.
25. What happens is that the messenger (Angel) bearing Allah's message is sent to the prophet chosen by Allah. The Angel entrusted with divine revelation is Jibril.
Allah says in Q (2:97); *"Say: Whoever is an enemy to Jibril; for he brings down the revelation to your heart by Allah's will..."*
26. This mode of revelation is restricted to only prophets where the divine message is delivered in actual words.
27. It is important to note that the holy Qur'an from the beginning up to the end was delivered to Prophet Muhammad PBUH in this form by Angel Jibril.
Allah says in Q (16:102); *"Say, the Holy Spirit has brought the revelation from your Lord in truth, in order to strength those who believe..."*
28. Unlike the other modes of revelation, messengership is accompanied by a violent change in the recipient. The burden of the message is not only felt by him but it is also visible by those who see him.

THE PROPHET'S EXPERIENCE OF THE REVELATION

1. Prophet Muhammad PBUH received the first message in 610AD at the age of 40 while he meditating in the cave of Mount Hira in the month of Ramadhan. This is when he first experienced the impact of the divine revelation.

2. Prior to disclosure of the message, he was commanded to read several times by the voice he did not know but insisted that he could not read until when he was strongly squeezed.
The prophet said; *“He seized me to such an extent that I was quite exhausted”*
3. After telling him what to read and introducing himself to him, Angel Jibril left but the Prophet PBUH thought that he had been possessed by the evil spirits and ran home immediately with in shock and fear.
4. He asked his wife Khadijah to cover him in his bed before narrating the experience in the cave while trembling.
5. Before he received the second revelation, the Prophet PBUH experienced a recess period of three years without any message from Allah. During this period, he faced a number of mocks and abuses from the Quraish Meccans that his God had forsaken him.
6. In the subsequent revelations, he continued to experience the effects of the Holy Spirit.
Lady Aisha narrates; *“I saw revelation coming down upon him on the coldest of the day and when the message was over, sweat ran down his forehead.”*
7. A companion by the names of Ubaidah stated that whenever revelation was sent to the prophet, he felt like one in grief and a change could come over his face.
8. Another companion called **Zaid bin Thabit** said that he was sitting with Prophet Muhammad PBUH and his legs were under those of the prophet PBUH. When revelation came upon him, he felt his legs were being crashed by the weight of the prophet’s legs.
9. Sometimes the prophet’s face could change whenever he received the revelation. A companion called **Y’ala** narrates that he saw the prophet’s face turning red after receiving revelation.
10. He used to receive revelation in two ways. That is, sometimes like the ringing of a bell and sometimes Angel Jibril physically appeared to him in shape of a man.
11. The hardest form was the ringing of a bell because the words of Allah were uttered to him like the ringing of a bell in a harsh and hard tone.
12. Angel Jibril used to appear to the prophet (PBUH) in different shapes. Sometimes in shape of a man and gently talked to him.
13. One time Jibril appeared to the prophet (PBUH) in full shape of an angel with six hundred wings covering the horizons of the earth.

- Question:**
- a) **Examine the mode in which the holy Qur’an was revealed.**
 - b) **Explain the significance of the above mode.**

Approach:

- a) - Define the term Qur’an and modes of revelation.
- State the verse that supports the modes of revelation Q (42:51)
- Indicate that the main mode in which the holy Qur’an was revealed is messengership.
- Elaborate messengership in detail.

b) Significance of messengership as a mode of revelation.

- It strengthened the faith of the Muslims after witnessing the prophet’s experiences whenever he received the message e.g **Y’ala** and **Zaid bin Thabit**.
- It confirms angel Jibril as the chief angel responsible for bringing Allah’s message to prophets.
- It illustrates the miraculous nature of the holy Qur’an as being the only book revealed in this mode.
- It contributed to the gradual development of the Islamic law because verses were revealed according to the demands of the time.
- It illustrates the difficulty the prophet PBUH encountered in his mission given the experiences he went through whenever he received the revelation.
- It serves to explain to man the stages of the revelation of the holy Qur’an.
- It contributed to the fine arrangement of the holy Qur’an because angel Jibril used to guide the Prophet as to where to fix which verse in which chapter.
- It accounts for the uniqueness of the holy Qur’an from the earlier revealed books.
- It shows the unmatched power of Allah because He used to reveal Qur’anic verses according to the circumstances of time.
- It confirms the authenticity of the holy Qur’an and its originality from Allah. **Ref: Q 2:97**

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REVELATION OF THE HOLY QUR’AN IN ARABIA TO AN ARAB PROPHET

1. It is clearly known that the holy Qur’an was revealed in Arabia in the two noble cities of Mecca and Madiina to an Arab prophet and in Arabic language.
2. It should also be noted that in the whole of Arabia, it was largely revealed in Mecca. Out of the 114 chapters in the holy Qur’an, 92 were revealed in Mecca and only 22 were revealed in Madiina.
3. As it is in Islam, there is also justification for the revelation of the holy Qur’an in Arabia to an Arab prophet in Arabic language and largely in Mecca.
4. It was revealed in Arabia because the Arabs of the desert were the worst in disbelief and hypocrisy compared to other peoples of the world.

Allah says in **Q(9:97)**; *“The Arabs of the desert are the worst in disbelief and hypocrisy, and most fitted to be in ignorance of the command which Allah has sent down to His Messenger...”*

5. Allah wanted to fulfill the prophecy in the earlier scriptures in which He promised the Israelites to send to them a prophet from among their brothers. In the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy, the descendants of Prophet Ismail are the Arabs who are the brothers of the Israelites, the descendants of Prophet Ismail’s brother, Isaiah. This justifies the revelation of the holy Qur’an to an Arab prophet.
6. Allah wanted to answer Prophet Ibrahim’s prayer because after building the Kaaba together with his son Ismail, Prophet Ibrahim prayed to Allah to raise from among the descendants of Ismail (Arabs) a messenger to recite to them His signs and teach them the book of wisdom and purify them. Hence, a justification for the revelation of the holy Qur’an to an Arab prophet.

Allah says in **Q (2:129)**; *“Our Lord! Send amongst them a messenger of their own, who shall teach your signs to them and instruct them in scripture and wisdom...”*

7. Geographically, Mecca is located in the centre of the world and it was therefore suitable to be the beginning point of the divine revelation. It would be easier to disseminate Islam from the centre of the world than from its outskirts like China or India, hence a justification for the revelation of the holy Qur’an largely in Mecca.
8. The Arabs were excellent in memorialization and were fond of competing in poem recitation. Since the holy Qur’an was a book to be memorized, it became apparently clear that Allah first revealed it among the great memorizers.
9. The nature of Arabia; Arabia is a desert and because of this, Arabs were always on the move looking for water and pasture. So they were seen as perfect agents of spreading Allah’s words in the areas where they went.
10. Kaaba, the first house of worship, was built in Arabia in the holy city of Mecca. Therefore, it could have been because of this that Allah decided to reveal the holy Qur’an in Arabia and particularly in Mecca.
11. Mecca is also described in the holy Qur’an as the “mother of cities” or “mother town”. This is because it was not only a commercial and political centre at the time of the advent of Islam but also a centre of spiritual eminence from where all humanity sucked the milk of spiritual life.

Allah says in **Q (6:92)**; *“And this is a book which We have sent down, bringing blessings and confirming which came before it: that you may warn the mother of cities and all around her...”*

12. The holy Qur’an was revealed in Arabic because of the known hardheartedness and extreme harshness of the Arabs. They could not have received it if it had been revealed in any other language other than Arabic as per **Q (41:44)**.
13. The prophet to whom the holy Qur’an was revealed was an Arab and he did not know how to read and write. Therefore, it would not be logical for him to receive a message in a medium he could not communicate to the people correctly. Hence, its revelation in Arabic.
14. The holy Qur’an was revealed in Arabic to facilitate its protection and preservation. If it was revealed in any other language well versed with the enemies of Islam, it would be easy for them to copy and change the Qur’anic message.
15. Arabic is also described as the most expressive and comprehensive language with a number of phrases and words that can discuss any topic precisely and thoroughly. It is because of this that it is described as the ‘mother of tongues’, hence suitable for medium of Allah’s revelation.
16. It was revealed in Arabic for man to learn wisdom since at this time the world was generally so low in morality. This is confirmed by Allah in **Q (12:2)**;

“We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur’an, in order that you may learn wisdom.”

17. It was due to Allah’s will to decide the time and place of the revelation of the holy Qur’an and the person to receive it as per **Q (36:82)**.

THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

1. This refers to the evidence presented by the Muslims to refute allegations by the critics of Islam that the holy Qur'an is not a word of Allah but a fabrication of Prophet Muhammad PBUH.
2. Firstly, it is true that while meditating in the cave of Mount Hira, Prophet Muhammad PBUH was unexpectedly visited by Angel Jibril who revealed to him the divine message in words contained in **Q (96:1-5)**.
3. However, the opponents of Islam allege that this message was formulated by Muhammad PBUH himself because it happened at the time he was labouring for such a spiritual experience and that he did not see the angel but he was possessed by the evil spirits.
4. This is a false allegation born out of envy and mere mischief on the side of the enemies of Islam intended to taint the person of Prophet Muhammad PBUH and the image of Islam.
5. There is ample evidence from the holy Qur'an itself, the prophet's traditions, history and logic to refute the allegation that the holy Qur'an was Muhammad's formulation.
6. Considering the first verse **Q (96:1-5)**, the critics of Islam claim that the Prophet PBUH was struck with fear because he was possessed by the evil spirits. Logically, one would ask himself why he would be hit with distress for the message he fabricated himself!
7. It is historically clear that the Prophet PBUH secluded himself to the cave of Mount Hira to meditate to Allah to change the situation in Mecca. However, **Q (96:1-5)** never made any emotional reference to the evils of Pre-Islamic Arabia. The question is that why he did not point in the verse to what had taken him in seclusion if he was the author of the book.
8. Between the first and second revelation, there was a time lapse of nearly three years during which the Prophet PBUH was bitterly abused by the Pagan Quraish claiming that his God had forgotten or forsaken him. He would not stand that embarrassment and mistreatment if he was the fabricator of the message.
9. In addition, the Prophet PBUH received the message in the holy Qur'an for a period of over 22 years. During this period, the Quraish Meccans subjected him and his followers to all kinds of torture including fighting the great battles. If he had fabricated the book, he would have revealed all its message at once to avoid such torture.
10. Lady Khadijah who first proved Muhammad's messengership was a respected and trusted business lady in Mecca. He was further proved that he had become a messenger of Allah by **Waraq ibn Naufal**, a renowned Jahiliyya Arab with the knowledge of previous scriptures. Therefore, claiming that he fabricated the book is sheer envy on the side of the pagans.
11. The experience the Prophet PBUH underwent through the course of the revelation also proves that he did not formulate the message himself. For example, perspiration would run down his face during the coldest of the day. No man would subject himself to such hard experience if he was the author of such divine message.
12. The order in which the chapters and verses of the holy Qur'an were arranged forms a basis to refute the accusation that it was formulated by a human being like Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

The continuity of the subject matter which characterizes the Qur'anic verses is beyond human capacity to conceive.

13. It is historically upheld that Prophet Muhammad PBUH did not know how to read and write. Therefore, it is surprising to attribute to him such words which even the great professors and philosophers of the day failed to interpret and resorted to him for explanation.
14. Likewise, even the Quraish Meccans who are the masters of the language in which the holy Qur'an was revealed could not understand the message not until it was explained by the Prophet PBUH, hence showing how authentic the message in the holy Qur'an is.
15. The critics of Islam also claim that the holy Qur'an contains words of the prominent companions of the prophet PBUH like **Q (3:144)** which they attribute to Abu Bakar (RA). It says;

“Muhammad is no more than a messenger: many were the messenger that passed away before him. If he died or were slain, will you then turn back on your heels? If any did turn back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah; but Allah will swiftly reward those who serve Him with gratitude.”

However, this is not true because there were many companions of the Prophet PBUH who had committed holy Qur'an to memory with the same content. Referring to **Q (3:144)**, when Abu Bakar read it to them, none of them came out to dispute it.

16. Related to the above, the opponents of Islam argue that Prophet Muhammad PBUH deliberately fixed his name in the Qur'an. They claim that the holy Qur'an was put on a Preserved Tablet before his birth and becoming a prophet. However, this is an expression of narrow thinking because such people know that Allah does what He wants and determines man's destiny before his birth.
17. The enemies of Islam also blindly use **Q (17:1)** to criticize the holy Qur'an. They claim that **Isra wal Miraj** was such an important event that Allah could not just summarise it in one verse. However, this is mere lack of critical thinking because Allah does whatever He wants and there so many other important aspects of Islam, moreover Ibadat which Allah does not elaborate e.g Salat (prayer).
18. Considering the concept of abrogation, the foes of Islam argue that Prophet Muhammad PBUH was forgetful and that he used to replace the forgotten verses with new ones. However, this is clear manifestation that they lack the knowledge of the revelation of the holy Qur'an. Besides, Prophet Muhammad PBUH was a human being liable to forgetting like any other human being.
19. However, sufficient evidence of the divine nature of the holy Qur'an comes from the verses of its message.

Q (52:33-34) states; *“Do they say ‘he forged it?’ No! But they have no faith. Let them produce a book like it if they speak the truth”.*

20. This outstanding challenge is further repeated in the following verses;

Q (17:88) says; *“Say: ‘If the whole of mankind and Jinn were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they backed each with help and support”.*

Surprisingly, none of the great professors or philosophers or authors of the world have come out to face this divine challenge even when Allah simplified it to ten chapters and then to one surah in the subsequent verses.

Q (11:13) says; *“Or they may say ‘He forged it,’ Say, bring then ten chapters forged like unto it, and call to your aid whomsoever you can, other than Allah, if you speak the truth.”*

Q (10:38) reduces the challenge to only one chapter (surah) where Allah says;

“Or do they say ‘He forged it?’ say; bring then a surah like unto it and call to your aid anyone you can besides Allah if you speak the truth!”

21. The holy Qur’an attributes the fine arrangement of its verses and chapters and the continuity of its subject matter to Allah but not Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

Q (75:17) says; *“It is for Us to collect it and to promulgate it”*

22. The absence of contradictions in the holy Qur’an is clear manifestation that it was revealed by Allah, the Most Wise. This is because there is no human being immune to errors and if the Prophet PBUH had fabricated the book, there would surely be errors.

Q (4:82) states; *“Do they not consider the Qur’an with care? Had it been revealed from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy”*

23. The holy Qur’an being the only book covering every aspect of human life is an exclusive feature confirming its authenticity from Allah. This is because no man can author a book that deals with the entirety of mankind.

Q (6:38) says; *“...Nothing have We omitted from the Book...”*

24. The fact that the protection and preservation of the holy Qur’an is offered by Allah is a clear sign that it originates from Him because He cannot protect what He did not write or produce.

Q (15:9) states; *“We have, without doubt, sent down the message and We will surely guard it from corruption”*

25. The presence of messages in the holy Qur’an about stories which happened so many years ago before the birth of Prophet Muhammad PBUH is enough to prove that he did not fabricate the book e.g stories of past prophets like Musa, Nuhu, Ibrahim, Adam e.t.c. This is because as a human being, he could not tell what happened a thousand years before he was born unless inspired in him by Allah.

Q (6:92) states; *“This is a book which We have sent down, bringing blessings and confirming which came before it...”*

26. The holy Qur’an completely confirms its revelation from Allah in this clear manifestation.

Q (29:51) says; *“Verily, this is a revelation from the Lord of the Worlds”*

Q (3:7) states; *“He it is He Who has sent down to you the Book...”*

Q (10:37) says; *“The holy Qur’an is not such as can be produced by other than Allah”*

27. In conclusion, it is on the basis of the above evidence stipulated in the holy Qur'an and reason, that one refutes the allegations posed by the critics of Islam that the message in the holy Qur'an was fabricated by Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

- Revision question**
- a) **What evidence is there to show that the holy Qur'an traces its origin from Allah?**
 - b) **Show how Muslims have maintained the holiness of the Qur'an.**

THE MIRACULOUS NATURE OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

1. Miraculous nature of the holy Qur'an refers to the challenges contained in the Qur'an which her opponents have failed to meet and its unique features that have led its critics powerless.
2. A miracle is an act done without the use of one's knowledge or experience. Like other prophets, Prophet Muhammad PBUH was also given a miracle to prove the authenticity of his messengership to his people.
3. The miracle which was given to Prophet Muhammad PBUH is the holy Qur'an. He is reported to have said;

"Every prophet was given a miracle because of what his people believed in and what has been given to me is the holy Qur'an which Allah has revealed to me"

4. The holy Qur'an has put in place many challenges which many people have failed to meet and therefore, qualifying it as a living miracle of Prophet Muhammad PBUH. The following are the features which prove the miraculous nature of the holy Qur'an:
5. The holy Qur'an is the only book which has retained the language in which it was revealed. The other revealed books as old as the holy Qur'an or even less are no longer in their original languages in which they were respectively written. Their language standards are either old or outdated which is not the case with the holy Qur'an.
6. In addition, the holy Qur'an was revealed in Arabic, a language which has defeated the Arabs on many occasions regarding the meaning and interpretation of the holy Qur'an despite being the masters of the language. For example, no one has been able to copy its composition and literature or produce the words and arrange them as they appear in the holy Qur'an.
7. The impact of the holy Qur'an on the hearts of its listeners also forms its miraculous nature. It is noted that the impact of Qur'anic recitation attract the attention of all those hearing it and that is why during the early days of Islam the Arabs used to shout by drumming, whistling and putting fingers in their ears for fear of being astonished by the Qur'anic recitation. Caliph Umar bin Khattab converted to Islam under this influence.
8. The holy Qur'an presents in its verses outstanding challenges for all times and places which no person has been able to meet and thus qualifying it as a miracle. For example, it challenges mankind and Jinn to produce a book like it if they think it is not a revelation from Allah.

Q (17:88) says; *"Say: 'If the whole of mankind and Jinn were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they backed each with help and support"*

The challenge is further reduced to merely ten chapters as it is stated in **Q (11:13)**;

Q (11:13) says; *“Or they may say ‘He forged it,’ Say, bring then ten chapters forged like unto it, and call to your aid whomsoever you can, other than Allah, if you speak the truth.”*

Q (10:38) reduces the challenge to only one chapter (surah) where Allah says;

“Or do they say ‘He forged it?’ say; bring then a surah like unto it and call to your aid anyone you can besides Allah if you speak the truth!”

It is challenging to note that although a chapter (surah) can be only one line, no person, not even the great philosophers of the world or even Jinn has been able to produce a single word like that of the holy Qur’an.

9. The way the holy Qur’an addresses religion is itself miraculous. It throws light on all the fundamentals of religion ranging from Tawheed, reward and punishment, future life, revelation to life in paradise and hell. It also offers solutions to the most difficult problems of this life like distribution of inheritance and sex problems. When dealing with such matters, it gives a reason for every assertion made hence qualifying it as a miracle.
10. Another miraculous nature of the holy Qur’an is shown by the change it brought in the world in a short period of time. Within a short time of less than 23 years, there was complete transformation in the lives of the Arabs from Jahiliyya practices to worship of one God and disappearance of all pre-Islamic practices. There is no other book in the world which has brought about change in man’s life so miraculously like the holy Qur’an.
11. The holy Qur’an explains and expands the previous scriptures in such a clear and comprehensive manner as no other scripture has done. It contains a number of stories of past nations and prophets, some of which did not even find mention in the previous books. It is thus miraculous of the holy Qur’an to possess such knowledge even a learned or greatest professor of the world cannot acquire.
12. The holy Qur’an is the only book which covers every aspect of human life. There is no subject in the daily life of mankind that is not covered in the holy Qur’an. It deals with law, theology, science, history and geography. Even though it does not give details when dealing with them, it throws light on each of them.

Q (6:38) says; *“...Nothing have We omitted from the Book...”*

13. The way the holy Qur’an has maintained its authenticity since its revelation is also miraculous. All the books revealed before it were corrupted and lost their original purity. However, this is not the case with the holy Qur’an whose purity is safeguarded by Allah.

Q (15:9) says; *“We have, without doubt, sent down the message and We will surely guard it from corruption”*

14. The holy Qur’an is very large in size but it does not contain any error yet it was revealed to an illiterate prophet. After nearly fourteen centuries, the book does not possess any slight contradiction despite the great change man has undergone since its revelation. This is indeed a characteristic feature of a miraculous book.

Q (4:82) states; *“Do they not consider the Qur’an with care? Had it been revealed from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy”*

15. Another miraculous nature of the holy Qur’an is found in the way it is committed to memory. Despite having a large volume, the holy Qur’an is the only book which is committed to memory by a large number of people in the world. This is a unique feature of the holy Qur’an because not a single book of similar volume that has been memorized.
16. The holy Qur’an is the most recited book in the whole world. It is recited five times in prayer per day by nearly over three billion Muslims world over. This is very strange because there is no any other book that enjoys the same advantage.
17. The arrangement of the holy Qur’an is also miraculous. Its arrangement did not follow the chronological order of its revelation but it was organized in a way that suits the needs of all people of all times and places. It will remain permanently in use today and by the people to come in subsequent times. This is an exclusive feature of the holy Qur’an only.
18. The holy Qur’an is not a book of science but some of its verses reveal many secrets of wonder in the field of science. It talks about reproduction, continental drift, composition of the outer space and many others.

Q (36:33-34) says; *“A sign for them is the earth that is dead: We do give it life and produce grain therefrom, of which you do eat...”*

Modern science has proved a lot of Qur’anic facts and great scientists have used the holy Qur’an in the field of science research e.g Q (23:13-14) clearly illustrates the scientific explanation of reproduction in humans. This shows the miraculous power of the holy Qur’an.

19. In conclusion, the holy Qur’an remains the only unchallenged book in the whole world and therefore, the greatest miracle the world has ever had. It shows how special Prophet Muhammad PBUH is and how wise Allah is, its author.

Miracles which Allah gave to other messengers

1. Prophet Isa (Jesus)
 - He spoke when he was still young.
 - He healed the blind, lepers, deaf and dumb.
 - He walked on water.
 - He fed eight thousand people with two loaves of bread. **Ref: Q 3:49**
2. Prophet Musa
 - He threw down his stick and turned into a big serpent in front of pharaoh. Q 7:107
 - He put his hand in the pocket and removed it while shinning. Q 7:108
 - He struck a rock and twelve streams of water gashed out. Q 2:60
 - He struck his stick in Red Sea and made seven ways in the sea for him and his follows to escape from pharaoh.
3. Prophet Sulaiman
 - Strongest of all Allah’s messengers/prophets. He soldiers from humans, jinn, birds, animals, insects, wind and all living creatures.
 - He could communicate to all living creatures of Allah. Q 27:16

4. Prophet Ibrahim

- He was thrown in fire by his enemies and stayed there for some time and came out of it unharmed. Q 21:28
- He produced a son at a very old age which Allah refers to as a blessing bestowed on him. Q 37:112

5. Prophet Adam

- He named all Allah's creatures put before him.
- Angels prostrated before him except Iblis.
- Allah sent him on earth as His vicegerent.

6. Prophet Yusuf

- He was eaten by a big sea fish but throw him back on land alive after staying in its womb for three days.

THE QUR'ANIC TESTIMONIAL

1. Qur'anic testimonial refers to the verses in the holy Qur'an in which it testifies to its merits. The idea is that the holy Qur'an talks about itself and that in so doing it gives evidence about itself.

The following are some of the verses in which the holy Qur'an testifies about itself:

2. Q (26:192) states; *"Verily, this is a Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds"*

In this verse, the holy Qur'an testifies that like the earlier books; its message also came from Allah. The only difference is that the message in earlier scriptures was sent to specific people but the holy Qur'an is a universal book.

3. Q (44:3) says; *"Truly, we sent it down during a Blessed Night..."*

The verse gives testimony as to when the holy Qur'an was revealed. That it was revealed in a blessed night which Muslims generally believe that it falls in the last ten nights of Ramadhan.

4. Q (12:2) says;

"We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an in order that you may learn wisdom"

Here, the holy Qur'an explains why it was revealed in Arabic language. That believers may learn knowledge from Allah, the Most Wise.

5. Q (4:82) states;

"Do they not consider the Qur'an with care? Had it been revealed from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy"

This verse shows that the holy Qur'an came from Allah and that the evidence to this, is the absence of errors in it.

6. Q (15:9) says;

"We have, without doubt, sent down the message and We will surely guard it from corruption"

In this verse, the holy Qur'an talks about itself as having come from Allah and therefore, He is its Supreme Guardian.

7. Q (3:5) states;

“He it is who has revealed to you the Book: In it are verses fundamental in meaning; they are the foundation of the book: others are allegoric (abstract)...”

In this verse, the holy Qur’an talks about the types of verses Allah revealed in it and their role in the book.

8. Q (2:2) says;

“This is the Book; in which there is no doubt, a guide to the righteous”

Here, the holy Qur’an testifies that it is a perfect book in which there is no doubt because it was revealed by one full of wisdom.

It also talks about the holy Qur’an as a book because of its nature e.g it was collected, compiled, written and its message is well arranged like other books.

The same verse refers to the holy Qur’an as a guide because it guides to what is most right since it came from Allah.

9. Q (10:2) states;

“Is it a matter of surprise to men that We have sent Our inspiration to a man from among themselves? That he should warn mankind and give the good news to the Believers...”

The above verse testifies that it contains authentic message from Allah whose purpose is to warn transgressors and to give glad tidings to the believers.

10. Q (6:155) says;

“And this is a Book which we have revealed as a blessing: so follow it and be righteous that you may receive mercy”

This verse testifies that the holy Qur’an is a revealed book which contains all the everlasting teachings and eternal truth formerly found in the previous scriptures.

It further illustrates that whoever follows the holy Qur’an and believes it, he receives mercy from Allah.

11. Q (38:29) states;

“Here is a Book we have sent down unto you, full of blessings that they mediate on its signs, and that men of understanding may receive caution”

Here, the holy Qur’an testifies that it contains Allah’s signs which believers should take time to think about as a warning of what will befall man on the day of judgement in what he disobeyed.

12. Q (21:24) says;

“...this is the message of those with me and the message of those before...”

In this verse, the holy Qur’an affirms that it is a book of all times because it summarizes the message revealed in earlier scriptures at the same catering for the present and future generations.

13. Q (39:23) states;

“Allah has revealed the most beautiful message in the form of a book, consistent with itself, yet repeating its teaching in various aspects...”

Here, the holy Qur’an describes itself as a book whose verses are mutually supportive of each other with no contradiction.

14. Q (52:33-34); says;

“Do they say ‘he forged it?’ No! But they have no faith. Let them produce a book like it if they speak the truth”.

The holy Qur’an openly challenges her critics that they cannot produce the like of it even if they seek assistance from the Jinn.

15. Q (16:98) mentions;

“When you recite the holy Qur’an, seek Allah’s protection from Satan the rejected one”

In this verse, the holy Qur’an teaches us how we should behave when reading it. That we have to seek protection from Allah against the rejected Satan so as to understand what it teaches.

16. Q (7:204) states;

“When the Qur’an is read, listen to it with attention and hold your peace that you may receive mercy”

Here, the holy Qur’an testifies that it is a book of respect which must receive attention when it is being recited.

It also affirms that listening to the holy Qur’an when it is being read is a form of worship such that whoever does so receives Allah’s mercy.

17. Q (25:30) says;

“Then the messenger will say ‘O my Lord! Truly my people took this Qur’an as a thing to be discarded”

Here, the holy Qur’an testifies to what will happen to the Muslims who neglect it and throw it behind their backs.

18. In analysis, one observes that the holy Qur’an has much to describe about itself in a clear and fundamental testimony that has never been presented by earlier revealed scriptures.

Many verses have been left out which give Qur’anic testimonial. What has been given above are just mere examples.

THE COLLECTION AND COMPILATION OF THE HOLY QUR’AN

1. Compilation of the holy Qur’an means the process of collecting all the written Qur’anic verses that were recorded during the prophet’s time into a book form.
2. During the prophet’s time, the holy Qur’an was written on different loose materials such as barks of trees, skins, leaves, stones and others basing on his instructions and supervision.
3. The compilation of the holy Qur’an was a process because it passed through gradual stages which were the prophet’s time, the caliphate of Abu Bakar, the caliphate of Uthman and the Umayyad time.

4. **The prophet's time;** this was the period between 610 and 632 AD, from the time of the first revelation until when the prophet died.
5. Throughout this period, revelation was still coming down and although it came in portions, it had some kind of order and arrangement.
6. Allah says in Q(25:32) "...and We have rehearsed it to you in slow well-arranged stages gradually." It was this format that the prophet PBUH and his scribes followed when collecting the various Qur'anic verses.
7. Traditionally, the Prophet PBUH assigned some of his companions the duty of writing down the Qur'anic verses as he instructed and supervised them.
8. The popular scribes of the holy Qur'an among the prophet's companions were Zaid bin Thabit, Ali bin Abu Talib, Ibn Abbas, Abu Musa, Abu Huraira, Abu Bakar, Uthman, Aisha and others.
9. Whenever the Prophet PBUH received a verse, he immediately ordered his scribes to write it down under his supervision.
10. Verses were written on loose materials such as bones, barks of trees, skins, leaves, and others which were highly protected to avoid them landing in hands of the enemies of Islam.
11. To ensure purposeful recording of the holy Qur'an, the Prophet PBUH is reported to have given the following instructions;

"Do not write anything from me apart from the holy Qur'an."

"Do not take the holy Qur'an on journey with you, for, I am afraid that it may land into the hands of the enemy."
12. Whenever a verse was revealed to the Prophet PBUH, he would instruct his writers that write it in such a chapter next to such and such a verse until when revelation stopped in 632 AD.
13. It should be noted that during the prophet's time, most of the Arabs were illiterate and relied mainly on their memories to preserve the divine revelation.
14. By the time of the prophet's death in 632AD, the holy Qur'an had been committed to memory by majority of the Muslims while they still kept the written scriptures.
15. It should further be noted that the Prophet PBUH did not leave a compiled text of the holy Qur'an. It was after his death that the holy Qur'an was compiled into a book form.
16. However, immediately after the prophet's death, a companion called Ali bin Abu Talib vowed not to leave his house before he had produced a compiled text of the holy Qur'an from his memory.

FACTORS THAT LIMITED THE COMPILATION OF THE HOLY QUR'AN DURING THE PROPHET'S TIME

- a) The Prophet PBUH died nine days just after the end of the revelation and so he did not get enough time to effect its compilation.
- b) In the last days of the prophet PBUH, he was very sick such that he could not organize the holy Qur'an into a book form.

- c) The compilation process was limited by the lack of adequate and suitable writing materials like pens and papers. Things like skins and leaves of trees could not be relied on.
 - d) There were few Muslims who could read and write during the prophet's time and the prophet PBUH himself was illiterate.
 - e) During the prophet's time, most of the Arabs were mainly good at memorization and they had committed the holy Qur'an to memory. So the need for compiling it was at its lowest.
 - f) During the prophet's time, the Prophet PBUH and other Muslims were pre-occupied with wars against the enemies of Islam. So they did not have enough time to deal with Qur'anic compilation.
 - g) Further still, during this time, Muslims were relatively few and almost everybody had memorized the holy Qur'an, hence a delay in its compilation.
 - h) The Prophet PBUH who was the source of the holy Qur'an was still alive and any issue could be referred to him for a solution. So Muslims attached less importance on compiling the holy Qur'an into a book form.
 - i) The concept of abrogation also limited the compilation of the holy Qur'an into a book form. The Prophet PBUH feared that he would include verses that would later be abrogated by Allah.
 - j) During the prophet's time, revelation was still coming down and the Prophet PBUH did not know when it would end. So he could not compile it for fear of leaving out some verses that would be revealed after the compilation exercise.
 - k) The Prophet PBUH did not get instruction from his Master to compile the holy Qur'an into a book form until when he died. So he could not do what Allah had not instructed him to do.
 - l) Most of the companions of Prophet Muhammad PBUH were traders and so they had limited time to combine learning the holy Qur'an, trading and at the same time involve themselves in compiling it.
 - m) Following Q(36:82), it was due to Allah's will for the Prophet PBUH not to compile the holy Qur'an into a book form.
17. **Caliph Abu Bakar's time (2nd stage)**; this was the period between AD 632 and 634, immediately after the death of the Prophet PBUH.
 18. After the prophet's death, there emerged wars of apostasy especially during Abu Bakar's caliphate.
 19. During one of the battles called Yamamah, many Qur'anic memorizers were killed and each died with his portion of the holy Qur'an.
 20. After the battle, one of the great companions of the Prophet PBUH called Umar bin Khattab became concerned after seeing many Qur'anic reciters dying.
 21. He cautioned Caliph Abu Bakar that if the same incident happened again, part of the Qur'an in memories of the companions would be lost. He thus proposed that the holy Qur'an be compiled into a book form.
 22. At first, Caliph Abu Bakar was hesitant to compile the holy Qur'an into a book form because the Prophet PBUH never did it nor did he instruct the Muslims to do so. So he feared to make innovation in Islam.

23. However, Umar bin Khattab continued to make his point and at last after consulting other prominent companions of the Prophet PBUH, Caliph Abu Bakar accepted to have the holy Qur'an compiled.
24. Abu Bakar chose a committee chaired by Zaid bin Thabit assisted by companions like Abdallah Ibn Masuud to effect the compilation of the holy Qur'an. Thus, Zaid bin Thabit reports;

"I collected the holy Qur'an from its original recording and from the memories of men."
25. The holy Qur'an was compiled from the pieces left behind by the Prophet PBUH and its order had to be certified by the companions who had it by heart like Lady Aisha and Hafiswat.
26. The holy Qur'an compiled by Caliph Abu Bakar was in Quraish dialect. A copy of it was kept by the caliph and another one with Lady Hafiswat. Many other copies of different dialects were produced and circulated in the Muslim world. This remained a state of affairs during the caliphate of Umar bin Khattab.
27. **Caliph Uthman's time (3rd stage)**; during his reign, Caliph Uthman realized that there were many copies of the holy Qur'an in the Muslim state being read in different dialects (languages) thereby bringing a difference in its reading and meaning.
28. As a result, Muslims understood the holy Qur'an differently and for it being the basic code of Sharia, Muslims got divided on the major teachings of the holy book.
29. Caliph Uthman reacted swiftly to solve the problem and with the consent of other prominent companions, he collected and burnt all the copies that were not in the original dialect of the holy Qur'an (Quraish).
30. They were replaced with a standard copy written according to the prophet's accent and language.
31. The caliph kept one copy at Madiina and distributed many others in all Muslim cities with a reciter to demonstrate the correct recitation of the holy Qur'an.
32. Thus, since then, the standardized copy (Uthmanic text) has been in use without any slightest change in words, order or even punctuation marks.
33. **The Umayyad time**; During this time, the Arabs found it difficult to read the holy Qur'an without vowels. A man called **Hujaji bin Yusuf** saved the situation by inserting vowels in the standardized copy. Hence, making it easier to read.

WHY WAS THE HOLY QUR'AN COMPILED INTO A BOOK FORM?

1. Death of many Qur'anic memorizers as a result of Ridah wars during Abu Bakar's caliphate especially during the battle of Yamamah.
2. The materials on which the holy Qur'an was previously collected and written were loose and could easily be lost e.g bones, leaves, and others. So there was need to remove it from scattered materials.
3. There was need to deal with false prophets such as Talha and Musailama who wanted to mix their words with the words of Allah.
4. The rise of conflicts about the interpretation of the holy Qur'an also necessitated its compilation into a book form.

5. Need to teach Islam to the new converts using the holy Qur'an dictated its compilation into a book form.
6. Need to preserve the holy Qur'an for the future generation.
7. Death of the Prophet PBUH yet he was the source of guidance for the Muslims.
8. Need to have the laws of the holy Qur'an compiled in one volume as a source of sharia.
9. The development of technology that saw the emergence of suitable writing materials such as pens and papers.
10. The expansion of the Islamic empire that necessitated the sending of Allah's message to all corners of the Muslim world.
11. The great influx into Islam and the increase in the number of Muslims.

IMPORTANCE OF THE COMPILED TEXT OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

1. It helped to save the holy Qur'an for the future generation because its memorizers were dying in Ridah wars (wars of apostasy).
2. It made it easy for the spread of Islam because all the divine laws of Allah were intact and moving with them became simple.
3. It also facilitated its memorization because it is easier to memorise from the same book than reading from scattered scripts.
4. It made it easy for Muslims to use the holy Qur'an in administration because all its laws were collected in one text book.
5. The standardized copy produced by Caliph Uthman saved the Muslim community from getting divided because it came with uniform reading and meaning.
6. The holy Qur'an contains a lot of information in our contemporary life and therefore compiling it facilitated research in various aspects like science.
7. It displayed the passion and love the companions of the Prophet PBUH had for Islam which is a lesson for modern Muslims to follow.
8. The burning of the disputed copies of the holy Qur'an by Caliph Uthman is a lesson to Muslims that they should always be on alert to deal with anything bound to bring disunity among the Muslims.
9. It facilitated the recitation of the holy Qur'an especially for non-Arab Muslims by Hujaji bin Yusuf who added vowels to it.
10. The reluctance Caliph Abu Bakar showed when he was first approached by Umar bin Khattab to compile the holy Qur'an is a lesson for the Muslims to be strictly mindful of innovation (**Bidi-a**) in Islam.
11. Caliph Abu Bakar accepted to compile the holy Qur'an into a book form after mutual consultation with the prominent companions of the Prophet PBUH. This is a lesson for modern Muslim leaders not to be dictators but also involve others (consultation) in matters affecting Islam.

12. We learn from the prophet's time that whenever he received a verse, he instructed his companions to write it down. Muslims should also take writing down of Muslim documents seriously and keep them safely.
13. It helped to differentiate the prophet's words (hadith) and those of his companions (Athar) from Allah's words because the later were compiled in one uniform book.

HARDSHIPS FACED IN COMPILING THE HOLY QUR'AN

1. The holy Qur'an was compiled after the death of the Prophet PBUH and this became a problem because he was the supreme source of knowledge for the Muslims.
2. The Islamic state had a problem of the enemies of Islam especially from the Byzantine Empire who wanted to destroy Islam completely.
3. There was a problem of hypocrites in Islam. These behaved like real Muslims but wanted to fight Islam from within after failing to fight it from out.
4. Death of the memorizers of the holy Qur'an especially during the battle of Yamamah posed a big problem because they were part of the sources of the divine message in absence of the prophet PBUH.
5. Illiteracy among the Muslims. By this time, most of the Muslims still could not read and write and this meant that the compilation exercise was left in hands of the few literate and trustworthy Muslims.
6. Writing materials such as pens and papers were still inadequate and this proved a problem to the compilers of the holy Qur'an and those present were of poor quality.
7. The exercise faced stiff opposition from the prominent companions of Prophet Muhammad PBUH arguing that it was Bidi-a (innovation) in Islam since the Prophet PBUH never did it nor did he instruct the Muslims to do it.
8. There was too much controversy among the great reciters of Islam on whether to include some of the abrogated verses or not. This delayed the compilation exercise.
9. The Islamic state had grown too big and Muslims had scattered in different parts of the world. So it became hard to collect the verses of the holy Qur'an from the memorisers in scattered areas.
10. The compilers lacked adequate funds to facilitate the exercise. For example money was needed for buying writing materials and transporting the compilers to different parts of the Islamic state to meet the memorisers.
11. Some of the materials on which the holy Qur'an was written during the prophet's time had disappeared while others had rotten. This became a problem in collecting the Qur'anic verses for compilation.
12. Different Muslim groups wanted to write the holy Qur'an in their original languages and this brought about difference in its understanding, reading and meaning until when caliph Uthman bin Affan standardized it.

Qn: Examine the role played by the following individuals in the compilation of the holy Qur'an.

- a) Prophet Muhammad PBUH. c) Zaid bin Thabit
b) Abu baker d) Uthman bin Affan

a) Prophet Muhammad PBUH

- Refer to the notes on the prophet's time during the compilation of the holy Qur'an.

b) Abu Baker

- He was the first successor of Prophet Muhammad PBUH.
- It was during his reign that the idea was conceived.
- He carried out Ridah wars against false prophets in which memorisers of the Qur'an and caused alarm to companions like Umar bin Khattab.
- He resisted the idea in the beginning to avoid **Bidi-a** in Islam but later accepted it.
- He carried out consultations with the prominent companions of the prophet PBUH before effecting the compilation of the holy Qur'an.
- He elected a committee chaired by Zaid bin Thabit and charged it with the duty of compilation the holy Qur'an.
- He looked for suitable writing materials for compilation of the divine book.
- He was an active member of the committee by giving advice on conditions guaranteeing the purity and authenticity of verses.
- He ordered that only the scripts that were written and supervised by the prophet PBUH be used in the process of compilation.
- He was among the undisputed memorisers of the holy Qur'an and therefore, he was referred to when cross-checking and verifying the verses.
- He kept the original compiled copy by the committee until his death.
- He wanted to have abrogated verses included in the compiled text.

c) Zaid bin Thabit

- He was one of the prominent companions of the prophet PBUH and his chief scribe.
- He used to write down Qur'anic verses as they came down to the prophet PBUH.
- He was one of the best reciters of the holy Qur'an and he used to recite it for the prophet PBUH.
- He was among the best memorisers of the holy Qur'an.
- He was the chairman of the compilation committee appointed by Abu Baker.
- He was among the companions consulted on whether the Qur'an be compiled or not.
- He carefully checked the authenticity of each verse before compiling it.
- He actively involved in the decision whether to include abrogated verses or not.
- He continued his role to Uthman's caliphate where he led acted as the chairman of the committee that standardized the holy Qur'an.
- All the issues related to Qur'anic compilation were referred to him.

d) Uthman bin Affan

- Third caliph (success) of the prophet PBUH.
- Was among the scribes of the prophet PBUH.
- Was among the committee nominated by Abu Baker.
- He standardized the holy Qur'an.
- Distributed the holy Qur'an to different learning centres.

- Ordered the burning of the false copies of the holy Qur'an.
- Established Qur'anic compilation centres in Persia, Madina, Yemen and others.
- Was a great memorizer of the holy Qur'an.
- Taught people how to read and write which simplified the work of compilation.

PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

1. Preservation of the holy Qur'an means the measures taken by Muslims to protect the holy Qur'an in order to retain its spiritual status as it was revealed by Allah through Angel Jibril to Prophet Muhammad PBUH.
2. It is certainly clear that the holy Qur'an has purely retained its purity without a slight change in words, order or punctuation marks despite being in use for fourteen centuries.
3. The protection and preservation of the holy Qur'an rests entirely on Allah and man through Him also offers protection to the holy book. In this case, man refers to the Prophet PBUH, the caliphs and the entire Muslim community.

Allah's Protection

4. It should be noted that the first protection offered by Allah to the holy Qur'an occurred when it was still in heaven on the tablet preserved.

Q (85:21-22) says; *"This is a Glorious Qur'an on the Preserved Tablet"*

5. In addition, Allah scornfully replied to those who thought that they could corrupt the holy Qur'an when He said in **Q (41:42)**; *"No falsehood can approach it from before or behind it..."*
6. Furthermore, Allah continued to protect the holy Qur'an even after revealing it to Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

Q (15:9) says; *"We have, without doubt, sent down the message and We will surely guard it from corruption"*

7. Again, it should be noted that even at the time of collection and compilation of the holy Qur'an when it seemed easy for the pagan Quraish to corrupt the Qur'anic message if they desired, Allah continued to protect it when He said in **Q (75:17)**;

"It is for Us to collect it and to promulgate it"

8. Following the above verse, the Arabs who maybe wanted to introduce their words in the holy Qur'an did not manage as its promulgation lies with Allah.
9. However, Muslims through the grace of Allah have also put in place measures to protect the holy Qur'an right from the Prophet's time to date.

The Role of man in the protection and preservation of the holy Qur'an

10. It is reported that whenever the Prophet PBUH received a verse, he would call on his scribes to write it immediately by telling them that put it in such and such a chapter next to such and such a verse. This saved the Qur'anic message from getting lost.
11. The prophet PBUH discouraged his followers from writing down anything from him apart from the holy Qur'an. He at one time said; *"Do not write anything from me except the holy Qur'an"*

12. In addition, the Prophet PBUH looked for suitable writing materials at that time where to record the holy Qur'an. He encouraged his followers to write it on stones, leaves and barks of trees, bones, hard rocks and others for purposes of saving it from getting lost.
13. Today, the holy Qur'an has continued to be preserved in the same method. Many copies of it have been printed including Qur'anic pamphlets, charts, textbooks, and others. This is aimed at preserving the divine message.
14. Prophet Muhammad PBUH encouraged his followers to memorise the holy Qur'an. He said;

“Whoever puts the holy Qur'an to memory shall be saved from the torment of hell”

With this, many Muslims memorized the holy Qur'an, thereby offering protection to it.
15. Today, Muslims have continued to preserve the holy Qur'an in the same way. Adult and young Muslims have committed it to memory and most cases prizes are given to the best memorisers to encourage others to do the same. Hence, offering protection to the divine book.
16. Frequent recitation of the holy Qur'an was another method employed by the prophet PBUH to protect and preserve the holy Qur'an. He encouraged his followers to read the holy Qur'an every day especially in prayer to enable them learn and understand it.
17. Today, Muslims also recite the holy Qur'an especially in the five daily prayers. They also organize Qur'anic recitation competitions and award winners so as to encourage them read more of the holy book, hence protecting it.
18. Transmission as a method was also applied by the prophet PBUH to protect and preserve the holy book. He encouraged his followers to transmit Qur'anic knowledge to those who would be absent during his preachings. Many companions in turn taught their fellows especially on how to read the holy Qur'an.
19. Today, transmission still applies as many Muslims are taught in mosques, public seminars and several women are taught by their husbands at home. Hence ensuring that the holy message is protected.
20. Prophet Muhammad PBUH trained his companions with the aim of teaching the holy Qur'an to others especially in far distant places. This served to protect the holy Qur'an.
21. He further used to supervise his Qur'anic reciters to ensure that they gave clear instructions to their students. This ensured that pure message was passed on to the Muslims.
22. During the caliphate period, Abu Bakar (RA), on the advice of Umar bin Khattab, compiled the holy Qur'an into a book form as a way of preserving it after noticing the death of many Qur'anic memorisers in the battle of Yamamah.
23. During the caliphate of Uthman bin Affan, the Qur'an was standardized by burning all the Qur'anic copies that were not in the original dialect in which it was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH). Thereby bringing about unified recitation and meaning of the divine message.
24. The Umayyads through Hujaji bin Yusuf added vowels in the compiled text of the holy Qur'an to make it easy for reading especially by non-Arab Muslims.

25. Due to improved technology, Muslims have recorded the Qur'an on modern gadgets e.g tapes, discs, computers and others. All this is aimed at protecting and preserving the heavenly message.
26. Muslims have set up libraries and museums where copies of the holy Qur'an are kept. Certainly, whatever item bearing any Qur'anic message is highly preserved.
27. In many Muslim families, copies of the Qur'an are kept and at least a copy in every mosque. Many Muslim agencies have distributed copies of the holy Qur'an in schools and mosques to encourage Muslims to recite and memorise it as a way of protecting and preserving it.

THE HOLINESS OF THE QUR'AN

Evidence from the holy Qur'an to show that it is a holy book

1. It was revealed and taught by Allah Himself. Allah says in Q 55:1-2
 "Allah Most Gracious it is He Who has taught the holy Qur'an."
2. It was revealed in a holy month of Ramadhan in the night of power. Allah says in Q 2:185
 "Ramadhan is the month in which was sent down the Qur'an as a guide to mankind..."
3. It was revealed through the Holy Spirit i.e Angel Jibril, the head of all angels with the duty of delivering Allah's message to His selected people. He says in Q 26:192-193
 "Verily! This is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds, with it came down the spirit of faith and truth..."
4. It is not touched by one with ceremonial impurities such as post child birth bleeding, post sexual dirt and others. However, the cleanliness does not stop on the body but also the mind. Allah says in
Q 56:77-79
 "That this is indeed a Qur'an most honourable, in a book well-guarded, which none shall touch but those who are clean."
5. One must seek refuge from Allah against Satan before reading the holy Qur'an. Allah says in **Q 16:98**
 "When you read the Qur'an, seek Allah's protection from Satan the rejected one."
6. Some verses attract prostration by the reciter and the listener e.g **Q 7:2016** and **Q 96:19**.
7. It is not read by one in a hurry but in a slow measured rhythmic motion. Allah says in **Q 73:4**
 "Or a little more and recite the Qur'an in slow, measured rhythmic tones."

How Muslims have maintained the holiness of the Qur'an?

Through the following ways, Muslims have shown that the Qur'an is a holy book and that they attach a lot of sacredness (purity) to it.

1. No Muslim reads or touches the holy Qur'an except when he or she has wudhu.
2. A Muslim wears his or her best clothes when he/she is going to read the holy Qur'an.
3. The holy Qur'an is read by the Muslims while facing in the Qibla.
4. At every Muslim function, a portion of the holy Qur'an is read as the opening prayer.
5. One pauses his or her recitation of the holy Qur'an when yawning.
6. One does not interrupt his or her recitation of the holy Qur'an and speak, except if necessary.

7. A Muslim pays strong attention to what he or she is reading in the holy Qur'an.
8. On recitation of the holy Qur'an, a Muslim pauses at a verse which mentions a reward and ask Allah for that reward.
9. At the same time, a Muslim pauses at a verse which mentions a punishment and seek protection in Allah from that punishment.
10. After reading the holy Qur'an, a Muslim does not leave it open.
11. Muslims do not place anything on top of the holy Qur'an.
12. A Muslim does not raise his or her voice to the extent of confusing others reading the holy Qur'an.
13. Muslims listen attentively to the holy Qur'an when it is being recited.
14. Muslims do not recite the holy Qur'an in marketplaces and places of distracting noise.
15. Muslims do not read the holy Qur'an in unacceptable places like the toilet.
16. Muslims sit properly when reciting the holy Qur'an but not to squat.
17. Muslims seek refuge from Allah against Satan before starting to recite any verse of the holy Qur'an.
18. Muslims mention Allah's name when starting every chapter of the holy Qur'an except where it is not recommended.
19. Muslims uphold that it is better to recite the holy Qur'an according to the arrangement of its chapters (surahs).
20. Muslims prostrate if he or she finds a verse signifying prostration during Qur'anic recitation.
21. Every Muslim makes sure that he or she keeps a copy of the holy Qur'an.
22. Muslims ensure regular recitation of the holy Qur'an.
23. Muslims also make sure that they memorise the holy Qur'an and give great respect to its memorisers.
24. Muslims have set up Qur'anic schools to teach the holy Qur'an.
25. Muslims have translated the holy Qur'an into local languages but its Arabic version is being kept on its side.
26. Muslims set up Qur'anic competitions and reward the participants so as to encourage its recitation and memorization.
27. Muslims take care to know the critics of Islam who want to destroy the holy Qur'an and avoid them.
28. Muslims have come out and fight those who fight Islam and the holy Qur'an.
29. Muslims always pray to Allah to save Islam and protect the holy Qur'an.
30. Muslims try to follow Allah's laws in the holy Qur'an and live by its teachings.
31. Muslims try to follow the practices and sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) so as to understand the holy Qur'an.
32. Muslims have trained sheikhs to teach the holy Qur'an especially in villages.
33. Muslims have set up a special department for teaching and preserving the holy Qur'an.
34. Many Muslims have set up special lessons on special days in the mosque for teaching the holy Qur'an.

(And many other things Muslims do to show respect to the holy Qur'an)

THE SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

TAWHEED (MONOTHEISM)

1. Tawheed (monotheism) is the belief in the unity (oneness) of Allah in all man's actions and words directly or indirectly.
2. The concept of Tawheed requires a Muslim to believe that Allah is one without a partner in His power and actions, without equality in His essence and attributes and one without rival in His divinity and worship.
3. Islam is a monotheistic religion and it calls up on its followers to believe in only one God, Allah. Thus, Tawheed is the cornerstone of the faith of Islam.
4. The Islamic doctrine of Tawheed means that Allah is one in His person, attributes and works.
5. His oneness in person means that there is neither plurality of gods or plurality of persons in the God-head of Allah. Allah is one and only one.
6. Oneness of Allah in terms of attributes means that there is no other being that possesses any of His divine attributes.
7. Oneness of Allah in His works implies that no creature can do or attempt to do what Allah can do or has done.
8. There are three categories of Tawheed which are Tawheed Rubuubiyya, Tawheed **Asmae wa Sifaat** and Tawheed Uluuhiyya.
9. Tawheed Rubuubiyya (Oneness of Allah in terms of creation) means to believe that Allah is the Sole Creator of the Universe.
10. It means maintaining the Unity of Allah's Lordship that He created the heavens and the earths and what is between them.
11. It requires one to believe that it is Allah who created what we see and what we cannot see.
12. This form of Tawheed means to understand that even what man does like cars, aero planes, phones and the like were all created by Allah. This is because the actions of a servant are part of his characteristics. So since the servant is a creation of Allah, then Allah is his Creator and the Creator of his characteristics too.

Allah asks in Q (35:3); "Is there a creator other than Allah that provides you with sustenance from the heavens and earth? There is nothing deserving of worship besides Him alone?"

Q (37:96) states; *"Allah created all of you and what you do"*

Q (67:1) states; *"Blessed is He in whose hand is the dominion (of all things). And He is capable of doing anything"*

13. Tawheed Rubuubiyya also means that Allah is the One who controls all affairs of the creations. He controls the heavens and earth. **Q (7:54)** says;

"To Him belongs the creation and the command. So blessed is Allah, the Lord of all creations"

14. Furthermore, Tawheed Rubuubiyya means that Allah is the sustainer of all creatures since He is their creator. Everything gets its sustenance from Him.
15. Tawheed Uluuhiyya (Oneness of Allah in terms of worship) means to believe that there is no god to be worshipped except Allah and all forms of worship like prayer, Zakat, fasting, making a vow and the like must be directed to Him.
16. It means maintaining the Unity of Allah's Worship by understanding that to worship anything else other than Allah is false and must be avoided.
17. This means that people are not to give any form of worship to anything other than Allah not even an angel should be brought near Him, nor a Messenger sent by Him, nor His righteous servant, nor anything else created by Him.
18. Worship is not deserved by anyone but Allah alone. Whoever violates this type of Tawheed, not fulfilling what it entails, then he is a polytheist, even if he were to accept and believe in Tawheed Rubuubiyya and the Tawheed of Allah's names and attributes.
19. If someone were to believe that Allah is the only Creator, owner, and controller of all affairs and that He deserves what befits Him of names and attributes, yet he worships along with Allah others than Him; then his acceptance of the other two types of Tawheed would never benefit him.
20. So if one were to completely believe in Tawheed Rubuubiyya and Tawheed Al-Asmaae was-Sifaat, yet he goes to the grave of someone deceased, worshipping him, making vows to him and seeking nearness to him, then such a person is a polytheists, a disbeliever destined to reside in the Fire forever. **Q (5:72)** says;

“...whoever joins other gods with Allah, Allah will forbid him paradise and the fire will be his abode...”
21. This form of Tawheed is expressed in one's actions like observing prayer, paying Zakat, fasting, pilgrimage, Sadaq e.t.c
22. *Tawheed Al-Asmaae was-Sifaat* is to understand Allah with what He has named Himself with or described Himself with in His Book or upon the tongue of His Messenger. This is by affirming whatever names and attributes Allah has affirmed for Himself without distorting or denying them or their meanings, nor believing them to be similar to the creation's, and without questioning “How” they are (seeking thereby to arrive at the same level of understanding of them as Allah Himself has).
23. It is incumbent to believe that whatever Allah has named and described Himself with of names and attributes are real and actual. However, we do not dwell into them, asking “How” they are and we do not believe them to be similar to the names and attributes of the creation in any way.
24. The holy Qur'an mentions ninety nine (99) of Allah's beautiful and exalted attributes such as al-Qawiyyu (the most powerful), al-Sswamadu (the sustainer), ar-Razaaq (the giver) e.t.c
25. This form of Tawheed further requires a believer to know the supreme name of Allah and that Allah has one principle name called **Allah**. He does not share it with any of His creatures.

Q (42:11) states

“There is nothing similar to Him. And He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing”

26. Tawheed is best expressed in the declaration **“Laa-ilaah illa llah”** meaning ‘there is nothing worth of worship except Allah’.
27. It is this declaration which when combined with the confession of the prophet hood Muhammad PBUH that admits a person in the faith of Islam.
28. The concept of Tawheed is clearly summarized in **Chapter 112** of the holy Qur’an which says;
 - Verse 1: *“Say” ‘He is Allah, the One and only’*
 - Verse 2: *‘Allah, the Eternal and Absolute’*
 - Verse 3: *‘He does not produce nor was He produced’*
 - Verse 4: *‘And there is none like unto Him’*
29. The first verse commands Muslims to permanently proclaim that Allah is one. He has been and will ever be one and alone.
30. He has no one to share His Lordship with nor His essence. He is the source and fountain Head from whom all creatures originated. This is supported by **Q (28:88)** which says;
 - “And cry not to any other god besides Allah. There is no god but Him”*
31. In the second verse **Q (112:2)**, Allah is considered Eternal in a sense that He is to stay after every creation has perished yet before Him nothing existed. This means that Allah is Everlasting without beginning or end.
32. Allah is also absolute because He is complete and does not need to depend on any of His creation but all creation depend on Him for their sustenance.
 - Q (57:3)** supports it when it says; *“He is the first and the last, the manifest and the hidden. He has knowledge of all things”*
33. Verse three Q (112:3) means that Allah does not produce and He was not produced. So attributing children to Him is like imposing human attributes to Him. It talks of Allah as having not been produced. So He has neither a father nor a mother as He did not succeed anyone and He will not be succeeded.
34. The last verse Q (112:4) implies that Allah does not look like any of His creatures nor there is any creature that looks like Him. He remains one without comparison and beyond human imagination.
35. This verse negates the Christian belief of trinity which maintains that there exist 3 persons in one God head i.e the father, the son and the Holy Spirit. Surely, one who adheres in the 3 God-Head is a disbeliever.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BELIEF IN ALLAH (TAWHEED)

1. It makes a believer peacefully happy and satisfied with the way things are because he knows that it is Allah alone who caters for His creatures.
2. It makes a believer patient because in whatever problem Allah is there to solve it for him.
3. It promotes hope in a believer because he will know that nothing occurs without Allah’s will.
4. It prevents arrogance in a believer because everything belongs to Allah alone, the giver.

5. It encourages a believer to follow Allah's commands because He watches the activities of His creature everywhere.
6. It teaches a believer that there is life after death because it is Allah who causes death and resurrects the dead.
7. It distinguishes a believer from unbelievers because some people do not believe in the oneness of Allah.
8. It promotes peace among believers because they know that Allah is the only source of peace in any place or community.
9. It is a source of mercy for the believers since Allah is also merciful to all creatures.
10. It explains to a believer that death comes from Allah and that no one can blame another for the death of his friend or relative.
11. It makes a believer brave and courageous in his work because he knows that Allah is there to assist him.
12. It is a form of Ibadat (worship) to understand the oneness of Allah and whoever observes it gets rewards from Allah.

(The reader should endeavor to expand the points and add on more)

SHIRK (POLYTHEISM)

What does Islam teach about Shirk?

1. Shirk is the verbal or conceptual or practical association of anything with Allah in His person or attributes or works or in obedience due to Him alone.
2. According to the holy Qur'an, shirk is the greatest sin in Islam.

Q (31:13) says; *"...to associate others with Allah is a tremendous sin..."*

3. Prophet Muhammad PBUH grouped shirk among the seven greatest sins and the first of all.

He expressly said; *"The biggest sin is setting equals with Allah"*

4. He also cautioned Muslims not to commit shirk even though one is in great danger of death.

He said; *"Do not associate anything with Allah even though they try to kill or burn you"*
(Bukhar)

5. Within Islam, shirk is an unforgivable crime if it remains unpardoned before death.

Q (4:116) states; *"Indeed Allah does not forgive those who associate partners with Him but He forgives whom He pleases for other sins..."*

6. The holy mentions various forms of shirk as stated in **Q (3:64)**;

"...that we shall worship none save Allah and that we shall not associate anything with Him and that some of us shall not take others for Lords besides Allah"

7. The first form of shirk mentioned in the above verse is where anything besides Allah is worshipped like praying to stones, trees, animals, heavenly bodies, tombs, human beings and others. This is called shirk Akbar (major shirk).
8. Major shirk involves showing more love to others other than Allah. Major shirk turns a person away from Islam.
9. Another form of shirk mentioned in the verse (3:64) is associating partners with Allah by supposing that other things or beings possess the same attributes as Allah.
10. The belief in the three god-head and that the son and the holy spirit are eternal like Allah or that there is a creator of evil and creator of good as in Christianity and Zoroastrianism respectively fall under this form of shirk.
11. The third form of shirk talked about in **Q (3:64)** is where some people take others as their Lords by following their authoritative commands at the expense of Allah’s instructions.

Q (9:31) further says; *“They take their priests and their doctors of law to be their lords besides Allah and they take as their lord Christ the son of Mary; yet they were commanded to worship but one Allah...”*
12. There is another form of shirk called shirk Aswigar (minor shirk) where one worships to show-off or to gain fame or for worldly benefit e.g paying sadaq to gain praise from people. It does not turn a Muslim away from Islam but it reduces one’s faith and reduces his acts of worship.
13. There is also shirk al-Khafi (invisible shirk) which involves blind submission to one’s own desires which are contrary to what Islam teaches. For example a woman who abuses Hijaab, a man who abuses cutting the trouser, swearing to anything other than Allah and the like.

Q (25:43) says; *“Have you seen him who made gods of his own desires?”*
14. While emphasizing the dangers of shirk al-Khafi (invisible shirk), Prophet Muhammad PBUH said;

“I fear for my people of shirk and their hidden desires... they will not worship the sun or the moon or the stones or the idols but they will make a show of their works and their hidden desires shall be such that one of them will wake up in the morning fasting and a desire out of his many desires shall come before him and he will leave his fasting”

CAUSES OF SHIRK IN SOCIETY

1. Need for quick money especially among the youths.
2. Need to cure certain diseases that may seem incurable.
3. Need to get children especially among women.
4. Some people commit shirk in form of bewitching others due to envy.
5. Shirk is committed by some people due to ignorance about the concept of Tawheed.
6. Invisible shirk is committed by so many Muslims unknowingly.
7. Need to get blessings and fight misfortunes.
8. Need to be praised and love for popularity in society causes shirk al-Aswigar.
9. Need for material gains by some people.
10. Need to gain political power.
11. Need to associate with strong political figures in the community.

12. Desire to be loved especially among women.
13. Some people commit shirk due to peer influence.
14. Need to foretell the future events.
15. Excessive love for our fellow human beings like the Baganda and Kabaka.
16. Declining levels of faith among the Muslims.
17. Need for fame.
18. Need to revenge on those who wrong others.
19. Desire to seek protection or help in homes.
20. Strong belief in Traditional and cultural practices.
21. Producing children of the same sex.
22. High rate of unemployment.

EFFECTS OF SHIRK IN ISLAM

1. It leads to death of people where it involves bewitching.
2. A Mushirk loses respect in society.
3. It leads to family breakdown where one partner is a Mushirk while the other one is a believer.
4. Shirk is punishable by Allah on the Day of Judgement.
5. A Mushirk is not allowed to be married except by a fellow Mushirk.
6. A Mushirk is isolated by fellow Muslims.
7. It tarnishes the name of Islam.
8. Major shirk is one of the main causes of human sacrifice in society today.
9. It leads to wastage of money.
10. Mental disorder may result in the Mushirk.
11. Leads to enmity in society.

MEASURES A MUSLIM SHOULD TAKE AVOID SHIRK?

1. By developing sincere intention in any act of worship.
2. Observing prayer which restrains one from shameful acts.
3. Avoiding friends who involve in shirk.
4. Avoiding cultural taboos which lead to shirk.
5. One should involve Allah in events which he intends to do.
6. One should not obey any authority even if a parent if he /she is required to perform shirk.
7. One should swear to Allah alone.
8. Praying to Allah to avoid temptations.
9. To believe in Allah's Qadar.
10. Always praising Allah in Adhikaar.
11. Observing Sunna (Prophet's practices)
12. Continuous recitation of the holy Qur'an.
13. Attending Islamic preachings to know the dangers of shirk and its manifestations (signs).
14. Having wudhu all the time to avoid satanic temptations.
15. Sticking on supplication (Duwa)

(The Reader should expand on the points)

**PRESENT DAY BELIEFS WHICH CONTRADICT THE CONCEPT OF TAWHEED
(MONOTHEISM) AS LAID DOWN IN CHAPTER 112.**

1. IDOLATRY

- This is the worship of idols and it is the most frequently cited practice of shirk in the holy Qur'an. It was the most rampant practice throughout the world at the advent of Islam.
- Idolaters base their worship of idols on the excuse that they enable them to concentrate and come nearer to Allah. This is denied by Allah in Q (39:3)

Q (39:3) says; *“Is it not to Allah that sincere devotion is due? But those who take for protectors than Allah say ‘we only serve them in order that they may bring us nearer to Allah’. Truly Allah will judge between them in that wherein they differ”*

- The fact is that the worshipper must know that it is the idol on which attention is centred but not Allah. It also wrong to think that a mere material symbol is necessary for concentration.
- In addition, the holy Qur'an brands those who worship and dedicate to idols as unclean.

Q (9:28) states; *“O you who believe! Indeed the pagans are unclean, so let them not approach the sacred mosque...”*

2. NATURE WORSHIP

- This is a form of shirk which involves worshipping the sun, moon, stars and everything that appears to control man's life. This is expressly forbidden in the holy Qur'an.

Q (41:37) says; *“Among His signs are the night and the day and the sun and the moon. Do not prostrate to the sun and the moon but prostrate to Allah, who created them...”*

- In addition, the worship of nature does not only apply to heavenly bodies but also to all forces of nature which Allah subdued for man. In this regard,

Q (45:12-13) says; *“It is Allah who has subjected the sea to you, that ships may sail through it by His command...And He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on earth...”*

3. TRINITY

- This is a Christian belief in the three persons of god-head i.e the father, the son and the Holy Spirit. It maintains that they co-exist and that they are equal in all respect.
- The belief uphold that the three combine to make one God and yet remain three. This is strongly denounced in the holy Qur'an as a form of shirk in the following verses;

Q (5:17) states; *“Unbelievers are those that say that Allah is Christ the son of Mary...”*

Q (5:73) states; *“Indeed they have disbelieved who say; Allah is one of three in a trinity: for there is no god except Allah. And if they do not desist from what they say, surely a grievous punishment will befall the disbelievers among them”*

Q (5:75) says; “Christ the son of Mary was no more than an apostle; many more apostles came before him...”

- According to the above verses, trinity is real shirk because Allah is not conceived as being embedded in three. He is united in design and existence and above all other creatures.
- Thus, since Allah is one and only one, a Muslim must not pray to Him ‘in the name of the father, the son and Holy Spirit’.

4. MARIOLATRY

- This is a Christian practice of worshiping Mariam, mother of Jesus (Isa) especially in the catechism of the Catholic Church. Mary is praised in the following words;

“that she is truly the mother of God... that she is the mother of pity and very specifically our advocate; that her images are of utmost utility”

Referring to the concept of Mariolatry, Allah says in Q (5:116)

“And behold! Allah will say ‘O Jesus the son of Mary! Did you say unto men, worship me and my mother as gods besides Allah? ...”

5. DOCTRINE OF SONSHIP

- This is a practice of shirk among the Christians which presupposes that Allah has a son but this is refuted by the holy Qur’an from the beginning up to the end of its revelation.
- This doctrine assumes that Allah cannot forgive sins unless He receives some satisfaction from it and that this satisfaction is supposed to have been afforded by the crucifixion of Jesus, who alone is believed to be with no sin.
- This is practically a denial of the quality of forgiveness in Allah and thus attributing a defect to Him. Therefore, wherever it is mentioned in the holy Qur’an, it is followed by the words ‘SUBHAANA LLAH’ (Holy is God) to indicate the purity of Allah from all defects.
- The holy Qur’an refers to those who assume that Allah has a son as having committed a horrible act. Allah says in Q (19:88-91);

“And they say: ‘The Lord of mercy has begotten a son. Certainly you made an abominable assertion. The heavens may crack, the earth break asunder and the mountains crumble when they ascribe a son to the merciful God”.

He also says in Q (43:81); *“If the Lord of mercy had a son, I would be the first to worship him”.*

SOME OF THE COMMON PRACTICES OF SHIRK IN SOCIETY TODAY.

1. Wearing protective charms and armlets to generate a feeling of security.
2. Belief that when a dog barks or when a fox cries at night somebody must die.
3. Belief that when a person jumps over a pregnant woman the born baby resembles him or her.
4. Putting local medicine like skins of animals and herbs on door ways to prevent dangers in the house.
5. Other medicines are put in gardens to have high yields and others to trap thieves.
6. Visiting local medicine men to get blessings and wealth.
7. Applying sorcery to poison others or cause damage to gardens or businesses.

8. Belief that relatives or friends die due witchcraft.
9. Belief in spirits that they have special power to cause good or evil society.
10. Worshipping idols and seeking blessings from them.
11. Belief that it is a misfortune to meet a woman in the morning before meeting any other person.
12. Having names that are meant to prevent evil or bring blessings or intended to please spirits
13. Fearing to eat totems that it causes harm to such a person.
14. Praising and prostrating to traditional rulers yet due respect is for Allah.
15. Making revenge on others when something bad happens on them.
16. Belief that when a pregnant woman should not attend funeral prayers and passing over cross-roads.
17. Belief in superstition that some creatures are signs of good or bad omen.
18. Belief that when an owl hoots, something bad or unfortunate happens.
19. Offering sacrifices to others like spirits which is due to Allah.
20. Praising diviners that they have special powers to tell the cause of events.

THE CONCEPT OF WORSHIP IN ISLAM (IBADAT)

1. Worship is an all-inclusive term for all that God loves of external and internal sayings and actions of a person. In other words, worship is everything one says or does for the pleasure of Allah.
2. This, of course, includes rituals as well as beliefs, social activities, and personal contributions to the welfare of one's fellow human beings.
3. Islam looks at the individual as a whole. He is required to submit himself completely to Allah as **Q (6:162) says;** *“Say! Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death are all for Allah, the Cherisher of the worlds.”*
4. It should also be noted that the sole purpose for the creation of mankind and jinn is to worship Allah as He says in **Q (51:56);** *“I did not create Jinn and mankind except to worship me”*
5. There are two kinds of worship in Islam; horizontal worship and vertical worship. Horizontal worship refers to all acts of worship that keep man in good harmony with his fellow man e.g generosity, kindness, trustworthy, truthfulness and others.
6. Vertical worship refers to acts that man does and bring him nearer to his God. Such acts include prayer, fasting, pilgrimage and others. If one omits such acts, it is between him and Allah.
7. The Concept of worship in Islam is comprehensive. It includes all positive activities of the individual which are done in conformity to Allah's guidance.
8. In Islam, worship implies many things such as trying to understand Allah, keeping Him in remembrance, praising Him and obeying His laws. **Q (1:2) says;** *“All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds”*
9. True worship requires faith and practical help of those in need, accompanied by sincerity rather than show in devotion and charity.
10. A man who loves Allah and shows true longing for Him should express his love and longing by outward acts but with sincerity of the heart.

11. Islam requires that not only the tongue and the body should involve in worship but also the heart.

Q (107:4-7)says; *“Woe! To those who pray but are unmindful of their prayers, who make a show of piety and give no alms to the destitute.”*

12. According to **Q (2:264)**, a person who gives charity to be seen of man and without sincerity of the heart is like a smooth rock covered with earth on which heavy rain falls leaving it bear and hard. Instead of being rewarded, he only disappoints Allah for lack of sincerity.

13. Referring to sincerity in worship, Allah says in **Q (2:177)**;

“Righteousness does not consist in whether you face towards East or West but true righteousness is to believe in Allah, and the last day, and the angels, and the books and the messengers, who for the love of Allah gives his wealth to his kinsfolk, to the orphans, the needy, to the wayfarers and to the beggars and for the redemption of captives, who attends to his prayer and pays the alms, who is true to his promises and steadfast in trial and adversity and times of war. Such are the true believers; such are the God-fearing.”

14. From the above verse, the following are some of the acts of worship;

a) Belief in Allah

- This is the foundation of the religion of Islam and is central to the teachings of the holy Qur’an.
- Belief in day of judgement
- Belief in angels
- Belief in books
- Belief in messengers
- Love for Allah
- Spending on kinsfolk
- Helping the needy, wayfarers, orphans, beggars, war captives
- Prayer; this is the immediate act of worship and according to the Prophet PBUH it is the key to paradise.

Q (24:56) states; *“So establish regular prayer and give regular charity and obey the messenger that you may receive mercy.”*

- Alms-giving; this is the third pillar of Islam which every Muslim with defined qualifications must observe.

Q (2:43) says; *“And be steadfast in prayer; practise regular charity; and bow down your heads with those who bow down.”*

- Keeping promises; when a Muslim keeps his promises whether with a fellow Muslim or non-believer, it is rewardable and therefore, a form of worship.

Q (61:2) says; *“O you who believe! Why do you say what you never do?”*

- Endurance: This is the ability of one’s persistence during hardship and have faith in Allah.
- Patience: This is the ability of a believer to continue pursuing his faith or physically suffer for the sake of Allah.
- Neighbours; Islam commands us to treat neighbours as we treat ourselves and therefore, a form of worship.

Q (4:36) says; *“Worship Allah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the poor, the neighbor who is near of kin, the neighbor who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer...”*

- Loving others; being tolerant and loving others is an act of worship as Allah says in **Q (2:195)**; *“Be good. Verily, Allah loves those who are good.”*

The Prophet PBUH said; *“None of you has faith until he loves for his brother or his neighbours what he loves for himself.”*

- Obedience to Parents; obeying and treating parents in a good way is a form of worship.

Allah says in **Q (17:23)**; *“Your Lord has enjoined you to worship none but Him, and to show kindness to your parents.”*

- Praising Allah
- Remembering Allah
- Generosity. This is the characteristic of being willing to donate both wealth and time in the way of Allah.
- Peacefulness. This is the act of being at peace with others whether Muslims or non-Muslims, believers or non-believers.
- Modesty. This is the quality of a believer being humble without bragging or boasting about oneself or one’s achievements.
- Forgiveness. This is the feature of a believer characterised by pardoning others who wrong him just like Allah pardons wrongdoers.
- Justice. This is the fair judgement of others whether a friend or foe, a relative or absolute.
- Honesty. This is the act of a believer telling the truth and without being known for swindling.
- Truthfulness. This is the quality of a believer being faithful first to Allah, to himself and to others. That is to conform to Allah’s laws.
- Kindness. This is an inherent nature of a person being kind to Allah’s creatures such as man, insects, animals, birds and the like.
- Good leadership. Leadership is the capacity of someone to lead others. Being faithful and just in administration. Leadership is a form of worship.
- Obedience. It is the quality of a believer doing as ordered by Islam. Obedience to Allah’s laws and prophet’s Sunna is a form of worship.

Q (3:32) says; *“Say ‘Obey Allah and His messenger, but if they turn back, Allah does not love those who reject faith”*

Q (26:126) states; *“So fear Allah and obey me.”*

THE ORIGIN, NATURE, DEVELOPMENT AND DESTINY OF THE HUMAN SOUL

1. Most of the earlier revealed scriptures do not clearly explain the nature of human soul. They explain it in two theories
2. The first theory is that human souls are not created by Allah but they are eternal and self-existing like Himself. Allah causes such souls to enter into human bodies at appropriate time.
3. The second theory suggests that human souls are created and that they are not self-existing like Allah. Allah created a number of them at the same time when He was creating the universe.
4. It further says that the created souls are kept in reserve and out of this reserve, Allah causes some to enter into human bodies from time to time.
5. When the Quraish Meccans and the Jews asked Prophet Muhammad PBUH about the nature of the human souls, Allah answered them in **Q (17:85)**;

“They put questions to you about the soul! Say; ‘the soul is by the command of my Lord. You have been given but a little knowledge of it”

6. From the above verse, human souls are created by Allah and developed under His divine guidance and that the birth of the soul is a process different from the birth of the body.
7. The series of development that bring about the birth of the body also bring about the birth of the soul and provide for its progress and uplift.

Allah says in **Q (2:117)**; *“He is the originator of the heavens and the earths. When He decrees a matter, He says to it, ‘Be’ and it is”.*

8. The above verse refutes the Hindu understanding that the soul and matter (earth) were created by Allah at the same time and that they are eternal.
9. Allah being the originator of the universe, it means that He created all things out of nothing without a pre-existing model or matter.
10. Allah further says in **Q (23:12-14)**;

“Verily, We created man from an extract of clay. Then We placed him as a drop of sperm in a safe depository. Then We fashioned the sperm into a clot, then We fashioned the clot into a shapeless lump, then We fashioned bones out of this shapeless lump, then We clothed bones with flesh, then We developed it into another creation. So blessed be to Allah, the best of creators”.

11. From the above verse, the words *‘We created man from an extract of clay’* means the process of man’s creation from the earliest stage when he lay dormant in the form of dust i.e the time when Allah created Adam.
12. At the state *‘then We clothed the bones with flesh’* means that the physical growth of the embryo becomes complete.
13. The words *‘then We developed it into another creation’* show that the soul is not imported into the human body from outside but grows as it develops into the womb.

14. At first, the soul has no separate existence from the body but the processes through which the body passes during its development in the womb purifies a delicate spirit called a soul.
15. As soon as the relationship between the soul and the body is adjusted, the heart begins to function and the soul gains a distinct existence of its own with the body becoming its shell.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN SOUL

16. The human soul passes through three stages of development which are mentioned in the holy Qur'an. The first stage is called **AMARA**, where the soul is uncontrollable and fond of committing evil. **Q (12:53)** says;

“Nor do I excuse my own self: the human soul is certainly prone to evil, unless my Lord do bestow His mercy...”

17. This is a stage when the soul is tempted by the earthly desires and it incites man to evil. It is opposed to his attainment of perfection and moral state.
18. The second stage of the development of the human soul is called **DHAWAMAH**, described in **Q (75:2)** which says; *“And I do call to witness the self-reproaching (accusing) spirit”*
19. This is a stage where the human soul feels ashamed for the evil man does and it tries to resist him from doing such evils.
20. It is a stage when the human soul commits an evil and seeks Allah's pardon and grace after sincere repentance. Here, the soul blames itself for doing evil and restrains its passions and appetites.
21. The third stage is called **MUTUMA-INNAH**. This is the highest stage of the development of the human soul.
22. At this stage, man is well pleased with Allah and Allah is also pleased with him. The soul is in fine state and has nothing to do with earthly life. Allah says in **Q (89:27-28)**;

“O you soul in complete rest and satisfaction! Return to your Lord well pleased and well-pleasing unto Him”

23. It is a stage where the human soul becomes immune to all moral weaknesses and it is braced with a special spiritual strength.

TREATMENT AND DESTINY OF HUMAN SOUL

24. As for the treatment of the human soul, Allah does not charge any soul for which it cannot bear. He says in **Q (2:286)**; *“And no soul does Allah place a burden greater than it can bear...”*
25. This means that Allah will charge and accept from each soul that which it had the ability to offer.
26. As for the destiny of the human soul upon the death of man, the holy Qur'an teaches that the soul does not die but it is put in a preserved place where it is kept in waiting until the Day of Resurrection.
27. According to Islam, the death of a person is only the change of form/state. This means that the disintegration of man's physical earthly life does not mean the end of his life.

Q (56:60-61) says; *“We decreed death to be your common lot, and We are not to be frustrated from changing your forms and creating you again in forms that you do not know”*

28. When the soul is removed from its natural habitat, it is given another body in a form beyond human capacity to conceive, where it grows and develops.
29. At the time of death, the human soul does not die but it is taken away by Allah and kept in a reserved place from where it will be taken to account for what it did on earth.
Allah says in Q (39:42);
“Allah takes away the men’s souls upon their death, and those that do not die during their sleep. Those who are doomed He keeps with Him, and restores the others for a time ordained...”
30. The destiny of the believers on the day of judgement will be paradise. Allah says in Q (89:27-30);
“O you soul in complete rest and satisfaction! Come back to your Lord well pleased and well-pleasing unto Him! Enter among my devotees! And enter my Heaven/paradise”
31. As for the sinners, their destination will be hell. Here, Allah says in Q (20:74);
“Verily, he who comes to his Lord as a sinner, for him is hell, he shall neither die it nor live”.
32. In Islam, the final destiny of the human soul will depend on Allah’s will and mercy because according to the prophet PBUH mere actions of man will not guarantee him paradise or save him from hell unless accompanied by Allah’s mercy.
33. In conclusion, it should be noted that whether by one’s deeds or environment in which he lives, the destiny of the soul will be determined by the mercy of Allah.
34. In situations where there is Allah’s pre-determination (Qadar), one has to always pray to Allah for a better place after death.

Revision questions

- a) Discuss the Islamic teachings on the development of the human soul.
- b) Give an account of the origin and destiny of the human soul.

THE CONCEPT OF PUNISHMENT AND REWARDS IN ISLAM

PUNISHMENT

1. A punishment is a penalty imposed on a person as justice for an offence he/she has committed. It can also be defined as a means of making someone suffer for the misdeeds, crimes and all the things that are regarded as aggressive in society.
2. A crime is a specific act committed in violation of the law or any great wickedness or sin (evil).

CAUSES OF CRIMES IN SOCIETY

- a) Some people use drugs like opium which make them unconscious and end up committing crimes like rape and defilement.
- b) Wine drinking is also another cause of crimes in society because alcohol weakens a person and fails to control him or herself.
- c) Peer group influence where the youths decide to gang up to commit a certain crime like burning schools, murder, rape and others.

- d) Adolescence also causes crimes in certain instances because adolescents think they have answers to everything and do what they feel they should do.
- e) In war torn areas, crimes tend to be high such as rape, defilement, Zina, theft, murder and many others because people are desperate.
- f) Poor dressing in girls also forces some greedy men to have sex with them and in the process young girls are defiled or raped.
- g) Some people commit crimes because of frustration like men who have strong sexual desires and fail to get girls to have sex with them or those whose girl friends have chucked them, end up committing crimes like suicide, defilement and rape, wine drinking and others.
- h) Some people commit crimes because of malice e.g an HIV/AIDS infested person who may not want to die alone and decide to commit Zina to transmit the disease to others.
- i) Some people commit crimes due mental problems like madness.
- j) Watching pornographic films like blue movies which suddenly awaken hidden sexual desires and those without stable partners can commit crimes such as rape and defilement.
- k) Some girls get money and other gifts from men and pretend that they love them yet they do not. Such men end up committing crimes like raping or assassinating them in order to repay themselves.
- l) Some people commit crimes due to political suppression in the country leading to violent demonstrations.
- m) Some people commit crimes because they poorly use their leisure time e.g they leave discos and cinema halls late at night and others while drunkard.
- n) Some families are poor which forces boys and girls to sleep in the same room and in the process commit crimes like defiling the young ones by their elders.
- o) Some people lack religious knowledge about the dangers of certain crimes in society e.g shirk al-Khafi (invisible shirk) and its consequences on the day of judgement.
- p) Permissiveness (laxity) also causes crimes in society e.g some elderly people find fun in having sex with young ones.
- q) Family neglect and breakdown which leads to the growth of street children hence becoming a social problem to the society.
- r) Moral decay especially among parents who do not care about what their children do like parents who pack condoms for their boarding children prompting them to commit fornication.
- s) Western influence where some people want to behave like Europeans e.g parents who allow their children to start courtship at an early age, unnecessary kissing by parents e.t.c
- t) Excessive need for money and material things among young girls and boys. Such girls end up of being defiled by sugar daddies and boys by sugar mummies.

ISLAMIC VIEW OF PUNISHMENT

1. Islam understands the concept of punishment in three ways. There are punishments which Allah inflicted on past nations, punishments in the present situation and punishments in future life.

PUNISHMENTS IN HISTORY

2. Islam talks about a number of punishments which Allah inflicted on the past nations and peoples in order for Muslims to reflect upon them and avoid falling in the same mistakes that led to such punishments. They include the following:
3. **The people of Aad;** these were powerful and wealthy men and women who built wonderful palaces and fortresses. They were strong idol worshippers.
4. According to **Q (7:65-71)**, Allah sent to them Prophet **Huud** to teach them Tawheed but they refused and the leaders among them called him a liar.
5. They also called him a foolish man and challenged him if Allah could cause a punishment to them if they refused to follow him. Allah sent a strong wind which destroyed all of them.
6. **The people of Thamuud;** these were cousins of the people of Aad who, due to their civilization, became Godless and extremely arrogant.
7. Allah sent to them Prophet **Swaleh** with a she-camel as His symbol to them. Due to a long drought, there was scarcity of water and pasture and the arrogant privileged class refused the poor from accessing the little water available.
8. According to **Q (7:73-79)**, Prophet Swaleh appealed to the rich to allow the poor to access water and warned them against killing Allah's she-camel but they refused and secretly killed it.
9. Allah destroyed them with a deadly earthquake which threw them underground and buried them with their strong buildings.
10. **The people of Lut;** these practiced a lot of adultery and fornication and time came when they started involving in homosexuality (sodomy). Allah sent to them Prophet **Lut** to warn them against their evil practices but they did not listen to him.
11. One time in the evening, Prophet Lut was visited by two angels in form of handsome men and the inhabitants of Sodom stormed Prophet Lut's house to have sex with them.
12. According to **Q (7:80-84)**, Allah destroyed the sinners of Sodom and Gomorrah with a shower of brimstone including Prophet Lut's wife.
13. **The Madyan people;** these people used to give wrong weights and measures and practiced other mischiefs like highway robbery, abusing people, exploiting religion for their own benefits e.t.c.
14. According to **Q (7:85-93)**, Allah sent to them Prophet **Shu'aib**, their own brother, to teach them belief in Allah and to do well to others. A few of them believed him while the rest refused and Allah destroyed all of them with a strong earthquake.
15. **The people of Nuhu;** these were strong disbelievers and polytheists who used to make noisy drums and putting fingers in their ears so as not to hear Allah's message.

16. According to **Q (7:59-64)**, Allah sent to them **Prophet Nuhu** but they refused to listen to him including his own son. He requested Allah to punish them and through inspiration, Allah instructed him to make a boat.
17. Meanwhile, the disbelievers laughed at him calling him a madman and wondered how he would take the boat (Noah's Ark) on water.
18. Allah brought heavy rains for some good days and brought with it strong floods. The believers and animals climbed the **Nuhu's Ark** while the disbelievers including his **son** were taken by the floods.
19. **Pharaoh and his people**; Pharaoh was king of Misiri who never believed in the existence of Allah. Allah sent to him **Prophet Musa** to show him His signs but he refused to accept him and even called himself the exalted God.
20. Pharaoh attempted to kill Prophet Musa and his followers but Allah directed Prophet Musa to take his followers to the liberated land across the Red sea.
21. According to **Q (2:50)**, Pharaoh tried to follow Prophet Musa and his followers in order to kill them but Allah divided the sea for them and drowned Pharaoh and his people.
22. **Haruna**; this was one of the chiefs of Pharaoh and at one time a king in history. He was very rich and history tells us that the keys to the stores of his wealth could be lifted by more than a hundred strongest men of the time. He misused his wealth by disobeying Allah and mistreating His people. Allah destroyed him with his wealth by sinking him in the ground till the day of judgement.
23. **Namuruthi**; he was another arrogant and powerful king of the time. He misused his power by comparing himself to Allah and promised that one day he would face and crash Allah's army. Allah challenged him by sending a mosquito which killed him.
24. **Iblis** (Satan); Allah cursed **Iblis** when it refused to prostrate down to Prophet Adam as Allah had directed all the angels. According to **Q (2:32-38)**, Allah sent Iblis away from Paradise and it is among the residents of hell on the Day of Judgement.
25. **Abu Lahab** and his wife, **Ummu Jamir**. Abu Lahab tried to frustrate Prophet Muhammad's mission in its early stages while beginning his public call on mountain Swafa because of his wealth and children.
26. According to **Q (111:1-3)**, wealth and children count nothing in the sight of Allah because this is what tempted Abu Lahab to ridicule the Prophet PBUH. In fact his wealth and children never saved him when he was attacked by a strange contagious disease because everyone feared to come nearer to him. He will also be thrown in the midst of fire-blast on the day of judgement.
27. **Ummu Jamir** was Abu Lahab's wife who used to slander the Prophet PBUH and went about abusing him. She also used to collect thorns and scattered them in the prophet's way. She was always seen carrying thorns and she was nick named Carrier of Thorns. She met an unfortunate death whereby she was found strangled with a rope around her neck and on the day of judgement, she will be thrown in hell.
28. **Adam and Hawa**; Adam was the first person to be created by Allah and after sometime He created for him a spouse called Hawa and placed them in paradise but He refused them to eat the forbidden fruit.

29. According to **Q (2:30-38)**, Iblis overpowered them and ate the forbidden fruit. Allah punished them by removing them from paradise and sent on earth as a punishment but Adam pleaded and Allah forgave them.
30. **King Abraha Al-Ashram**; he was king of Yemen who tried to divert the Arabs from making pilgrimage to the Kaaba. When he failed, he organized an army of six thousand men with thirteen elephants to go and destroy the Kaaba. According to **Q (105:1-5)**, Allah sent against Abraha's army birds in flocks and struck them with stones of baked clay (Sijiil). Abraha and his army were destroyed completely and were left like dried up grass eaten by animals.

LESSONS FROM THESE PUNISHMENTS

1. It cautions Muslims to reflect on what happened in the past and act according to Allah's laws i.e they should learn from the past and avoid falling in the same mistakes.
2. We learn that Shirk is a major sin and we should try our level best to avoid because it led to the destruction of the **people of Aad**.
3. We also learn that Allah is the guardian of the holy Kaaba and City of Mecca. He safeguards them together with the Muslims up to date.
4. We learn that children and wealth count nothing in the sight of Allah. Allah destroyed **Abu Lahab** because he was influenced by his wealth and children to frustrate the prophet's mission.
5. It is a lesson to the believers that those whom Allah bestows with His favours and turn against Him will face His wrath on the day of judgement like the favours Allah gave the Arabs by defending them against Abraha and later turned against His prophet.
6. Muslims learn that the most powerful on earth are the weakest in the sight of Allah. That is why He destroyed Abraha's elephant army with just mere birds and people of Nuhu with floods.
7. Much respect should be accorded to the holy places of worship such as mosques, churches, Kaaba and others. They should not be destroyed even during holy wars.
8. It is a lesson to man that before disobeying Allah, he should reflect first upon what He will do to him like in the case of Abraha, Pharaoh, Haruna and Ummu Jamil.
9. It is a lesson that Allah has many ways of dealing with His enemies. He can destroy using earthquake, floods, animals and birds e.t.c
10. We learn from the people of Thamud that arrogance is a sin and should be avoided because it led to the destruction of the whole nation.
11. We also learn from the past that messengers have an exalted place in the sight of Allah and they should be obeyed because whichever nation that disobeyed them Allah destroyed them angrily.
12. It is a lesson to believers that we should not put too much trust in the people we live with about religious matters. That is, little did Prophet Lut know that his wife was a sinner of Sodom and Gomorrah.

PUNISHMENTS IN THE PRESENT SITUATION

1. In the present situation, Islam classifies punishments into two i.e Hudud (fixed) punishments and T'azir (discretionary) punishments.
2. **Hudud punishments** are punishments for fixed offences mentioned in the holy Qur'an. Such punishments are explained by the traditions of Prophet Muhammad PBUH.
3. They include punishments for theft, fornication, adultery, highway robbery, false accusation of adultery, murder and others.
4. **Theft**; if one is guilty of theft, his hands are cut off depending on the extent of the theft.

Q (5:38) says; *“As to the thief, male or female cut off his or her hands: a punishment by way of example from Allah for their crime...”*

5. **Armed robbery**; this is intended take away of one's property by force. Accordingly, the offender must be killed or his hands cut off as per **Q (5:33)**.
6. **Illegal sexual intercourse (Zina)**; this is sexual relations between man and woman without legal rights as taught by Islam. It is divided into fornication and adultery.

Fornication is illegal sex between unmarried couples or when one of the couples is not married while adultery is illegal sex by a married couple outside the marriage bond.

Q (24:2) says; *“The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication; flog each of them with a hundred stripes...”*

7. **Homosexuality**; this is where man plays sex with fellow man. Both offenders must be banished and isolated.

Q (4:16) says; *“If two men among you are guilty of vulgarity (homosexuality), punish them both. If they repent and amend, leave them alone...”*

8. **Lesbianism**; this is an act where a woman plays sex with a fellow woman. The punishment for the offenders is found in **Q (4:15)** which says;

“If any of your women are guilty of vulgarity, take evidence of four reliable witnesses from amongst you against them; and if they testify, confine them to houses until death do claim them or Allah finds them some way”

9. **Bestiality**; this is a situation where a human being commits sexual intercourse with an animal. Islam declares that such a person be killed.
10. **False accusation of adultery**; this is an act of alleging that one has committed Zina and fails to bring four eye witnesses. This is a grave sin in Islam which carries a severe punishment.

Allah states in **Q (24:4)**; *“And those who accuse against chaste (pure) women and do not produce four witnesses, flog them with eighty stripes and reject their evidence ever after...”*

11. **Taking intoxicants**; intoxicants are things which befog one's mind e.g alcohol, cocaine, marijuana and the like. According to the traditions of the Prophet PBUH, the punishment for the offender ranges between forty to eighty lashes.

12. **Apostasy**; this is the act of denouncing Islam. A person who denounces Islam is called an apostate (murutard). According to the prophet's traditions, an apostate must be killed.
13. **Murder**; this is the unlawful taking of one's life intentionally. It is one of the greatest sins in Islam and the punishment for the offender is **Qisas (retaliation)**.
Allah says in Q (2:178); *"O you who believe! The law of retaliation is prescribed to you in cases of murder; the free for free for the free, the slave for the slave, the woman for the woman..."*
14. **Manslaughter**; this is the unintentional taking of one's life or mistakenly killing a person. According to the traditions of the prophet PBUH, the punishment for the offender is to free a believing slave and pay blood money to the heirs of the murdered person.
15. **T'azir (Discretionary) Punishments** are punishments which are not found in the Qur'an or prophet's traditions but they are administered by the Muslim judge (Qadhi).
16. Such punishments are administered by the Qadhi according to the extent or gravity of the offence committed and its consequential effects on the society. They include the following:
17. **Admonition**; this means warning the offender that he/she has behaved unlawfully. It is normally administered on people who commit crimes for the first time.
18. **Reprimanding**; this is where the judge (Qadhi) expresses official disapproval of the crime committed by using words he feels are sufficient to make the offender reform.
19. **Threatening**; this is where the offender is forced to change his/her bad behaviours out of fear of a severe punishment. It involves promising him/her a strong punishment if he commits the offence again or the current punishment can be referred until when he/she commits a related or same offence.
20. **Boycotting**; this is the act of isolating the offender in the society because of his/her bad behaviours so that he/she is forced to change after suffering lowliness.
21. **Public disclosure**; this is where the criminal is publically announced to all Muslims due to his misconduct. It is intended to make the offender reform out of the shame caused to him/her and to warn the public against his/her offences.
22. **Paying fines and seizing property**; this is administered to offences of theft in which the minimum requirement for inflicting Hudud punishment cannot be reached. For example refusing to pay zakat.
23. **Imprisonment**; the Qadhi administers this punishment depending on the extent of the offence. The offender can be imprisoned for one day as a minimum depending on the type of the offence and the person.
24. **Flogging**; this is administered to offenders whom the Qadhi thinks that circumstances require giving them a number of strokes. The strokes given vary from person to person and crime to crime.

PUNISHMENT IN FUTURE LIFE

1. Allah's punishments in future will depend on the crimes one commits on earth because Allah sent messengers to teach man what He allows and forbids.
2. Allah gave man freewill to exercise his faculty of reasoning before doing anything because whatever he does is recorded and will be accountable for it on the day of judgement.
3. In the holy Qur'an, Allah clearly illustrates the punishments for wrongdoers.

Q (32:20) says; *"As to those who do evil, their abode will be fire; every time they try to get out, they shall be driven back and a voice will say to them 'taste the torment of hell which you have persistently denied'"*

4. From the above verse, the punishment on the final day will be Jahannamah (Hell) in which evil-doers will be thrown forever and ever.
5. Furthermore, Allah says in **Q (14:16-17)**;

"Hell lies before him and he is given shrinking water to drink. He takes it in portion but cannot swallow it. Death will come to him every quarter but he will not be able to die. A dreadful torment is before him"

6. From the above verse, the wrongdoers will be thrown in Hell-fire and their dear drink will be boiling water mixed with bloody lust and yet it will be hard for them to take it.
7. The punishments after death will be administered by Allah himself. He will instruct the angels of punishment led by Malik to carry out the punishments. This means that there will be no appeal after judgement.
8. The situation on the last day will be gloomy with no refreshments nor any kind of pleasure. People will stand in the hottest sunshine and will suffer from the deepest thirst.
9. Wrongdoers will taste the curst tree called Zaqqam, described to be growing at the bottom of hell. Such will be the situation from time to time.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PUNISHMENTS ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT AND PUNISHMENTS ON EARTH

1. The punishments on the day of judgement are everlasting but earthly punishments are short-termed i.e people are set free afterwards.
2. The punishments on the day of judgement will be administered by Allah Himself whereas earthly punishments are administered by man.
3. Earthly punishments can be dodged by the criminal but this is not expected of in the hereafter by the unbelievers.
4. Earthly punishments can be appealed but Allah's judgement has no appeal because he is the best of the judges.
5. Heavenly punishments are stipulated in the holy Qur'an and hadith but earthly punishments are clearly specified in the constitution and bi-laws of their respective countries.

6. Punishments on earth are sometimes are not fair i.e they may be less or greater than the crime committed but heavenly punishments are ever equivalent to what one did on earth.
7. Punishments in the hereafter are irreversible but earthly punishments can be reversed by the judge.
8. The punishments on earth are simple and light e.g one can be for some time and later released but for those of the hereafter are very tough and unbearable.
9. In earthly, there is a chance of one to beg for forgiveness especially for Ta'azir punishments but there will be no such chance after death.
10. In hereafter, man will be a witness of himself i.e each part of his body will testify against him but here on earth witnesses are fellow human beings who may give false evidence.
11. The magistrate's judgement on earth depends on combined consultations from different state bodies like police, CID and prosecutors but Allah makes no consultations.

ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON REWARDS

1. A reward is a recompense given to a person in reference to something good done. According to Islam, a person who is rewarded is one who does something that pleases Allah.
2. In Islam, a person who does a good deed, can be rewarded more than his deed unlike in sinning where one is punished for only the transgression made.
3. On the day of Judgement, a person whose good deeds will outweigh the bad deeds, will be rewarded by Allah accordingly as He says in **Q (39:35)**;

“Thus Allah will do away with their evil deeds and reward them according to their noblest actions”
4. According to **Q (39:10)**. Allah highly recommends His people to be good so that He can reward them with paradise.
5. Allah is very generous that even if one has not done something good but had the intention to do it but unfortunately fails, Allah rewards him as one who has actually done it.
6. In Islam, the best amongst Allah's creatures is one who fears and gets the best reward.

Q (39:10) says; *“Say; O you my servants who believe! Fear your Lord, the reward is for those who do well in this world...”*
7. The reward for the good doers will be paradise. This is the garden house of Allah full of all articles pleasure which He prepared for the righteous.
8. In order to perfect their reward, the residents of paradise will be nearest to Allah and will be seeing Him.
9. They will occupy places decorated with precious materials like gold and diamond and they will be near each other in order to form a mutual society.
10. Believers in paradise will be served with all sorts of fruits all the time accompanied by opposite sexual mates with virginal purity, grace and beauty.

11. They will never experience anything similar to sorrow such as boredom, sickness, regret, frustration and the like.
12. The best reward to be enjoyed by the righteous will be seeing Allah with their naked eyes. He will unfold His full structure, strength and power.
13. The reward for the righteous on earth is that people like them and find life easier for them.
14. It is reported from the Prophet PBUH that the righteous person Allah likes him and instructs all angels in heaven to like him. Allah then forces all people to like him.

Guiding questions

- a) Discuss the concept of punishment as taught by Islam.
- b) Discuss the causes of crimes in your society and using the holy Qur'an, suggest the solutions to prevent these crimes.
- c) Discuss the concept of punishment from the historical point of view and show the importance of such punishments to man.
- d) Explain the kind of punishments which Islam prescribes for wrongdoers in society today.
- e) Discuss the Islamic concept of reward and punishment.
- f) 'God used to punish those who rejected the faith.' Give an account of the above events as taught in the holy Qur'an.

ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON LIFE AFTER DEATH (FUTURE LIFE)

1. In Islam, life is defined as a condition of existence. It is divided into three parts; namely life on earth i.e between birth and death, life between death and resurrection i.e Barzakah and life after resurrection.
2. It should be noted that the sole purpose of life on earth is to prepare for future life. Indeed, the righteous on earth will enjoy for millions of years after death just as the evildoers will suffer for ever and ever.
3. The only purpose for man's creation on earth is to worship Allah. Allah says in **Q (51:56)**;

"I did not create jinn and man except to worship me"
4. There is no doubt that life on earth is very short and a mere amusement.
 Allah says in **Q (4:77)**; *"...Say; short is the enjoyment of this world. The hereafter is the best for those who do right..."*
5. From the above verse, man must prepare for life to come by worshipping Allah as his sole purpose of creation e.g praying, sadaq, fasting, patience, kindness e.t.c
6. While on earth, Muslims, must carefully consider their beginning and end so that they may get to know the signs of Allah and His greatness.
7. In Islam, future life is marked by death. Death is defined as the separation of the soul from the body and all limbs of the body stop functioning. Allah says in **Q (3:185)**;

"Every soul shall have a taste of death..."

8. It should be noted that the death of the body does not mean the death of the soul. It is Allah who takes the soul at the time of death.

9. Death is the first return journey to Allah and there is no doubt it is caused by Allah.

Q (56:60-61) says; *“We decreed death to be your common lot, and We are not frustrated from changing your forms and creating you again in forms that you do not know”*

10. From the above verse, it is evident that death is caused by Allah and that it is not the end of man’s life but it opens the door to a higher form of life.

11. After death, man is put in the grave. The grave referred to here is a place where one’s body lies after death. It can be a land grave, water grave or an animal if one eaten by carnivores.

Allah says in Q (80:21-22); *“Then He causes him to die, and put him in his grave. Then when it is His will, He will raise him up again”*

12. After death, man enters into the second stage of life called **Barzakah**. This is the state of life between death and resurrection. Allah says in Q (23:100);

*“... and behind them is **Barzakah** till the day of judgement”*

13. Barzakah is the world between death and the establishment of the last hour, the Day of Resurrection. This is where man remains until when the last hour comes when mankind rises from their graves to stand before the Lord of the worlds, their bodies naked, their feet bare, and their eyes fixed in terror as they rush towards a caller.

Characteristics of life in Barzakah

1. According to Q (80:21-22), when man dies, he is put in the grave but due to Allah’s mercy, he raises him back to life.

2. After death, man is able to see what is happening in the spiritual world which he could not see while still alive because he is covered by barriers. Q (50:22) says;

“You have been heedless of this. But now We have removed your veil. Today your sight is very sharp”

3. Although it is hard for ordinary people to know what happens to a dead person in the grave, it was simple for the prophets of Allah. Prophet Muhammad PBUH said;

“Had it not been my fear that you may refuse to bury one another, I would request Allah to make it possible for you to hear the punishments I hear in the grave”

4. Life in the grave is the intermediate state where one will realize whether he is destined for paradise or hell. Good doers will start enjoying their reward from here and the same will apply to the evil-doers.

5. The evil-doers in the grave will plead to Allah to bring them back on earth to do good deeds after tasting part of the punishments of hell in their graves.

Q (23:99-100) says; *“Oh my Lord! Send me back that I may do the righteous things I ignored”*

6. In the grave, it is the soul which enjoys the rewards or suffers the punishments that are there although the body may indirectly feel it.
7. In Barzakah, even if two bodies are buried together, one a sinner and another one righteous, they receive different treatment. No one can feel or see or hear the treatment of the other.
8. When one dies, the soul goes out of the body to an assigned place. For example, the souls of believers are in heaven, others are in gates of heaven, others in birds flying in heaven while some in their graves.
9. Once a deceased person is placed in his grave and his companions turn and walk away, he hears their last seven footsteps.
10. While in the grave, the dead is visited by two fierce angels, Munikar and Nakiir, which question him about Tawheed, messengership of Muhammad PBUH, Qur'an and Islam.
11. If he gives satisfactory answers, the two angels assure him of paradise and if he answers them unsatisfactorily, he is subjected to torture till the day of resurrection.
12. The souls in Barzakah are grouped into four kinds namely; those who sleep on their backs until their corpses become dust. There are those who are asleep and will only wake up on the first blast of the trumpet.
13. There are souls who stay in the grave for a short while and then fly in the trees or birds of paradise e.g those of martyrs, prophets and saints and those souls who choose their own destiny.
14. After death, the human soul acquires a new body and an abode depending on the nature of the actions which man did on earth.
15. In short, Barzakah is a place of happiness or misery according to one's spiritual conditions. This means that life on earth is a carbon copy of life to come.
16. When a person dies, his or her deeds come to an end except for three types of recurring and rewardable benefits which he did himself. The prophet mentioned these three:

“When a man dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge, and righteous offspring who pray for him”
17. When a believer is put in the grave, a man with a rejoicing face, nice clothing, and a perfect scent will then come to him. This man will say to the person *‘Rejoice at that which will make you joyful. This is your day which you were promised.’* So the person will ask him, *“Who are you? Your face is the face that brings joy!”* The man will reply, *“I am your good deeds.”* He will then say, *‘My Lord, establish the last hour.’*
18. Likewise, when a disbeliever is put in the grave, a man with a shocking face, ugly clothing, and a horrible stench (stink) will then come to him. This man will say to the person *‘Rejoice at that which will make you sad. This is your day which you were promised.’* So the person will ask him, *“Who are you? Your face is the face that brings evil!”* The man will reply, *“I am your filthy deeds.”* He will then say, *‘My Lord, do not establish the last hour.’*

RESURRECTION

1. It should be noted that when one dies, that is only the end of his earthly life but there will be a general day when all creatures will die except the face of Allah. This is the Day of Resurrection.
2. Whereas death is the first return journey to Allah, resurrection is the second. It is the day when all souls will be assembled before Allah for judgement.
3. The Prophet PBUH described some of the signs of the last day by maintaining that on that day knowledge will suffer full extinction. Zina, alcoholism, ignorance and obscenity will alarmingly be on increase.
4. It is spoken of differently in the holy Qur'an. For example it is called the day of great rising, the hour, the last day and future life.
5. Most of these names refer to either awakening or destruction or rising to new life. In all, they relate to the removal of the old order and establishment of the new one.
6. The exact day when resurrection will take place is not known by anybody except Allah.

Allah says in **Q (7:187)**; *“They ask you about the final hour; when it will be its appointed time. Say ‘none knows except my Lord. He alone will reveal it at its appointed time.’”*

7. The prophet is quoted to have said that on the Day of Resurrection all people will rise from their graves naked as they were first created and upon hearing this, Aisha (RA) asked, *“Messenger of Allah, will men and women be together (like that) looking at each other?”* Allah's messenger replied;
‘Aisha, the circumstance will be more severe than for them to be concerned with looking at one another.’
8. That day will be so dreadful and stressful that men and women will not care to look at one another. In fact, it will be a day on which no mother will even care to ask about her child, no son will care to ask about his father.
9. When the horn is blown, there will be no more relationships between them nor will they ask about one another.
10. It is the day when a person will run away from his brother, from his mother and father, from his wife and children. Every one of them that day will have enough worry of his own.
11. The shock of the final hour is a terrible thing. For example, a nursing mother will be distracted from whom she was nursing, every pregnant woman will abort her pregnancy, and you will see the people appearing as if intoxicated but they are not intoxicated. Rather, the punishment of Allah is what is severe. Allah says in **Q (99:1-6)**;

“When the earth is shaken to its utmost shaking. And the earth throws up its burdens (loads) from within. And man cries ‘what is the matter with it’. On that it will declare its tidings (reports). Because your Lord will have given it inspiration. On that day men will proceed in companies sorted out, to be shown the deeds that they had done”

12. It is a day on which man's records of deeds will be distributed while assembling in the plain of Arafat. A believer will be given his record in his right hand and a disbeliever in his left from behind his back. Allah in **Q (83:4-6)** states;

"Do they not think that they will be called to account? On a mighty Day, a Day when all mankind will stand before the Lord of the Worlds?"

13. As for the one given his record in his right hand, he will proclaim with joy and relief to his companions but as for the one given his record in his left hand, he will wish with sorrow and anguish never to have been given their records.

14. On that day the scales will be placed and the deeds of an individual will be weighed, both good and bad. So whichever man did whether big or small will be seen.

15. The day of resurrection will last fifty thousand years and people will remain standing, suffering such pain and hardship until they will be unable to bear it.

The prophet said; *"...until Allah passes judgment between His slaves on a day the length of which will be fifty thousand years"*

16. They will look for someone who can intercede with their Lord to begin judgment. They will then go to Prophet Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses, and each of them will refuse to ask Allah to begin judgment. They will then go to Jesus to ask him but he will reply, "I am not the one for that. Go to Muhammad for whom Allah has forgiven all his sins."

17. As Allah judges between His servants, He will isolate His believing worshipper and speak privately and directly to him with no need for someone else to interpret their private talk.

18. Allah will draw a believer close, placing him under His care and screening him. Allah will ask him, *"Do you remember this sin and that sin?"* The person will answer, *"Yes, my Lord."* After he is made to confess all his sins and he sincerely believes he is ruined, Allah will say, *"I concealed them for you in life and I forgive you for them today."*

19. Also on that day, another favor to look forward to is the pool given to Muhammad PBUH. Its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey while its scent smells better than perfume. Only believers will drink from it.

20. As for its size, the prophet said; "My pool is as wide as a month's journey and all of its sides are the same and its mugs are like the stars in the sky. No one will drink from it except the true believers in Allah and His messenger, those who follow the Sunna of Muhammad. Whoever drinks from it will never again be thirsty"

21. Two streams from Paradise drain into it. These two streams are from **al-Kauthar**, a huge river in Paradise given to the prophet PBUH. The first group of people allowed to drink from it will be the poor among those early Muslims who migrated to Medina.

22. Another event to occur on that day is that the sun will be brought near close to creation so much that it will be a "mile" from them.

23. Because of this people will be in their sweat in accordance with their deeds. For some, it will rise to their ankles, some to their knees, some to their waists, and for some of them, the sweat will reach their mouths.

24. However, there are some people Allah will shade on that day, the day when there will be no shade but Allah's. Some people will be under the shade of their own charity.
25. The Prophet PBUH mentions seven groups of people who will be under Allah's shade: *a just ruler; a youth who grew up in the worship of Allah; a man whose heart is attached to the mosque; people who love each other for Allah's sake, meeting for His sake and parting for His sake; a man who is called by a woman of beauty and position for adultery, but he says: "(No) I fear Allah;" a man who gives in charity and hides it so much so that his left hand does not know what his right hand gives; and a man who remembered Allah in private so much that his eyes shed tears.*
26. On that day, the bridge will be placed over Hell, and this bridge is sharper than a sword and thinner than a hair. People will pass over the bridge according to their deeds in this life. Some as fast as the blink of an eye, some like lightning yet others will crawl across and others at speeds between those.
27. At the edges of the bridge will be hooks hanging which will seize whomever they are ordered to seize. Some will be scratched but saved while others will fall in the fire.

LIFE IN PARADISE AND HELL

PARADISE (JANAH)

1. Paradise is the garden house of Allah full of all articles of pleasure and enjoyment for rewarding the righteous on the Day of Judgement.
2. The righteous in paradise will enjoy a lot of blessings that cannot be conceived of man in this life of the world. Allah says in Q (32:17);

"No soul knows what delights of the eye are hidden in reserve for them as a reward for their deeds"
3. The Prophet PBUH said in relation to the blessings of paradise;

"Allah says; 'I have prepared for my righteous servants what no eye has ever seen and no ear has ever heard and what mind of man has ever perceived.'"
4. The roof of paradise is the Throne of Allah, the most merciful, under which there are rivers of water that never get stagnant and its pebbles are pearls and coral. Its soil is sweet scented musk.
5. It has eight gates and each gate will be entered by a believer according to his rank, faith and piety. For example, the gate for those who observed fasting is called Rayan.
6. In order to perfect their reward, the residents of paradise will be nearest to Allah seeing Him with their naked eyes, occupying places decorated with precious materials like gold, silver, diamond and others.
7. Residents of paradise will form a mutual society. That is, they will not be isolated like the pagans of hell.
8. In paradise, there will not be any more struggle for survival for example struggling to get food and drinks, medical care, housing, love and the like.
9. Fruits will be a matter of choice in paradise and amazingly, believers will never suffer any disadvantage of eating or drinking like loss of appetite, stomach pains, and the rest.

10. The residents of paradise will be very beautiful and graceful (elegant). They will enjoy divine peace that man has never enjoyed.
11. The righteous in paradise will never experience any form of sorrow. For example, boredom, sickness, regret, frustration and anything similar to that will be unheard of.
12. The believers in Jana will see Allah with their naked eyes and talk to Him directly. There will not be more struggles for worship e.g praying, paying Zakat, fasting e.t.c.
13. They will rest under shades of trees which will spread widely. Under each shade, there are tents of carved pearls with a width of sixty miles. The believer will have a companion in each corner.
14. As far as sexual intercourse is concerned, residents of paradise will have opposite sexual mates with virginal purity and beauty accompanied by full love and they will all be of the same age.

Allah says in **Q (56:22)** says; *“And there will be companions with beautiful, big and lustrous eyes”*

15. The residents of paradise will remain in the youth stage and their clothes will never fade. Men will be fully grown but youthful without beards. They will be of the same young age.
16. They will also occupy places under which rivers of honey, milk and wine are gushing without channels and a believer will be able to make them flow as he wishes.
17. The Prophet’s followers will drink on a pool called **Kauthara** whose water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey.
18. According to **Q (83:22-28)**, they will be given to drink of pure wine securely sealed to quench their thirst.
19. They will have shining faces full of joy and smiles. They will lie up on soft coaches (beds) and gaze at the unbelievers.
20. In short, the righteous will stay in paradise forever and ever, well pleased with Allah and also Allah well pleased with them.

Allah says in **Q (98:8)**; *“Their reward is with Allah in Paradise beneath which rivers flow, they will dwell in it forever. Allah well pleased with them and also well pleased with Him...”*

21. In conclusion, paradise can be summarized as a place of forgiveness, peace and satisfaction to be extended to the believers by Allah as a result of His merciful kindness.

HELL

1. Hell will be the final abode for those who will be condemned on the day of judgement. It is the punishment which Allah prepared for the sinners.
2. The holy Qur’an describes hell by different names such as *Hawiyya* (deep place by which the bottom cannot be reached), *Jahiim* (blazing fire), *Naar* (the fire), *Sa’iir* (kindled/lit fire), *Hutwamat* (Vehement/vigorous fire) and many others.
3. The residents of hell are people who deny Allah and His messengers, those who associate Him with partners and those who say that Allah has a son or a spouse.

4. The residents of hell also include people who eat others' wealth through ribah and unlawful means and those who make pictures or statues of human beings or animals.

Allah says in **Q (104:1-4)**; *“Woe to every backbiting slanderer, who piles up wealth and lays it by, thinking that his wealth would make him last forever. By no means! He will be thrown into vehement fire”*
5. Hell was prepared for women who beautify themselves for others other than their husbands and those people who commit adultery and suicide.
6. The Prophet (PBUH) said that hell was ignited for a thousand years until it turned red, and kept burning for another thousand years until it turned white, and continued for another thousand years until it turned black.
7. According to **Q (56:41-44)**, the residents of hell will be the companions of the left hand and will be in the midst of a fierce blast of fire and in boiling water.
8. They will have no good place to rest but they will be in the shades of black smoke with nothing to refresh or to please.
9. The flames of hell never fade away while its heat is seventy times more severe (hotter) than the hottest fire of this world.
10. The body of the people of hell will be made to grow so that he or she tests the torture of the fire more severely while their skin will be very thick and it will be changed with a new one every time it burns so as to feel the pain of the scorching (hot) punishment.
11. The prophet PBUH said that the distance between the sinner's shoulders in hell will cover a three days' journey on a horse and the size of his or her molar tooth will be like mountain Uhud.
12. Their food is the flesh and blood that washes off from the residents of hell. They will also feed on the curst tree called *Zaqqam* mentioned **Q (17:60)**, which is very sour and grows at the bottom of hell.
13. The residents of hell will have nothing cool to drink but hot water mixed with bloody lust which cut through the intestines of the people in hell. Allah says in **Q (78:24-25)**;

“Nothing cool shall they taste therein, nor any drink, save a boiling fluid, dark, muddy and deeply cold”.
14. Hell has seven big gates which unbelievers will enter according to their level of disbelief, dressed in garments made from fire.
15. Wrongdoers will be thrown in blazing flames by fearful and strong angels of punishment led by *Malik*, tied in chains and shackles.
16. Hell is full of scorpions and snakes which will cause pain to its residents forever and ever with neither friends nor supporters.
17. It will be fueled by people and stones. The prophet PBUH said that the least punished will have two burning coals placed on the soles of his or her feet and by this, his or her brain will boil.

18. Some scholars maintain that hell is everlasting while others uphold that after sometime, the residents of hell will be shown Allah’s mercy and be removed from hell basing on the following prophet’s traditions;

“Surely, a day will come over hell when it will be like a field of corn that has dried up after flourishing for a while.”

“Surely, a day will come over hell when there shall not be a single human being in it”

19. In conclusion, the residents of hell will never see Allah nor will they hear His voice. They will be scattered from one another to a distance of seventy miles journey and will be in severe pain throughout their remaining entire life.

Guiding questions

- a) *To what extent is resurrection a reality?*
- b) *Discuss the events of the day of resurrection.*

SOCIAL TEACHINGS OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

FEATURES AND UNIQUENESS OF THE ISLAMIC SOCIAL SYSTEM

12. The Islamic social system is a principled and civilized society which is different from modern societies. It is built on the following pillars;

13. Unity of mankind:

According to Islamic social system, all people are united by their common origin and ancestry (Adam and Hawa). Allah says in Q (49:13);

“O you mankind! We have created you from a male and female and We have divided you into tribes and sub tribes so that you may recognize one another”

The Prophet PBUH said; “O you mankind! Your God is one and your ancestor is one...”

Thus, originally, all people were alike with no distinction between them but as they increased in number, they started living in various climates and environments. As a result, they developed different races, languages, customs and colours.

Such differences are recognized by Islam but none of them shows superiority of one nation or tribe or race over the other. They are only meant for people to know one another so as to benefit from each other’s national pride.

13. Equality of mankind.

Having been created from a single pair of male and female, all people are equal in the sight of Allah. It is only the most righteous who is considered better than others before Allah. He says in Q (49:13)

“... surely the most honoured among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous of you.”

Thus, Islam does not recognize class distinctions or any other differences based on prejudice like language, colour, tribe, status and others because all men are equal before Allah except the most righteous.

In Islamic social system, if a person believes in Allah and His messengers, he will be admitted in the community of Islam no matter which race he belongs to or colour or language he speaks.

All those who join Islam will have the same rights and social status without being subjected to any racial or class distinction of any kind. Since Islam aims at building a civilized society, no person is regarded as high or low, inferior or superior.

In Islam, man’s merit depends on whether he is better than others in moral conduct, righteousness and piety.

The Islamic social system considers all people equal by virtual of common destiny (Allah). From Allah we come, for Him we live and to Him we shall return.

14. Man’s natural responsibility to the society in which he lives.

According to Islamic social system, an individual is responsible for doing all what he can to see that there is harmony and development in the society. However, the society is also responsible to Allah for the welfare of such an individual.

When the individual is well-off, he is the contributor and the society is the beneficiary. Likewise, if the individual is poor or needy, the society is the contributor and the individual is the beneficiary. There is no question of one exploiting the other.

15. Maintenance of social morals and ethics.

According to Islamic social system, every individual in the Muslim society is charged with enforcing good morals and fighting evil. He is responsible for inviting others towards good and guarding them against committing evil using all his possible means. A person who is indifferent to his society is a selfish sinner, his morals are in trouble and his faith is low.

Allah states in **Q (3:104)**; *“Let there arise out of you a group inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity (happiness)”*

The Prophet PBUH said;

“Whoever invites others to do well is like the doer of that good and will be rewarded accordingly; and whoever instigates evil is like the doer of that evil and will be punished accordingly.”

16. Mercy for the young and respect for elders.

In an Islamic social system, a true believer must be merciful to the young and respect their feelings. He also has to respect the elders irrespective of their religious affiliations.

17. Sympathy and social solidarity

A believer should be sympathetic to fellow Muslims in distress. For example, he should visit the sick, comfort and console the aggrieved and others. He should have genuine feelings of brotherhood.

A Muslim should have respect for other people’s rights such as the right to life, property and honour. He should be with them in time of joy like marriage and aqiqah celebrations.

The Prophet PBUH said; *“Whoever relieves a human being from the grief of this world, Allah will relieve him the grief of the Day of Judgement.”*

18. In his farewell speech, the Prophet PBUH summarized the Islamic social system by stressing that people’s lives and property should be honoured, wives must be treated equally, that there is no need for bloodshed and that Muslims are members of one brotherhood.

ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON MARRIAGE

1. Marriage is the legal union of man and woman for life with the aim of love and procreation.
2. It is a matrimonial contract between man and woman whose validity depends on proposal by the man and acceptance by the woman.
3. In Islam, marriage is a permanent relationship and continuous harmony not only between man and woman but also between them and Allah.
4. It is a religious duty, moral safeguard and a social necessity.
5. Marriage is an obligatory act incumbent upon every Muslim of defined qualifications and a rule every Muslim must observe unless there is a special reason barring him.

Allah says in Q (24:32);

“Take in marriage those women among you who are single and those male and female slaves who are honest. If they are poor, Allah will enrich them from His own abundance”

6. From the above verse, being poor is not a sufficient excuse for not marrying because the poor are assured of Allah’s enrichment from His wealth.
7. Islam encourages self-satisfaction but it does allow free satisfaction of sexual desire. Therefore, any conjugation outside marriage is not allowed.
8. Though marriage is optional, it is the most encouraged and necessary act in Islam without which the deeds of a believer are not fully accepted. The Prophet PBUH is reported to have said that one who cannot marry should fast always.
9. Free intimacy is not allowed and everything possible has been ordered by Allah to eliminate it. A Muslim must enter a marriage contract unless otherwise.
10. The Prophet PBUH is reported to have said that marriage was his recommended custom and whoever turns away from it turn away from him.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MARRIAGE IN ISLAM

1. It is necessary for obtaining natural and mutual benefit by a man and woman that human morals are protected by means of nikah. Without the Ihsan free mixing of opposite sexes is unnatural. This is a cause of mischief for not only human morals but also for human culture. If such bad conduct becomes common in any society it cannot maintain its very survival for a long time nor can human life remain balanced in such society.
2. Marriage acts a cure of certain diseases in grown up men and women such as backaches and boredom. This is because it gives peace of the mind and contributes to the physical beauty of the married couple.
3. Furthermore, with marriage, an idle man is turned into an active one and his mind is set up to thoughts and actions which were dormant before marriage.
4. It is through marriage that society is procreated, thereby bringing about multiplication of the human race. Allah says in Q (16:72);

“Allah has given you wives from among yourselves, and through them He has granted you sons and daughters and grandchildren and provided for you sustenance of the best...”

5. Marriage is the basis of the family which is the real unit of the human race and the first cohesive force which makes civilization possible. So, marriage is a means of uniting the different elements of humanity and consequently bringing about civilization.
6. In addition, marriage leads to the development of the feelings of love and service. Marriage love is described in the holy Qur’an as a sign of Allah as per Q (30:21).
7. Marriage helps to satisfy the natural sexual urge, failure to satisfy it may lead to either deviation or maladjustment. It is thus a means of checking unruly sexual feelings and falling into sin.

The Prophet PBUH said; *“Marriage is the best check on lustful eyes and effective help to maintain chastity” (Bukhar).*

He also said; *“Oh you young people! Whoever of you who can marry, let him do so. Those who cannot afford it should keep fast, because it may protect them against sin” (Bukhar).*

8. In marriage, there is comfort of the soul, beauty to look at, company and play, all of which relieve the heart from its burdens and make the mind able to concentrate during worship.
9. Marriage enhances the status of the married couple because of the added responsibilities one gains after getting married. Living with a spouse trains one in accommodating oneself in new experiences, hence gaining respect in society.
10. It fulfills half of Muslim’s faith because in marriage one learns a number virtues like patience, kindness, gentleness and social responsibility, all of which are important for one’s faith.
11. Marriage is a form of worship and therefore rewardable by Allah. This is because of the family responsibilities one gains in marriage.

The Prophet PBUH said; *“A man will be rewarded for what he spends on his wife, even for putting a piece of food into her mouth.”*

He also said; *“Whoever performs prayer correctly and spends on his children in spite of his modest means and does not speak ill of others will be in paradise as close to me as these two fingers of mine”*

PROCEDURES OF CHOOSING A MARRIAGE PARTNER IN ISLAM

1. Marriage is recommended for partners who share a common way of life and should be able to fulfill their purpose of creation as defined by Allah.
2. Partners should share the common goal of building a well-integrated Muslim community and be able to work harmoniously towards it.
3. When man and woman decide to marry, they should have every intention to make it a lasting success for good or for bad, for better or for worse.
4. The holy Qur’an enjoins Muslims to select partners who are good and pure.

Allah says in Q (24:26); *“Women of purity are for men of purity and men of purity are for women of purity.”*

5. The Prophet PBUH recommended Muslims to select those partners who are best in religion and character.

He said; *“A woman may be married for four reasons: for her property, for her rank, for her beauty and for her religion. So marry the one who is best in the religion and character and prosper.”*

6. The consent of both man and woman is important because Islamic marriage is not forced. Therefore, the mutual choice of the would-be-spouses is given the highest consideration.

Allah says in Q (2:232);

“... do not prevent them from marrying their husbands when they agree themselves in a lawful manner.”

The prophet PBUH said; *“Give women in marriage to men they approve of.”*

7. The process of choosing a marriage spouse should not stop the influence and consent of parents/guardians nor should the parents/guardians ignore the wishes and consent of the would-be spouses.

8. Beauty and physical compatibility is another factor in choosing a marriage partner.

The Prophet PBUH said;

“The best woman is the one who is pleasing to look at, who carries out instructions when you ask her with solemnity of oath, who responds favourably and in your absence she protects your trust in herself and your property.”

9. Falling in love is not a pre-condition for marriage in Islam but for purposes of selecting an appropriate spouse, the would-be-spouses are allowed to lawfully see and or talk to each other.

The prophet PBUH said;

“When one of you seeks a woman in marriage, and then if he is able to have a look at whom he wishes to marry, let him do so.”
(Abu Dawooda)

10. The would-be-spouses are allowed to see each other for matrimonial purposes under the direct supervision of their nearest relatives but this must be done with piety and modesty.

The Prophet PBUH said;

“No man has a right to be in the privacy with a woman who is not lawful to him. Satan is their third partner unless there is a relative.”

11. The would-be-spouses living in non-Muslim societies are recommended to enter into pre-nuptial commitment to safeguard Islamic values and Muslim personal law.

12. The would-be-partners should not deceive each other or conceal a defect during the selection process because it can have serious implications if exposed after marriage.

13. It is not allowed to marry an ill-natured man (bad tempered) because he can mistreat the wife and at the same time the bride-to-be should be avoided if she lacks good nature. Such a woman make the life of her husband miserable.

14. The messenger of Allah PBUH gave great emphasis on taking into consideration a good family background when choosing a marriage partner.

He is reported to have said;

“Marry in the lap of a decent family, since the semen and the genes have effect.”

15. Regarding the giving away of girls in marriage, the Prophet cautioned Muslims to be careful when giving away their daughters in marriage.

He said;

“Giving away a girl in marriage is almost like giving her into slavery. Therefore, be careful and see where you are depositing your daughters”

16. It is not allowed to marry a foolish and insane person. This is because his/her company is a distress and the children also get wasted.
17. The physical and mental health of the partner-to-be should be considered.
The Prophet PBUH said; *“When one intends to marry a woman, he should ask about her hair just as he asks about her face since the hair is one of the two beauties of a woman.”*
18. When choosing a marriage partner, one should consider the fact that sharia places certain restrictions on the choice of a spouse depending up on blood relationships and religious affiliations.
19. Man is also advised to choose for marriage a woman who will be affectionate to him and bear him children.
The prophet PBUH said; *“Marry a lovely woman who can give birth to children so that on the day of judgement, I will be delighted by your crowd compared to other nations.”*
20. The factor of age should not be ignored as well. It is reported that the Prophet PBUH refused to give Fatimah to Abu Baker and then Umar bin Khattab because she was still young but he accepted Ali bin Abu Talib who was also young and ready to marry her.
21. The man should make a proposal of marriage either to the woman he wants to marry directly or through her parents/guardians. It then becomes illegal for other men to propose to her until the first man fails or has been rejected.
The Prophet PBUH said; *“A man must not propose to a woman when his Muslim brother has done so already until the first proposer withdraws.”*
22. A certain time should be allowed to pass before marriage is concluded between the would-be-spouses. This period is necessary for them to find defaults in their marriage and correct them or otherwise.

THE ESSENTIALS OF A MUSLIM MARRIAGE COVENANT

1. In Islam, marriage is a social agreement and a legal contract between the husband and the wife and with Allah as their Supreme witness.
Allah says in **Q (4:21)**; *“And how could you take it when you have gone in unto each other, and they have taken from you a solemn convent?”*
2. Negotiating and signing a marriage contract is a requirement under Islamic law and certain conditions must be upheld in order for it to be valid.
3. Consent of partners: There must be a mutual agreement of both the groom and the bride to their marriage. Both must agree that none of them has been forced into their marriage ties.
4. However, they should be sexually pure. That is, a chaste lady should not be married to unchaste man or a chaste man to unchaste lady unless both are impure.
5. Consent of parents/guardians: The parents of the marrying partners should also give consent especially those of the woman. The woman can only be given in marriage by her father unless otherwise but a fellow woman cannot give her away.

6. Giving dowry (Mahr): The bride has a right to receive a gift from the bridegroom, which remains her own property as security in the marriage.

Q (4:4) states; *“And give the women on marriage their dowry as a free gift; but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it and enjoy it with right good cheer.”*

Dowry can be given in form of cash or property or service rendered by the bridegroom to the bride herself as long as it is preferred by the bride.

Dowry is intended to assure the bride that she is wanted, loved and that the bridegroom is ready to meet his marital obligations. It is the bottom line of the marriage contract that legalizes sexual intercourse between the two couples.

7. Presence of witnesses: Two reliable male witnesses are required to verify and witness the marriage vows. They should be adult trustworthy Muslims able to hear the language being used. They act as referees in case there comes misunderstandings among the couples.
8. Registration of the marriage. To ensure the best marriage contract, one free from doubt of any kind, it is in accordance with the Islamic law that marriage is registered and a marriage certificate issued to the bridegroom.
9. Delivery of the sermon. The marriage sermon should be delivered before or after the announcement of the marriage. The purpose of the sermon is to give marriage a sacred character and to educate them about their mutual rights and duties for a purposeful marriage.
10. Publication of the marriage function. The marriage function should be publicized to distinguish it from adultery and fornication. The mutual consent of the couples-to-be does not constitute a marriage unless expressly publicized in presence of witnesses.
11. The publicity should be by gathering in a public place, beating drums or performing it from the mosque. It can also be at the groom’s place or in any Islamically convenient place to the couples.
12. Marriage feast. After concluding the marriage contract, the couples should serve their invited guests with a simple feast depending on their economic status. Everything possible must be done to avoid extravagance.

The Prophet PBUH said; *“The most blessed woman is one whose wedding does not involve too much expense.”*

PROHIBITED MARITAL RELATIONS IN ISLAM

1. In Islam, there are forbidden marriages i.e people a believer should not dare to take in marriage. Allah says in Q (4:22-23);

“And do not marry women whom your fathers married except what is past, it was shameful and odious, an abominable custom indeed. Prohibited to you for marriage are; your mothers, daughters, sisters, father’s sisters, mother’s sisters, brother’s daughters, sister’s daughters, foster mothers, foster sisters, your wives’ mothers, your step daughters under your guardianship, born of your wives to whom you have gone in; no prohibition if you have not gone in, wives of your sons proceeding from your loins and two sisters in wedlock at one and at the same time

except in the past... Also prohibited are women already married except those whom your right hand possesses...

2. From the above verse, the following marital relations are not allowed in Islam:
3. The marriage to mothers is absolutely forbidden. The mothers are everyone to whom you are related by childbirth. These include mothers (gave birth) and grandmothers.
4. Marriage to daughters is also absolutely prohibited. These include every female related to you by birth such as the daughter who springs from your own loins or daughters of sons and daughters.
5. Also absolutely forbidden to marry are the sisters from three directions; from the same mother and father or from just the father or just the mother (uterine sisters).
6. Marriage to paternal aunts, sisters of the father from three directions are forbidden, also the sisters of grandfathers through the father or mother, whether the grandfather is immediate or distant and whether he inherits or not.
7. Marriage to paternal aunts; the sisters of the mother from three directions are forbidden and all the sisters of grandmothers in the line of descent.
8. Marriage to nieces and any woman related to the brother by birth is forbidden. This puts into consideration the daughters of the sisters as well.
9. Forbidden for marriage also are the foster mothers. They are the ones who have suckled you, their mothers and grandmothers and every woman related to them in any way.
10. Marriage to the mothers of wives is forbidden. Whoever married a woman, then everyone who is a mother to her by lineage or suckling, whether close or distant in relation becomes forbidden to him.
11. Marriage to stepdaughters is also prohibited. They are not forbidden except by consummation of the marriage with their mothers, including those under their guardianship. They include every daughter of the wife by lineage or suckling, close or distant in relation.
12. In addition, marriage to daughters-in-law is absolutely forbidden. That is, marriage to wives of one's sons and grandsons through lineage, suckling, whether close or distant in relation.
13. Furthermore, marriage to one's step-mothers is prohibited. That is, the wife of one's father whether he is close or distant in relation or whether he is related by lineage of suckling or whether still in marriage or divorced.
14. It is prohibited to be married to two sisters at the same time, whether they were sisters because of lineage, suckling, from the same mother and father, from one father or one mother and irrespective of whether the marriage to the sisters took place before or after consummation.
15. It is also forbidden to marry a woman and her paternal or maternal aunt at the same time.
The Prophet PBUH said; *“One cannot be married to a woman and her paternal aunt or a woman and her maternal aunt at the same time.”*
16. In addition, it is forbidden to marry women who are already married i.e chaste women who have protected their private parts from adultery through marriage.

17. Suckling prohibits that which lineage prohibits. Every woman that is forbidden due to lineage is also forbidden due to suckling e.g mothers, daughters, sisters, paternal and maternal aunts and nieces.
The Prophet PBUH said; *“What is forbidden by lineage is likewise forbidden by suckling.”*
He also said; *“Suckling makes unlawful what birth makes unlawful.” (Muslim)*
18. Islam further prohibits Muslims from marrying a Mushirk. People who associate partners with Allah. Allah says in **Q (2:221)**; *“Do not marry unbelieving women until they believe... nor marry your girls to unbelievers until they believe...”*
19. It is forbidden to marry a pregnant woman until she gives birth and breastfeeds her baby for 2 ½ years.
Q (65:4) states; *“...and for those who carry life in their wombs, their period is until they deliver their burdens...”*
20. It is not allowed to marry a divorced woman unless she completes her **IDDA** period which is 90 days. This is intended to determine whether she is pregnant or not as **per Q (65:1)**.
21. It is prohibited for a divorced woman to remarry to her formal husband unless she is taken by another man who formally divorces her and then the first husband takes her back as **per Q (2:230)**.
22. Another form of prohibited marriage is called **Shighar**, a form of marriage in Jahiliyya where one man would give his daughter or sister in marriage in exchange for another man’s daughter or sister without paying dowry. It was forbidden because it denies the woman her right of dowry.
23. Temporary marriages are forbidden in Islam. This is a form of marriage in Jahiliyya that is meant to last for a specified period in exchange for a certain amount of money. This is not allowed in Islam because marriage is a permanent relationship and continuous harmony not only between man and woman but also between them and Allah.

THE DUTIES AND RIGHTS OF FAMILY MEMBERS IN ISLAM

THE RIGHTS OF A WIFE IN A FAMILY

1. The rights of a wife in a family are the obligations of a married husband in his home on how he should treat his wife and handle their home as the family head.
2. It should be noted that once a woman is married, she does not lose any of her rights which she possesses as an individual member of the society. She just acquires new responsibilities in life which carry with them new rights.
3. In the first place, we must know that both the husband and wife have rights and responsibilities over each other in the family and that they are guardians of one another. They are rulers of one another.
The Prophet PBUH said; *“Your body has a right over you and your soul has a right over you and your wife has a right over you.”*
4. Secondly, the husband must fulfill the promises he made to the wife at the time of contracting their marriage.
5. The wife is entitled to maintenance by the husband according to his means. This includes feeding, clothing, shelter and general care.

Allah says in Q (65:6);

“Let the women live in the same style as you live according to your means.”

6. Although the residence of the wife should be according to the means of the husband, it must be adequate to provide her with privacy, comfort and independence.

7. The wife is entitled to good and kind treatment even if the husband does not like her.

Allah says in Q (4:19);

“...on the contrary live with them on a footing of kindness and equity. If you dislike them, it be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings about through it a great deal of good.”

The Prophet PBUH said;

“The most excellent of you is he who is the best to his family and I am the best of you to my family.”

8. It is the husband’s obligation to provide protection to his wife against any aggressors on her chastity and defend her against humiliation or defamation.

9. The husband should not subject his wife to insecurity and uncertainty. He should not keep warning her of inflicting harm on her or hindering her freedom.

10. If the husband does not have love and sympathy for the wife, she has the right to demand divorce from him.

11. The husband should be relaxed with his wife and always cheer up with her by making agreeable jokes. The Prophet PBUH himself used to joke with his wives like running in competition with them.

12. He should call her with sweet nicknames because the Prophet PBUH himself used to call his wives nicknames.

13. The husband should see to it that his wife has sufficient knowledge of her religious obligations and to ensure that religion is practiced in their home.

14. The husband should not harbour suspicion about his wife anyhow by allowing fanciful thoughts to engage his mind and behave in a spying manner towards her but rather he should depend on mutual trust to live a happy marriage.

15. He should jealously guard her wife against any provocative situations and should not remain indifferent when his wife is undergoing corruptive influences but his jealousy should be of legitimate cause.

16. The husband should avoid dwelling on simple mistakes committed by the wife and blaming her frequently because no man is perfect. He is advised to ignore minor faults her wife commits.

17. He should always appreciate the good things his wife does for him because the holy Qur’an is clear that Allah does not want the ungrateful.

18. The husband should do everything possible to keep the secrets of their family as much as possible especially the sexual matters with his wife.

19. It is the obligation of the husband to satisfy his wife sexually to prevent her from being tempted to go for adultery if she is not satisfied.

20. The husband should caress his wife before having sex with her in order to make sex enjoyable but not painful for her.
21. The husband should honour his wife's parents and sometimes buy them presents for her to feel secure.

THE RIGHTS OF THE HUSBAND IN THE FAMILY

1. When she gets married, a Muslim woman assumes new responsibilities which in one way or the other are the rights of her husband. The obligations of the wife in the family originate from the holy Qur'an.

Allah says in Q (25:74); *“And those who pray, ‘Our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes and give us the grace to lead the righteous.”*

2. For the husband to benefit from the above prayer, the wife must fulfill certain obligations which are imposed up on her by the marital relationship she enters into under the marital covenant.
3. The first obligation of the wife is to create a conducive environment in which she and her husband can live together happily, by being faithful, trustworthy and honest to him.
4. She must not allow other people to have sexual access to her because it is an exclusive right for her husband.
5. Likewise, a married Muslim woman must not talk to strangers or to people whom her husband does not approve and must not admit them into their house in his absence.
6. The wife is bound to protect her husband's property from loss or waste because it is a trust in her which she must discharge wisely and diligently.
7. The management of the husband is the responsibility of the wife because in one tradition of the prophet she is described as the ruler of her husband's house and children.
8. The wife should not be too demanding but must be considerate, appreciative and contented with any service rendered to her by the husband. She should not insist on buying for her expensive things beyond his means to afford.
9. She should always appear attractive, charming and desirable to her husband. A shabby and indifferent woman makes love undesirable and therefore creates a distance between herself and the husband.
10. The wife should regard their marital home as her own place of residence and she must not leave it except in company of her husband or with his permission.

The prophet PBUH said; *“A woman who leaves her husband's home without permission from her him is cursed by the angels until she returns.”*

11. When she goes out for a legitimate cause, the wife should be properly dressed and should walk and behave in a dignified manner. For example, she should lower her gaze and should not strike the ground with her feet to attract the attention of other men.

12. A wife should be respectful and obedient to her husband as the natural family head. However, her obedience should be in the reasonable limits and in matters acceptable in Islam.
13. The wife should not refuse to go to bed with her husband for sex unless there is an Islamic reason for it e.g sickness, menstruation and others. In fact, when she intends to fast voluntarily, she can do so only with permission from her husband partly for that reason.
14. The wife should do everything possible to keep the secrets of their family as much as possible especially the sexual matters with her husband.
15. The wife should not deceive her husband by deliberately avoiding conception because it deprives him of children.

RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD

(Duties of Parents to their Children)

1. In Islam, children are the joy of one's life as well as the source of pride. Therefore, parents should avoid indulging in overconfidence, false pride and being on guard against the misdeeds of their children which may arise out of love for them.
2. Parents/guardians must pray to Allah before having sex so as to bless them with God-fearing children and guard them against other satanic temptations.
3. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to develop their children's personality by making them dependent on them and exhibiting good morals to them in their tender age.
4. Parents/guardians must provide their children with the three major rights; the right to life and equal chances in life, the right to legitimacy (having a legal father) and the right to good upbringing and general care.
5. Parents/guardians are required to perform aqiqah for their newly born babies and all other related rituals like adhan and iqama and giving them good names.
6. Parents/guardians are supposed to give their children good education especially Islamic education in Qur'an and Sunna of Prophet Muhammad PBUH. Secular education should always be given second consideration.
7. According to Islam, the best mothers are those who are the most affectionate to their young ones by showing them maximum love but also avoid false pride in them.
8. Discrimination among children is prohibited in Islam. Male children should not be preferred to female children nor should the latter be to the former.
9. However, Islam stresses the importance of taking special care of the daughters because of their diligence. They need extra kindness due to their softheartedness.
10. It is the responsibility of male Parents/guardians to help their children to marry when they reach the right age.
11. Muslim Parents/guardians must be fond of their children and be kind to them. They should always be seen by people of other faith exhibiting love to their children.

12. Children deserve the best care from either the state or relatives whether Parents/guardians are alive or deceased, present or absent, known or unknown. They should not be left to starve.
13. Parents/guardians should establish full justice when dealing with their children to avoid leaving the children divided due to unfair judgement among them.
14. Parents/guardians are required to ask their children to do only those tasks which they can afford. Overburdening children with heavy work beyond their capacity is an abuse of parental love and authority.
15. Parents/guardians especially mothers are asked to avoid cursing their children but to always ask for Allah's blessings for them because Allah answers their prayers directly.
16. Parents/guardians should train their children religious practice at an early age e.g at the age of seven, they should ensure that they start praying.

Allah says in **Q (31:13)**; *“Behold! Luqman said to his son by way of instruction; ‘O my son! Do not join others with Allah in worship. For shirk is a grave sin.’”*

Allah in **Q (31:17)** says; *“O my son! Establish regular prayer, enjoin what is just, and forbid what is wrong...”*

17. Parents/guardians should avoid being too demanding from their children. This is because over demanding usually results in disobedience to Parents/guardians by their children.
18. Female relatives must not expose their bodies to mature male children. Only parts like the head, face, neck and mid upper arm to the fingers and lower parts of the feet may be shown to them.

HOW CHILDREN SHOULD TREAT THEIR PARENTS

(Responsibilities of children to their children)

1. In Islam, good treatment of parents is a form of worship commanded by Allah in the holy Qur'an. Allah says in **Q (17:23)**;

“Your Lord has enjoined you to worship none but Him, and to show kindness to your parents.”
2. A child must show every kind of patience and speak to Parents with nice words especially at the old age. Allah says in **Q (17:24)**;

“If either or both of them attain old age with you, show them no sign of impatience nor rebuke them but speak to them with kind words.”
3. We must treat our parents with humbleness and sensitivity and always pray for them whether dead or live. Allah states in **Q (17:24)**;

“Treat them with humbleness and tenderness and say ‘Lord! Be merciful to them. They nursed me when I was an infant.’”
4. Parents need respect from their children because they are the reason we exist on earth. They love us and care for us like mothers who carry us in their wombs for nine months.
5. Respect is also accorded to them due to the pain they go through while bringing up children.

Allah says in **Q (31:14)**; *“And We enjoined on man to show kindness to his parents, for weakness and weakness his mother bears him and he is not weaned before he is two years of age.”*

6. A good child must take time and thank his parents for what they did for him even if for him sees nothing in that case. That is a command from Allah as He says in **Q (31:14)**;

“We said: ‘Give thanks to Me and to your parents.’”

7. It is an obligation of the child to always meet his parents with a smiling face. Though this is an act of kindness to others, it is a necessity to the parents.
8. Allah commands us to lower ourselves before our parents and not to speak any words that may show displeasure to them.

He says in **Q (17:24)**; *“... nor shout at them but speak to them with kind words and out of your kindness lower yourselves to them.”*

9. Kindness and respect must be extended to both parents, mother and father, whether they are Muslims or not because Allah does not categorize them.
10. Disobedience to parents is extremely condemned in Islam unless they tell us to commit shirk or to disobey Allah, but even then, we have to do it in a polite way.

Allah says in **Q (29:8)**; *“We ordered man to show kindness to his parents. But if they bid you to associate with Me what you do not know, do not obey them.”*

11. Prophet Muhammad PBUH said that the child’s paradise is under his parents’ feet. So whoever disobeys them denies himself chance to enter paradise.
12. In Islam, mothers are preferred to fathers in the division of the child’s love. The prophet PBUH said that they take $\frac{3}{4}$ (75%) of his love due to the pain they go through in carrying the womb for nine months and giving birth to him and other strong reasons in that case.
13. A child should be extra careful and patient to his parents when they grow old. This is because at this age they grow physically weak and mentally feeble, accompanied by impatience and misjudgment. So one must control his temper to them.
14. It is among good moral for a child to listen to his parents while speaking to him. It is totally irreligious for him to interrupt their speech or argue with them.
15. In Islam, among the everlasting benefits (sadaq) a parent can be proud of even after death is a good child left on earth that can pray for him or do things that can benefit him e.g building a school or mosque for him.
16. A good child is obliged to provide necessities of life to his parents and to always visit them especially when they grow old. In doing so, he should give them according to his standard.
17. Male children are charged with a duty of balancing the love for their parents and wives. They should not love their wives at the expense of their mothers but they should strike a harmonious and reconciliatory relationship between them.

18. A good child should maintain friendship and respect of his parents' friends. This is because he finds consolation in them and comfort in absence of the parents.
19. Finally, insulting parents is one of the grave mistakes a child should never commit to them. Abusing one's parents or the parents of others must be avoided.

MARITAL FAITHFULNESS

1. This is the commitment and fulfillment of marital obligations expected of each partner in a marriage bond in order to maintain a permanent and joyous marriage.
2. In order to have a long and lasting marriage, the married couples should observe following pillars in Islam.
3. They should not engage in adultery because it is a major evil that has led to family breakdown in society today.
4. Each partner should ensure sexual satisfaction to each other in order to eliminate cases of marital rape and adultery in the family.
5. They should endeavor to look attractive to each other e.g having a pleasant face, being smart, clean and having a good scent.
6. They should not entertain rumours because it is the major source of family quarrels. The Prophet PBUH said; *"If one does not have what to say should keep quiet."*
7. Women are asked to seek permission before leaving their husbands' homes to avoid suspicion and quarreling with them in cases they do not find them at home.
8. Islam encourages Muslims to choose partners they love. They should not be forced in marriage because it will not serve its purpose of harmonious living.
9. They should keep the secrets of their marital affairs to themselves without revealing them to unconcerned people.
10. They should be open to each other. If one has disappointed the other, he/she should tell her/him in order to solve the problem amicably.
11. Islam prohibits superstition and witchcraft because apart from being shirk, it disrupts the peace and unity of the family.
12. Islam emphasizes that marriage should be based on love and sympathy. This will encourage partners to forgive each other.
13. Each partner should tell the other their whereabouts. They should not just move out especially men without informing their people at home.
14. Partners especially wives are not allowed to receive gifts which may be tempting and hence make them unfaithful to their partners.
15. Partners are asked to avoid being in company of members of opposite sex without their brothers or sisters or husbands/wives because this reduces temptations.
16. Women are not allowed to entertain visitors in their homes when their husbands do not approve them or when they are not present to avoid suspicion.

17. Where there is misunderstanding, partners should settle their issues amicably and the one in wrong should apologize.
18. In case of serious misunderstandings, partners should refer their differences to their parents for guidance and if necessary to their witnesses during their marriage covenant.
19. There should be mutual trust between the husband and the wife if they are to have a successful marriage relationship.
20. However, having faith in Allah and sticking on Islamic morals is the major foundation on which a pure and stable marriage is built.

POLYGAMY IN ISLAM

1. Polygamy is a situation where a man possesses more than one wife at a time. As a matter of fact, Islam recognizes only the union of man and one woman as a valid form of marriage.
2. However, under exceptional cases, it allows the man to marry more than one wife but it does not allow a woman to have more than one husband (polyandry).
3. The permission to marry more than one wife is got from the holy Qur'an.

Allah says in Q (4:3); *“If you fear that you cannot treat orphans with fairness, then you may marry such women of your choice, two or three or four; but if you fear that you cannot do justice, then marry one only or those you possess. This will make it easier for you to avoid injustice.”*

4. From the above verse, Muslims have a liberty to marry as many as four wives at maximum but note must be taken that it is not a rule or an article of faith for them.
5. Furthermore, the verse allows polygamy on condition that the man will be able to deal justly between the wives in matters such as feeding, dressing, housing and division of time.
6. Anyone who lacks assurance to this justice must marry only one wife. The Prophet PBUH said;

“Anyone who marries two wives and does not treat them equally shall come on the Day of Judgement dragging his part of the body which shall be hanging down.”
7. The fair treatment of wives mentioned by the prophet PBUH in the above hadith relates to the rights of the wives but not love because for it, he said that it is hard to divide it equally.
8. However, the husband should not expressly show them that he loves one wife more than the other as this may bring grudges among them.

CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH POLYGAMY IS ALLOWED IN ISLAM

1. According to Q (4:3), polygamy is allowed only when one has orphans to look after and he fears that they will not be treated well. In this case, one can marry the mother of the orphans or one of the orphans or some other elderly woman so that the orphans' welfare is catered for, hence polygamy.
2. If a man has a number of female orphans to look after but he is unmarried and there is a danger of him falling in love with one of them. In this case, he is allowed to marry one or more of them to avoid committing Zina with them, thereby betraying his trust with Allah.

3. If a man is married and his wife fails to treat the orphans properly, he is allowed to marry one of the female orphans so that she can look after her fellow orphans in a separate home.
4. If the young relatives of the man like brothers and sisters become orphans and finds out that his existing wife cannot look after them properly, he can marry a suitable mature woman who can treat them like a mother.
5. If the man is afraid that the orphans under his care being strangers, he may not treat them fairly as he should have done. He may establish direct relationship with them by marrying one of them.
6. If a man has a large number of orphans under his care and he finds out that he cannot do full justice to them without marrying another wife, he is permitted to do so to the limit of four only.
7. However, although the subject matter of **Q (4:3)** talks about polygamy in relation to orphans only, it is important to note that there are other situations which may give rise to polygamy. In this case, polygamy is seen as a solution to social and moral evils. These include;
8. There are certain women who are barren and yet men marry to get children. Since barrenness can be known after marriage, the barren woman should not be divorced or neglected because if it is done, she may go in for prostitution in search of a child. The solution for the man is to marry another wife and at the same time keeping the barren one to also enjoy her conjugal rights.
9. There are some men whose sexual desires are too strong for one woman to bear. Since this one is found out after marriage to a particular woman, it should not necessarily call for divorce but for the man to have another woman so as his sexual lust is shared among them, hence polygamy.
10. Certain women naturally have long menstrual periods or chronicle diseases which may not permit sexual intercourse yet the husband may find it hard and suppressive of his sexual desires during these periods. The only solution besides patience is having another woman.
11. There are situations when women outnumber men especially after wars. Under such circumstances, it is in the interest of Islam and for the women in particular to accept and become co-wives to a man instead of spending their entire lives without being married.
12. If a Muslim man converts to Islam with more than four wives, he cannot stay with them but Islam advises that he chooses four from them and then divorces the rest.
13. If the woman is too harsh to the man and there is no peace in the home. So the unhappy husband is allowed to look for another wife to give him comfort and satisfied marriage life whereas the woman is allowed to ask for divorce if the man is harsh to her.

ADVANTAGES OF POLYGAMY

1. Polygamy allows more women to get married instead of remaining single for most of their lives.
2. If there are more than two wives, then in the absence of the husband, the wives can help each other out with household duties and taking care of the children.
3. It creates social relationship between the husband and different families.
4. It brings responsibility and commitment in the husband.
5. It prevents prostitution among barren women.
6. A husband who does justice among his wives gets rewards from Allah.
7. It brings respect to the man.

8. It brings about increase in Muslim community.
9. It promotes sexual satisfaction among men.
10. It creates care for parents in old age due to many children born.
11. It gives men opportunity to have children of different characters from different women.
12. Many wives and the children they produce are a source of labour and income in the family.

DISADVANTAGES OF POLYGAMY

1. It leads to transmission of diseases.
2. It increases financial burden in the family.
3. It leads to injustices among wives by unfair husbands.
4. It leads to shirk among wives fighting for more love from the husband.
5. It creates disunity among the children especially after the death of the father.
6. It creates jealousy among wives.
7. In case of broken marriages, bitter relationships emerge with the divorced wife.
8. It is one of the causes of street children especially due lack of maintenance.
9. It may result in adultery among wives if the husband fails to satisfy them sexually.
10. It leads to divided attention and love among couples.

HOW HAVE MUSLIMS MISUSED THE INSTITUTION OF POLYGAMY

1. Many Muslims fear to practice polygamy even though they have genuine reasons for it.
2. Other Muslims are influenced to practice polygamy even when they cannot afford it.
3. Some men show economic unfairness to their wives.
4. Some Muslims exceed the maximum number of four wives allowed in Islam.
5. Some women practice social evils in their marriages as a result of polygamy like witchcraft.
6. Some women divorce when their husband marry a second wife.
7. Some men give their wives little time and do not satisfy them sexually.
8. Sometime children are neglected and mistreated by step mothers.
9. Some Muslims marry two sisters at ago which is forbidden in Islam.
10. In some polygamous families, men are controlled by their wives.
11. Some men marry polytheists in the process of practicing polygamy.
12. Some women neglect religious duties because their husbands have acquired second wives.
13. Some Muslims have misinterpreted the institution of polygamy in Islam by making it a compulsory act to the Muslims.
14. Fighting and hatred among wives is common among polygamous families.

ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON DIVORCE

1. Technically, Muslim jurists define the term divorce as the legal dissolution of a marriage bond established between man and woman so that they are no longer husband and wife.
2. Although marriage is a permanent relationship, Islam recognizes the necessity under exceptional circumstances of keeping the way open for its dissolution when the couples can no longer live happily as husband and wife.
3. This is because there is no point in keeping a nominal contract when the two couples cannot honour its vows and therefore they are living as enemies in their home.

4. Instead of the married partners turning their home into hell, it is better for them to separate peacefully than persisting on indefinitely and harm each other.

5. However, although divorce is allowed in Islam, it is the most hated act in the sight of Allah.

The prophet PBUH said; *“Of all things allowed in Islam, divorce is the most hated”*

He also said; *“The woman who asks her husband to divorce her without a cause, the smell of Paradise is forbidden on her.”*

“There are three things which, whether done in joke or in earnest, shall be considered serious and effectual, namely; marriage, divorce, and taking a wife back.”

6. In the holy Qur’an, Allah approved the prophet’s decision of insisting that his adopted son, Zaid, keep his wife whom he had divorced.

Q (33:37) says; *“And remember when you said to the man whom Allah and yourself have favoured! Keep your wife and have fear of Allah...”*

7. Everything possible must be done to avoid divorce. Firstly, the two couples are asked to try and settle their differences themselves.

8. Secondly, if they fail, two arbiters (mediators) from either side of the woman and man are sought to make peace between them.

Allah says in **Q (4:35)** says; *“If you fear a break between a man and his wife, appoint an arbiter from his people and another from hers. If they wish to be reconciled, Allah will bring them together...”*

9. If the mediators fail to bring peace between the couples, then divorce will follow.

Allah says **Q (2:227)**; *“But if their intention is firm for divorce, Allah hears and knows all things”*

GENERAL CAUSES OF DIVORCE IN ISLAM

(Conditions under which divorce is allowed in Islam)

1. If the husband has been by any cause deprived of his organ of generation. In this case the wife can obtain instant divorce if the defect occurred before marriage. Cases of evident madness and leprosy are treated in the same way.

2. If the husband is proved impotent after marrying the wife, divorce is sought because if the two are left together, the woman may indulge in adultery to get sexual satisfaction.

3. Apostasy from Islam. When a man or woman apostatizes from Islam, then an immediate dissolution of the marriage takes place, whether the apostasy.

4. Insufficient dowry. If the stipulated dowry is not given when demanded, divorce takes place if the husband promised to pay it in future and fails to fulfill his promise, the wife has a right to divorce her.

5. Refusal of Islam. If one of the parties embrace Islam, and the other one refuses to embrace the new faith, then divorce takes place.
6. If a husband charges his wife with adultery, the charge is investigated, but if there is no proof, and the man swears his wife is guilty, and the wife swears she is innocent, then divorce must be decreed.
7. When a husband makes a vow not to have carnal intercourse with his wife for no less than four months, and keeps the vow unviolated, an irreversible divorce takes place.
8. Reason of property. If a husband become the proprietor of his wife (a slave), or the wife the proprietor of her husband (a slave), divorce takes place.
9. An invalid marriage of any kind, arising from incomplete *nikah* (marriage ceremony) or from affinity (compelled by a kin without one of the couple's consent), or from consanguinity (a blood relationship).
10. Difference of country. For example, if a husband flee from land of enmity i.e. a non-Muslim country to country of Islam and his wife refuse to perform *flight* to accompany him, she is divorced.
11. If a man converts to Islam with more than four wives, he is asked to divorce some of them and remain with a maximum of four as allowed in **Q (4:3)**.
12. Cruelty of one partner. If one partner is constantly cruel to another, instead of hurting each other if they are forced to stay together, Islam allows them to divorce.
13. Difference in race or tribe. A woman cannot be compelled to marry a man who belongs to a tribe she does not want and in case of such a marriage she may ask for divorce.

FORMS OF DIVORCE

1. Woman initiated divorce (Khul'a)

- This is a form of divorce asked by the wife if she feels that she has reasons no longer binding her with the husband in marriage.
- Islam allows it on condition that the Muslim judge is satisfied that the couple can no longer live together happily and the wife can pay back dowry unless the husband is caught in dirtiness. It may be due to the following conditions;
 - *Inability of the husband to look after her in matters like dressing, shelter, feeding and other.*
 - *Inability of the husband to satisfy her sexually.*
 - *If the husband denounces Islam.*
 - *If the woman was forced into marriage.*
 - *If both were non-Muslims and the wife converts to Islam.*
 - *If the husband is imprisoned for life.*
 - *If the husband commits adultery.*
 - *If the husband goes missing for a while without her knowing his whereabouts.*
 - *If the husband's male organs are amputated.*
 - *If the husband becomes insane or attacked by chronicle diseases.*

2. L'ana

- This is a form of divorce in which the husband accuses the wife of adultery but has no visible evidence to support his accusation while the woman denies it.
- If the husband insists that his wife committed adultery, L'ana (cursing) is sought to separate them whether the accusation is true or false.
- Authority to this form of divorce is given by Allah in **Q (24:6-9)**;

“And for those who accuse their wives and have no evidence except their own, let each of them testify by swearing four times by Allah that his charge is true, calling down in the fifth time up on himself the curse of Allah if he is lying. But they shall spare her the punishment if she swears four times by Allah that his charge is false and calls down Allah’s wrath up on herself if it is true.”

- If both have sworn and each has borne witness of his or her truthfulness and called for the wrath of Allah on himself or herself if he or she told a lie, they are separated forever.

3. Husband initiated divorce (Talaq)

- This is a form of divorce in which the husband decides to let the wife go i.e a divorce initiated by the husband. It may be due to the following conditions;
- *If the wife commits shirk.*
- *If the woman is caught in adultery.*
- *If the wife becomes mentally unconscious (insane).*
- *If the wife turns away from Islam.*
- *If the wife refuses to embrace Islam in case the husband becomes a Muslim.*
- *If the wife denounces Islam.*
- *If the wife denies her husband sex.*

4. Fask

- This is a form of divorce sought by the couple through the Qadhi’s court. It may be due to the following conditions;
- *Impotence of the husband.*
- *Serious defects in the marriage contract.*
- *Failure by the husband to maintain the wife.*
- *In case one partner becomes an apostate.*
- *If the husband goes missing for no genuine reasons.*
- *Imprisonment of the husband for life.*
- *When one of the partners denounces Islam.*
- *Immigration of the husband to another country for permanent residence while the wife is not ready to follow him.*
- E.t.c

5. Mutual divorce

- This is a form of divorce as a result of mutual agreement between the husband and wife to end their marriage after getting satisfied that they cannot live together. This is done in presence of the Qadhi and some witness.
- However, the husband must spend three months looking after the wife but without sex to ascertain that she is not pregnant.

RULES AND PROCESSES FOR EFFECTING DIVORCE

1. Divorce is permitted in Islam as a last resort if it is not possible to continue a marriage.
2. Certain steps need to be taken to ensure that all options have been exhausted and both parties are treated with respect and justice.
3. When a marriage is in danger, couples are advised to pursue all possible remedies to rebuild the relationship. Divorce is allowed as a last option, but it is discouraged.

The Prophet Muhammad once said; *"Of all the lawful things, divorce is the most hated by Allah."*

4. For this reason, the first step a couple should make is to really search their hearts, evaluate the relationship, and try to reconcile because all marriages have ups and downs, and this decision should not be arrived at easily.
5. Couples should evaluate their own needs and weaknesses and think through the consequences. They should try to remember the good things about each other, and find forgiveness and patience in their hearts for minor annoyances.
6. They should communicate with each other about their feelings, fears, and needs. During this step, the assistance of a neutral Islamic counselor may be helpful for some people.
7. If, after thoroughly evaluating their marriage, and find that there is no other option than divorce, there is no shame in proceeding to the next step. Allah gives divorce as an option because sometimes it is truly the best interest of all concerned.
8. Nobody needs to remain in a situation that causes personal distress, pain, and suffering. In such cases, it is more merciful that they each go their separate ways, peacefully and amicably.
9. It should be recognized, though, that Islam outlines certain steps that need to take place both before, during, and after a divorce. The needs of both parties are considered. Any children of the marriage are given top priority.
10. Guidelines are given both for personal behavior and legal process. Following these guidelines may be difficult, especially if one or both spouses feel wronged or angry but they should strive to be mature and just.
11. The couples should remember Allah's words in the Quran: *"The parties should either hold together on equitable terms or separate with kindness."* Q (2:229).
12. Selecting arbiters. Before a decision is made about divorce, it is only fair to involve family elders in an attempt to reach a reconciliation because they know each party personally, including their

strengths and weaknesses, and would hopefully have their best interests at heart. If they approach the task with sincerity, they may be successful in helping the couple work their issues out.

Allah says in Q (4:35); *“And if you fear a breach between the two, appoint an arbiter from his relatives and an arbiter from her relatives. If they both desire reconciliation Allah will effect harmony between them. Verily Allah has full knowledge, and is aware of everything.”*

13. If this attempt fails, after all due efforts, then it is recognized that divorce may be the only option. The couple proceeds to pronouncing a divorce. The procedures for actually filing for divorce depend on whether the move is initiated by the husband or the wife.
14. When a divorce is initiated by the husband, it is known as *Talaq*. The pronouncement by the husband may be verbal or written, and should only be done once. Since the husband is seeking to break the marriage contract, the wife has full rights to keep the dowry (*Mahr*) paid to her.
15. If the wife initiates a divorce, there are two options. In the first case, the wife may choose to return her dowry to end the marriage. She forgoes the right to keep the dowry since she is the one seeking to break the marriage contract. This is known as *Khul'a*.

Allah says inQ (2:229) *“It is not lawful for you (men) to take back any of your gifts except when both parties fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah. There is no blame on either of them if she gives something for her freedom. These are the limits ordained by Allah so do not transgress them”*

16. In the second case, the wife may choose to petition a judge for divorce, with the cause. She is required to offer proof that her husband had not fulfilled his responsibilities. In this situation, it would be unjust to expect her to also return the dowry. The judge makes a determination based on the facts of the case and the law of the land.
17. In any Islamic divorce procedure, there is a three-month waiting period called **Iddah** before the divorce is finalized. During this time, the couple continues to live under the same roof but sleeps apart. This gives them time to calm down, evaluate the relationship, and perhaps reconcile.
18. During the waiting period, the husband and wife are free to resume their relationship at any time, thus ending the divorce process without the need for a new marriage contract.
19. Another reason for the waiting period is a way of determining whether the wife is expecting a child. If the wife is pregnant, the waiting period continues until after she has delivered and breastfed the child.
20. During the entire waiting period, the wife has the right to remain in the family home and the husband is responsible for her support.
21. If the waiting period is completed without reconciliation, the divorce is complete and takes full effect. The husband's financial responsibility for the wife ends, and she often returns to her own family home.

22. It is best for the couple to formalize the divorce in the presence of the two witnesses, verifying that the parties have fulfilled all of their obligations. At this time, the wife is free to remarry if she wishes.

23. Islam discourages Muslims from going back and forth about their decisions, engaging in emotional blackmail, or leaving the other spouse in limbo.

Allah says in Q (2:231); *"When you divorce women and they fulfill the term of their Iddah, either take them back on equitable terms or set them free on equitable terms; but do not take them back to injure them, (or) to take undue advantage. If anyone does that, he wrongs his own soul..."*

24. If a couple decides to reconcile, after the divorce is finalized, they must start over with a new contract and a new dowry (*Mahr*). To this effect, there is a limit on how many times the same couple may marry and divorce. If a couple decides to remarry after a divorce, this can only be done twice.

Allah says in Q (2:229); *"Divorce is to be given two times, and then (a woman) must be retained in good manner or released gracefully."*

25. After the third divorce, the couple may not remarry again. First, the woman must seek fulfillment in marriage to a different man. Only after she is divorced or widowed from this second marriage partner, would it be possible for her to reconcile again with her first husband if they choose.

26. This seemingly strange rule is intended to prevent the husband from initiating a third divorce in a frivolous (playful) manner, knowing that the decision is irrevocable and Secondly, it helps to show the two individuals that they were simply not a good match for each other.

The wife may find happiness in a different marriage or she may realize, after experiencing marriage with someone else that she wishes to reconcile with her first husband after all.

THE CUSTODY OF CHILDREN AFTER DIVORCE

1. In the event of divorce, children often bear the most painful consequences. Islamic law takes their needs into account and makes sure that they are cared for.
2. The financial support of any children both during a marriage and after divorce rests solely with the father. This is the children's right upon their father, and courts have the power to enforce child support payments, if necessary. The amount is open for negotiation and should be in proportion with the husband's financial means.
3. The Quran advises the husband and wife to consult each other in a fair manner regarding their children's future after divorce.
4. According to Q (2:233), infants who are still nursing may continue to breastfed until both parents agree on the period of weaning through "mutual consent and counsel." This spirit should define any co-parenting relationship.
5. Islamic law stipulates that physical custody of the children must go to a Muslim who is in good physical and mental health and is in the best position to meet the children's needs.

6. Different Muslim jurists have established various opinions of how this might best be done. Some have ruled that custody is awarded to the mother if the child is under a certain age, and to the father if the child is older.
7. Others would allow older children to express a preference. Generally, it is recognized that young children and girls are best cared for by their mother.
8. Since there are differences of opinion among Islamic scholars about child custody, one might find variations in local law. In all cases, however, the main concern is that the children are cared for by a fit parent who can meet their emotional and physical needs.

DISADVANTAGES OF DIVORCE

(Reasons why divorce is hated in Islam)

1. It leads to disintegration of the family which is a very important institution of the Islamic social order.
2. People who divorce lose respect in society.
3. It denies children parental love.
4. Child grow up poorly disciplined due to lack of parental love.
5. The woman loses her protector and may not get another comforter.
6. The virtues that are derived from marriage are lost.
7. It leads to misunderstandings between the man and his in-laws.
8. It leads to spread of venereal diseases if the divorced couple resort to adultery.
9. It may lead to shirk by a partner who want to bring back his/her love.
10. It leads to loneliness which is not easy to cope up with.
11. It leads to street children which is a social problem in the world today.
12. Marriage secrets are exposed especially by the woman.

THE POSITION OF A WOMAN IN ISLAM

1. The position of a woman in Islam is unique with no similarity with any other systems. From the material as well as the spiritual point of view, Islam recognizes the position of a woman to be the same as that of man.
2. In Islam, a woman has been given rights and privileges which she has never enjoyed under other religious or constitutional systems.

POSITION OF WOMEN IN ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS AND RELIGIONS

3. A close observation of the status women had in the pre-Islamic civilizations and religions would be a good introduction to highlighting Islam's rather respective view of women.
4. Reviewing examples and textual evidences from the thought of ancient civilizations and religions, and the behavior of their followers, and comparing them to the sound Islamic approach of social thought and behavior, must present anyone who seeks truth with fair findings.
5. Over the succession of nations, women suffered many an injustice that denied them even the most basic human rights and put them, in most times, in a lower position in terms of training and ranking.
6. The Sumerian, Assyrian and Babylonian civilizations in Mesopotamia treated women with contempt and held their opinion to be simply irrelevant. The Hammurabi law would blame women for

assumed wrongdoings they did not actually commit, and unlike in the case of killing a man, no one may lose his life if he takes a woman's.

7. The Manu law in India considered women as inheritable properties who had no right to education; for women's task was to provide pleasure and lust for men. Even worse, a woman's life should end with the death of her husband, as habits had that a woman shall be burnt with her dead husband at the stake.
8. As for the Chinese civilization, women were considered a bad omen and a byword for misery, which prevented them from going out of their home or looking to people in the face.
9. In the Greek tradition, Women were portrayed as stained creatures, described by Hesiod as having *"a dog's mind and a thievish disposition"*.
The Greek orator Demosthenes once said: *"We keep prostitutes for pleasure, we keep mistresses for the day to day needs of the body, we keep wives for the begetting of children and for the faithful guardianship of our homes."*
10. The Romans considered the woman as an unclean animal that shall be banned from entering temples, and thus disqualified from entering paradise. They viewed her femininity as one reason for her legal incompetence.
11. The Torah holds Eve responsible for tempting Adam, as we read in the Genesis, Chapter 3, Adam saying: *"The woman whom God gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."*
12. The wife was considered as an integral part of her husband's properties, so she shall concede on her human and material rights.
13. The Children of Israel used to sacrifice girls to please Molech. In the Book of Jeremiah, Chapter 32, it reads: *"and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech which I commanded them not"*.
14. In pre-Islamic times, the Arabs attached less importance to the person of a woman. She was taken as a mere property of her husband and herself would not own any property nor carry out transactions in her own name.
15. The Arabs were ashamed of having female births, and burying girls alive was widespread. They believed that they were a sign of poverty and misfortune.
16. Still in Pre-Islamic, a woman had no right to inheritance but instead she was inherited by even her far distant relatives.
17. In other parts of the world, a woman was taken as a product of the devil. Man was placed as the dominant lord of the woman who had no choice but to surrender to his dominance. A question was always asked as to whether or not a woman has a soul in her.
18. In the Eastern communist world or the Capitalist countries, a woman is in no better position. She has to work so hard to live and sometimes she may be doing the same job like that a man does but her wage is less than his.
19. It is true that the woman of today has got rights but these were not granted voluntarily or out of kindness to her. She had to pay painful sacrifices and give up many of her natural rights. But even then, she has not acquired what Islam has established by Allah in the Qur'an for a Muslim woman.

THE STATUS OF WOMEN AS DEFINED BY ISLAM

1. Islam recognizes a woman as a mother and it is said that "Paradise lies under her feet." In an authentic hadith the Prophet (PBUH) was asked by a man: *'Who is the one most worthy of my care?'*. The Prophet replied: *'Your mother'*. The man asked: *'Then whom?'*. He replied: *'Your mother'*. The man further asked: *'Then whom?'*. He replied: *'Your mother'*. The man asked: *'Then whom?'*. And in this fourth time the Prophet replied: *'Then your father.'* This shows how important the mother is in Islam compared to the father.

2. In his farewell speech, the Prophet PBUH stressed the status of women in society when he said;
"O people! Surely there are rights in favour of your women which are incumbent up on them ... I command you to treat women well because they are like captives in your homes."

3. While addressing the issue of parents in the holy Qur'an, Allah does not distinguish between father and mother but rather He addresses them in the same voice.

Allah says in Q (17:23); *"Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him and that you be kind to parents. When one or both of them attains old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor repel them but address them in terms of honour"*

4. Referring to a woman as a daughter, Islam addresses them in the same as it addresses her male brothers that they are born of the same family and from the same womb.

Allah says in Q (42:49); *"He bestows female (offspring) upon whom He wills, and bestows male (offspring) upon whom Him wills."*

The Prophet PBUH said: *"Women are the equal sisters of men"*.

5. A woman is also recognized as a wife who is a source of comfort for her husband just as the husband is to her:

Allah said in Q (2:187); *"They are like a garment to you and you are like a garment to them"*

6. A woman is recognized by Islam as a full partner of man in procreation of mankind. He is the father and she is the mother and both are essential for life. By this partnership, she has an equal share with the man in every aspect of life.

7. A woman's responsibility in faith is exactly the same as that of a man. She is accountable for her belief in Allah and the Prophet (SAW) even if her closest of kin, like her father, husband or brother disagrees with her in this. She is rewarded for her good deeds the same way Allah rewards man.

Allah says in Q (3:195); *"Their Lord answers them, saying 'I will deny no man or woman among you the reward of their labour. You are offspring of one another."*

8. A woman is equal to man in the responsibility of seeking knowledge. When Islam instructs man to seek knowledge, it makes no distinction between man and woman.

The Prophet PBUH said; *"The pursuit of knowledge is incumbent up on every Muslim, man and woman."*

9. Women make up half of society and they are responsible for the nurturing, guidance and reformation of the subsequent generations of men and women. It is the female who instills principles and faith into the souls of the nation. It is probably because of this that a child's "Paradise lies under her feet."

10. A woman is entitled to freedom of expression as much as man is. Her sound opinions must be put into consideration and cannot be disregarded just because of her sex as a woman.

Allah says in Q (58:1-4); *“Allah has heard the words of her who pleaded with you concerning her husband and made her plaint to Allah. Allah has heard the arguments of both of you. He hears all and observes all.”*

11. A woman is free to participate in public life just as man is. According to Islamic traditions, women participated in public life with the early Muslims e.g they could accompany Muslim army to the battle field nursing the wounded, preparing supplies and serving as warriors. This alone shows how man and woman are equal.

12. In terms of good or bad deeds, God makes no difference between men and women. What is lawful shall be so for both men and women, and what is wrong shall be so for both men and women. Women are no longer seen as the devil's associates or just objects for sensual pleasure. Unless their feminine disposition prevents them to do so, women should assume their responsibilities in everything just as men do.

13. Likewise, the Quran underlines their equality with men in bearing charges and assuming their responsibilities in religion.

Q (74:34); *“Every soul will be held in pledge for its deeds...”*

14. At the same time, Allah discharges Eve from seducing Adam, as they were both ordered to keep away from the tree and therefore, she is not the origin of the sin as Christians allege. They were both tempted by Satan, they confessed and asked for forgiveness together.

Allah says in Q (7:19); *“To Adam He said ‘Dwell with your wife in Paradise and eat whatever you please but never approach this tree or you shall both become transgressors.’”*

15. The Holy Quran also stresses the likeness of creation for both men and women and, therefore, the likeness of responsibility and retribution. None of them holds a higher position than the other, except through good deeds. Women in the Holy Quran are not considered as dependent upon men, but rather as independent human beings.

Allah says in Q (4:1); *“Men, have fear of your Lord, who created you from a single soul...”*

16. People are differentiated in Islam according to their faith, God-consciousness and good conduct and not by their sex. Therefore, man and woman are equal in the sight of Allah.

Allah says in Q (49:13); *“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most God-fearing”*

17. The Muslim woman, like the Muslim man is called upon to believe in Allah, the Day of Judgement, the Books, the Angels, and the Prophets, etc. She is also asked to perform prayers, pay out the Zakat duty, fast in the month of Ramadan and perform Pilgrimage to the Holy Places if she can do so. She must also call for the good and forbid evil in addition to being responsible for the well-being of the Muslim community.

Allah says in Q (9:71); *“The believers, men and women, are guardians, one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil.”*

18. The Hudud punishments that are prescribed in the Sharia are the same for men and women; the female thief is punished the same way as the male thief, the adulteress is punished like the adulterer, the female wine-drinker is punished like the male wine-drinker, and the female who wages war on Allah and the Prophet is punished like the male who does so.

In Qisas (retribution), the woman's soul is equal to that of the man. The murderess is like the murderer and the murdered woman is like the murdered man. Qisas is exacted from a man if he kills a woman exactly and as equally as when he kills a man. Blood money rules do not discriminate between male and female.

19. A marriage is not valid in the Sharia of Allah without the approval, acceptance and consent of the woman and it is forbidden by the Sharia that she be forced to marry someone that she does not accept. That means that man and woman are equal.

Allah says in Q (2:232); *“... do not prevent them from marrying their husbands when they agree themselves in a lawful manner.”*

20. The woman has full financial status that is no less than that of the man. She has the right in the same way that a man does to possess all types of wealth whether it be in the form of assets, real estate or cash. She has the right to use her wealth in any manner she wishes to as long as it is approved by the Sharia. So she can buy, sell, trade, barter, provide grants and loans, incur loans, exchange assets etc. All these actions do not require the consent of any male whether this be her father, husband, or brother.

Allah says in Q (4:32); *“...For men is a portion of what they earn and for women is a portion of what they earn.”*

Al-Bukhari reports; *“A woman is permitted to free slaves and give gifts to someone other than her husband, unless she is mentally deranged.”*

21. The Quran addresses everyone, men and women, equally, an indication that both sexes are equal since Allah, the exalted Creator, does not discriminate between them.

Allah says in Q (33:35);

“The Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the worshipping men and worshipping women, the truthful men and truthful women, the pious men and pious women, the alms-giving men and the alms-giving women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who are chaste and the women who are chaste, the men who remember Allah much and the women who do likewise, Allah has prepared a forgiveness and a great reward for all.”

He also says in Q (33:36); *“It is not for a believing man or woman, when Allah and His messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision.”*

He again says in Q (24:30-31); *“Say to the believing men to lower off their gaze and be chaste for this is more pure for them and God knows what they do. Say to the believing women to lower off their gaze and be chaste...”*

22. A woman is entitled to a share of inheritance much just as her male counterpart is unlike in Pre-Islamic Arabic where he was not only denied inheritance but she was also considered as a property to be inherited. In Islam, whether a woman is a daughter or a wife or a mother or a sister, she receives a certain share of her deceased kin’s property.

Allah says in Q (4:7); *“Women shall have a share of what the parents and near relatives leave...”*

23. In conclusion, Islam recognizes man and woman as equal partners of one another. However, it also recognizes that both sexes are not the same based on their biological, physiological and psychological aspects. They belong to different sexes and therefore, they have separate and distinguished functions in life.

24. Islam maintains equality between man and woman where there is a natural ground for it and differentiates between them where there is but natural reason for it.

INSTANCES WHERE ISLAM DIFFERENTIATES BETWEEN MAN AND WOMAN

1. Regarding her share on inheritance, man receives double the woman’s share. This is so because man in Islam is burdened with all financial responsibilities in the home including looking for his wife while the woman has no financial responsibilities except her personal expenses which are just luxuries.

Thus, instead of doing injustice to either side, Islam gives man a large portion of the estate of a deceased relative to help him to meet family responsibilities and at the same time not forgetting the woman altogether. She is given a portion to satisfy her personal needs.

2. Standing of women behind men in prayer does not in any sense indicate that a woman is inferior to men. This is a regulation of discipline in prayer and not a classification of importance. Prayer involves actions and motions such that if men and women were to mix in the same line, the believers would experience emotional disturbances, hence denying them attention in such a noble practice.

Women are also not allowed to lead prayers because of their attractive nature such that if by coincidence any part of her body is uncovered, it can corrupt the concentration of her followers more so men. It is for this reason and some others that women do not talk loudly in prayer.

3. In giving witness, two men are required alone or one man and two women. This is not a sign that women are inferior to men but a measure of securing the rights of the contracting parties because naturally a woman is not much experienced in political life as man. Islam requires that at least two women should bear witness with one man so that if a woman forgets or makes an error, the other can remind her or help to correct her. It is a precautionary measure to guarantee honest and proper dealing between people.

4. A woman is commanded to cover the whole of her body and to lower her gaze when she meets a man. The Muslim dress is not intended to minimize her because of her sex but to save her soul from weaknesses, her mind from indulgence, her eyes from lustful looks and personality from demoralization. It also saves her from being bothered by men with a disease in their hearts about Zina.

5. A woman is entitled to demand from her prospective husband dowry. This does not mean that she is a bought property of the man but rather an instruction and a right given to them by Allah. It is a sign of love to her and guaranteed security from her prospective husband at home.

6. As a mother, a woman enjoys 75% of children's love. This is a privilege enjoyed by mothers over fathers because of the pain they go through for nine months carrying a baby in her womb, labour and delivery pains.

Moreover, it is the mother that suckles the baby with her milk, giving out of care, nurturing the child, the effects of which remain with him throughout his life.

7. In one saying, the Messenger (SAW) said that women are less than men in mind, religion and fortune. However, he has explained this saying in a manner that is consistent with the texts cited concerning the rights, dignity and honour of women. The lesser degree in religion does not mean a lesser degree of faith.

Belief that she is less human means that she cannot rise to the highest ranks. This is because Allah Himself has exempted her from certain forms of ritual worship at certain times, such as prayers and fasting during her menstruation periods and during her bleeding time after delivery.

The lesser fortune only means that in some cases of inheritance, a woman's share is less than that of a man's. The Messenger (SAW) did not generalize this to other rights or to anything indicating a lesser status. The lesser mind is concerning the status of a woman's testimony in certain matters like debts and sale contracts, and in Hudud punishments. It does not imply anything other than this and is not generalized to degrade women into being inferior to men.

Indeed, in this regard, it should be pointed out that there are certain matters which only accept the testimony of a woman and not that of a man.

Furthermore, women are unanimously accepted as narrators of hadith (the sayings of the Prophet PBUH), and this means that their testimony in narrating hadith is treated like that of a man.

In addition to this a woman is responsible towards her duties to her faith and she has full independence in her right to possess, and in her right to make contracts. If she was supposed to have a lesser mind, the contracts and other dealings would have required the assistance of a male.

8. Fasting Ramadhan. This is compulsory on all Muslims of defined qualifications including women but the later are among those exempted during menstruation, breastfeeding and pregnancy. However, they may be required to make up for the missed days when they are in good condition.

9. In short, these differences are due to the separate functions that have been accorded to the male and the female. It is because of these complimentary and necessary distinctions that a man becomes attracted to a woman and a woman becomes attracted to a man and marriage can be a happy, constructive and a healthy one.

Revision questions

1. *Women were liberated from the time the holy Qur'an was revealed 14 centuries ago. With the help of Qur'anic teachings, assess the validity of this statement.*
2. *Islam has been accused of keeping women backward. Basing on the Qur'anic teachings, refute this accusation.*

ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON DRESS

1. In Islam, there is no specified fashion of dressing but various rules and regulations have been prescribed to determine the mode of dressing for the Muslims.
2. It puts much stress on the dress for both male and female Muslims. However, much stress has been set for the female group due their attractive nature.
3. Allah says in **Q (7:26)**;
“O children of Adam! We have bestowed up on you raiment to cover your shame and as adornment and the raiment of the righteous is the best...”
He also says in **Q (7:31)**; *“O children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel at every place of prayer, eat and drink but do not be wasteful, because Allah does not the wasters.”*
4. From the above verse, ‘beautiful apparel’ does not only mean clothes but also toilet manners, cleanliness, attention to hair and other small personal details which no self-respecting man and woman can neglect.
5. Thus, Muslims must be well dressed at every occasion of worship. However, one should not be extravagant in any aspect like dressing, eating, drinking, and clothing e.t.c because Allah does not love wasters.
6. In Islam, there are three categories of dressing i.e compulsory dressing, recommended dressing and forbidden dressing.
7. Compulsory dressing is the mode of dressing which covers the nakedness of the body. The Prophet PBUH said that the nakedness of man lies between the navel and the knees while that of the woman is the whole body except the face and the hands.
8. Recommended dressing is that form of dressing that is somehow beautiful and clear. Here, a Muslim dresses according to his/her economic means so as to be grateful to Allah but putting into consideration that He does not love wasters.
9. Forbidden dressing is that form of dress which is not allowed in Islam. For example, a woman wearing a man's dress or putting on a dress on the basis of pride or one that exposes one's nakedness.

THE PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE DRESS FOR A MUSLIM MAN

1. As regards the principles governing dress, Islam is clear on both man and woman's dress.
Allah says in **Q (24:30)**; *“Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their chastity. That is pure for them...”*

2. From the above verse, the rules concerning the dress for male Muslims are summarized. In the first place, they are asked to lower their eyes whenever they meet their opposite sexes except those who are not lawful for them to marry.
3. A male Muslim must cover the nakedness of his body which lies between the navel and knees. However, it is discouraged to expose other parts of the body save for the face, head, hands, legs and arms.
4. He must not put on tight clothes so as to reveal the shape of his body like chest packs and heaps.
5. Thin and light clothes are discouraged for a male Muslim. He must put on thick clothes to avoid revealing the colour or handsomeness of his skin.
6. Muslim men must not put on very beautiful clothes so as to attract the attention of others. This is because it is a way of showing-off that is haram in Islam.
7. Muslim men are forbidden to wear silk and gold. This is the prophet PBUH attributed it to a dress of a man with no character. He also plainly said;

“Do not wear silk because those who wear it in this life shall not wear it in the hereafter.”
8. A man is not supposed to dress like women. Use of ornaments and earrings and other items known for women is openly prohibited e.g beads, necklaces, lipstick and others.
9. He is not allowed to put on like non-believers or to wear clothes identified with non-believers. The prophet PBUH is reported to have said that whoever identifies himself with a group is a member of that group.
10. Muslim men are asked to shorten their garments above their ankles. Long garments are associated with arrogant and proud Jahiliyya Arabs.
11. It is recommended for Muslim men to grow their beard and trim their moustache and other parts of the body like pubic places.
12. Wearing long or short hair is one’s preference. However, braided hair or use of dye is not allowed, including hair styles in the head.
13. The use of perfume is strongly recommended for Muslim men especially on special days like Friday and Idd days.

THE PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE DRESS FOR A MUSLIM WOMAN

1. As regards the dress for Muslim women, Allah says in **Q (24:31)**;

“And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their chastity; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what is apparent of; that they should draw veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers ... and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments...”

The prophet PBUH said; *“When a girl reaches the menstrual age, it is not proper that anything should remain exposed except this and this. He pointed to the face and hands.” (Abu Dawud)*

2. From the above verse, Islam holds women in very high esteem and the Islamic rules of covering are intended to protect and guard her dignity and honour.
3. A Muslim woman is asked never to display her beauty or figure or appear in an undressed manner to people she can get married to, except her father, husband, near relatives and the like.
4. In all, the prophet's wives and those of the believers are enjoined to dress in a proper manner so as to avoid any danger of attracting evil minds towards them.
5. In order for them to be protected from the bitter anger of Allah and to minimize temptation from the opposite sex, the following dress rules have been prescribed for them:
6. A woman must cover the whole of her body except the hands and the face. However, the extent of the covering depends on the environment e.g if the woman is in her house or her father's house with people she cannot marry, she can dress in a simple way.

When going outside to the public or to meet a visitor or to perform prayer, she is supposed to cover the whole of her body except the hands and the face.

7. She must put on loose clothes so that the swells of her body are not exposed i.e he should avoid tight dresses that can reveal her natural beauty like bust line, buttocks, thighs, breasts, waist and others.
8. She must not put on thin or light clothes that can expose the colour or beauty of her body skin. The dress should be thick and relatively dark to avoid attracting the opposite gender.

The Prophet PBUH said; *“In the later generation of my Ummah, there will be women who will be dressed but naked ... curse them because they are truly cursed.”*

9. The dress of a woman should not resemble that of a male costume. The prophet PBUH is reported to have cursed women who dress like men e.g putting male trousers, shirts, caps and jackets.
10. Her dress should not resemble the costume for non-believers. This requirement is derived from the general rule of sharia that Muslims have their distinct personality and they differentiate their practices and appearance from those of unbelievers.
11. In addition, her dress should not be a dress of fame, pride and vanity so as to attract the admiration of others. Fancy dresses are forbidden in Islam.

The prophet PBUH said; *“Whoever wears a dress of fame in this world, Allah will cloth him in a dress of humiliation on the day of judgement ...”*

12. The overall appearance of a Muslim woman must be average so as not to be too beautiful or attractive to avoid capturing the attention of the opposite sex.
13. Women are also asked to lower their gaze and to avoid lustful looks on people of the opposite sex. This is intended to protect and preserve their beauty.
14. A woman is permitted to put on silk and jewelry or ornaments. They are also free to put on gold.
15. A woman is allowed to braid their hair as long as it is to bring beauty or admiration of her husband.
16. Women are allowed to dye their hair but it is undesirable for them to put holes in their tongues or eye bows or tattoos on their bodies.

17. Any addition of hair, real or artificial, to one's hair such as wearing wigs, braids, hair pieces and the like is not allowed. The prophet PBUH termed it as false or forged hair.
18. Muslim women are not allowed to put on long-heeled shoes because while walking, they can stamp their feet and attract the attention of the opposite sex.
Allah says in Q (24:31); “... and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments...”
19. It is not allowed for a Muslim woman to remove her eye-brows and replace them with pencil colours unless it is done to please her husband and if he approves it.
20. The dress for a Muslim woman should not be perfumed. This prohibition applies both the body and the clothes.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES GOVERNING A MUSLIM DRESS

1. The Muslim dress has no fashion but rules and regulations governing it.
2. It is intended to give a Muslim external covering of the body which houses the soul and general personal dignity.
3. It is divided into compulsory, recommended and forbidden dressing.
4. It should cover the nakedness of the body.
5. Even when having sex, sharia forbids lovers from seeing their nakedness. The prophet PBUH said;
“When one of you goes to his wife, he should mind his shameful parts. They should not both strip their clothes off their bodies and become naked like donkeys.”
6. A Muslim is not allowed to sleep or remain naked even if he is alone in the house.
7. It should not be tight to reveal the swells of the body e.g skin-tight and body-hugging clothes are discouraged.
8. Clothings worn by Muslims should be clean and decent, neither excessively flashy nor ragged.
9. It should not be thin and light to expose the beauty of the body e.g see-through clothes are not allowed because they reveal the colour of the skin and shape of the body underneath.
10. It should not be a dress of fame or vanity.
11. It should not resemble the costume known for non-believers.
12. A Muslim should not put on a dress for the opposite sex.
13. Muslims must lower eyes when they meet their opposite sexes.
14. They should put attention to extra details of the body like finger nails, shaving and the like.
15. Dresses of shouting colours are not recommended for Muslims.
16. Extravagance should be avoided whether in dressing or eating because Allah does not love wasters.
17. Muslims must appear beautifully dressed at every occasion of worship.
18. Beyond clothing, one must be modest in behaviour, manners speech and appearance in public.

SOCIAL AND MORAL IMPLICATION OF A MUSLIM DRESS

1. It gives respect to the Muslim by making him/her descent and guarding her chastity.
2. It is good for one's health by protecting the body from extreme heat and coldness.
3. It guards a believer from being tempted into the sin of Zina by covering all the attractive beauty of the body.

4. It represents a Muslim's submission to his/her Creator and her connection with the faith especially Hijab for women.
5. It is a form of identity for the believers because the dress is exclusive to them only.
6. It is a form of worship which accords rewards for a believer who actually observes it.
7. It minimizes vain talks about the makeup of a person which would result in social evils like slander.
8. It is a test for the Muslim and when he/she wears Islamically, he/she is obeying and submitting to Allah.
9. It distinguishes believers from non-believers.
10. It is a proper economic measure by prohibiting the wearing of gold and silk.
11. It also combats luxuriant and extravagant living that is a social injustice to the poor.
12. It helps man to cover his nakedness hence distinguishing him from animals.
13. The prohibition of dresses of opposite sex is a measure against the likelihood of cases like lesbianism and homosexuality.

CIRCUMSTANCES THAT LED TO THE REVELATION OF VERSE Q (33:59)

1. The verse **Q (33:59)** is found in Surat **Al-Ahzaab**, the Confederate (Allied) states.
2. It was revealed in Madiina after the prophet's migration from Mecca to Madiina.
3. Surat Al-Ahzaab, which is the 33rd chapter according to the arrangement of the holy Qur'an deals mainly with family laws.
4. Most of its subject matter gives guidelines on how the Prophet should treat his wives and daughters and how they should behave towards him.
5. It also teaches how believing men and women should treat each.
6. **Q (33:59)** was revealed after Umar's suggestion to the Prophet PBUH about the dressing of his wives and daughters.
7. One day, Umar bin Khattab visited the prophet's house and while there, his wives came to greet him.
8. Umar noted that the prophet's wives were dressed in a manner that exposed their beauty to other men.
9. He felt concerned and suggested to the Prophet PBUH to tell his wives to veil themselves especially when going out of their houses.
10. Immediately Allah sent angel Jibril with the message contained in Q (33:59) instructing the Prophet PBUH to tell his wives and daughters and the wives of believing men to veil themselves.
11. Allah says in **Q (33:59)**;

“O Prophet! Tell your wives and daughters, and the believing, that they should cast their outer garments over their persons; that will be better, that they should be recognized and not molested! And Allah is ever forgiving and merciful.”
12. From then onwards, the prophet's wives and daughters and believing women started veiling the whole of their bodies except for both eyes to see the way, outer palms of the hands or one eye.

ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON INHERITANCE

Inheritance is the passing of title to an estate up on death or what a person is entitled by sharia to receive from the estate of his/her deceased person.

Death is inevitable. As a result, Islam being a complete way of life has spelt out how the deceased's estate should be shared among his heirs.

Allah says in Q (2:180);

"It is decreed that when death approaches, those of you that leave wealth shall bequeath it equitably to parents and kindred. This is a duty incumbent on the righteous. He that alters that (the will) after hearing it shall be accountable for his crime. Allah is hearing and knowing."

He also says in Q (4:7); *"Men shall have a share in what their parents and kinsmen leave, and women shall have a share in what their parents and kinsmen leave; whether it be little or much, it is legally theirs."*

TERMINOLOGIES APPLIED IN THE LAW OF INHERITANCE

- 1. Estate;** this is the entire property a deceased leaves behind such as houses, cars, clothes, furniture, land, farm, jewelry, cash (at hand and in bank), shares, bonds, and so on including socks and underwear; everything.
- 2. Bequests or Legacy** - These are specific grants made, viz, grants made to the particular members of the family or allotments made to the poor or for the advancement of religion, etc.
- 3. Mirath - Gross Inheritance:** This is all movable or immovable property left behind by the deceased whether the deceased earned it, inherited it or was gifted this property.
- 4. Warith - Heir:** This is a relative who may potentially inherit from the wealth of the deceased.
- 5. Wassiya – Will (Testament):** An order for allocation of certain amount of property of the deceased after death based on his/her order. This is not allocated during the person's lifetime rather is asked to be allocated after death.

A will of up to $\frac{1}{3}$ of the property is allowed. If a will is made in excess to this proportion then only $\frac{1}{3}$ will be spent on it. A will cannot be made for a person who is already entitled to receive a share as heir (Warith).
- 6. Testator (Musi)-** He is the person making a Will.
- 7. Executors (Wasi) -** Persons appointed by the testator, to execute, administer and distribute the estate in accordance with the Will. They are also known as Administrators or Trustees.
- 8. Beneficiaries (Musa Lahu) -** These are persons with the right to inheritance. They are also as heirs or legatees.
- 9. Walad (awlaad) - Children:** This include any one of the following: son, daughter, son's son, son's daughter, son's son's son, son's son's daughter.
- 10. Ikhwa - Siblings:** A total of 2 or more persons alive from real, paternal or maternal brothers and sisters, irrespective of their type or gender

11. **Real brother and Real sister:** siblings who have same parents as the deceased.
12. **Paternal brother and Paternal sister:** siblings who have same father as the deceased but have different mothers (step-siblings with a common father)
13. **Maternal brother and Maternal sister:** siblings who have same mother as the deceased but have different fathers (step-siblings with a common mother)
14. **Dhil – Furoodh** - 1st tier of heirs who have a prescribed proportion of share under different circumstances.
15. **Asbah - Residuary:** 2nd tier of heirs. Their proportion is not fixed, rather after applicable distribution among Dhil-Furoodh, the rest is entitled to the closest relation among Asbah. Asbah are male relatives related through a chain of males (exception: real sister and paternal sister)
16. **Dhil-irham:** 3rd tier of heirs after Dhil-Furooz and Asbah. If there is still left over property after distribution to Dhil-Furooz, and there are no Asbah then Dhil-irham may be entitled to have a share. The closest in relationship will get all the remaining share.
17. **Kalala** - A person who at time of death does not have any living child or grandchildren or living father or grandfather.

It should be noted that when a Muslim dies, the obligations to be taken out of his estate (in order of priority) are:

- a) Kafn (shroud) and other basic expenses relating to the funeral like grave digger's wage, transportation to cemetery, e.t.c if they are to be paid for. A surviving husband is responsible for the shroud and burial expenses of his deceased wife if she is not endowed.

There is difference of opinion in respect of a wealthy woman. Some scholars said that the husband is still responsible while others are of the view that they should be paid from her estate.

- b) Repayment of his outstanding debt. The Messenger of Allah (Peace Be upon Him) said:
"A believer's soul remains in suspense (cannot enter Paradise) until all his debts are paid off."

He also said: *"By Him in whose hand Muhammad's soul is, if a man were to be killed in Allah's path then come to life, be killed again in Allah's path then come to life, and be killed once more in Allah's path then come to life owing a debt, he would not enter Paradise till his debt was paid."* **Bukhari.**

Generally, a debt can be owed to fellow humans or to Allah e.g. unpaid *Zakat*. The former has to be repaid, no questions about that.

Scholars differ as regards repayment of debt due to Allah. Some are of the view that it should be repaid while others are in support of non-repayment.

A third view is that it should be repaid if and only if the deceased instructs the same.

- c) Fulfilment of his will: Provided it does not exceed one-third (1/3) of the entire estate and it is not in favour of an heir. If any or both of these conditions are not satisfied, the validity of the will is subject to approval of all the heirs, otherwise, its void.

- d) The rightful heirs then inherit the remaining estate.

TYPES OF HEIRS

There are two types of heirs in Islam. These are fixed heirs and residual heirs.

FIXED HEIRS

Fixed heirs are the closest family members to the deceased who inherit a fixed share of the estate. Under no circumstances can these individuals be denied their fixed share because their rights are outlined in the Quran and cannot be taken away regardless of family dynamics.

They include husband, wife, son, daughter, father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, full brother, full sister, and various half-siblings.

Exceptions to this automatic, “fixed” inheritance include disbelievers i.e Muslims do not inherit from non-Muslim relatives, no matter how close, and vice versa.

Also, a person who is found guilty of homicide (either intentional or unintentional) will not inherit from the deceased. This is meant to discourage people from committing crimes in order to benefit financially.

The share that each person inherits depends on a formula which is described in the Quran. It also depends on the degree of relation, and the number of other fixed heirs.

RESIDUAL HEIRS

These are more distant relatives who may have a share in the deceased’s estate. They include aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews, or other distant relatives if no other living close relatives remain.

Once the calculations are done for the fixed heirs, the estate may have a remaining balance. This balance is then further divided to “residual heirs”.

MALE HEIRS

Male heirs of a deceased are fifteen (15):

1. Son. This refers to a legitimate male child. A man can only have a legitimate child after contracting a legally acceptable marriage with a woman outside his prohibited degree; while a woman can have a legitimate child with or without a formal marriage contract.

Allah says in Q (4:2); *“Give orphans the property which belongs to them. Do not exchange their valuables for worthless things or devour their possessions adding them to yours; for this would surely be a great sin.”*

2. Grandson or his descendant. Everyone has two categories of relatives: agnates and cognates. Agnates are relatives whose connection is traceable through the father or male line such as paternal grandparents, paternal uncle, paternal aunt, etc.

Cognates are relatives whose connection is traceable through the mother or the female line like maternal grandparents, maternal uncle, maternal aunt and so on.

Now, only agnates are eligible to inherit the estate of a deceased; meaning that all cognates are **NOT bona-fide heirs** except uterine brothers/sisters and maternal grandmother to whom the Qur'an assigns a share. Therefore, the grandson referred to here as a male heir is the one through a son. The grandson through a daughter is a non-heir.

3. Father. This is straight forward. A father shall inherit from his son or daughter.
4. Paternal grandfather or his ascendant. By now it's clear that maternal grandfather is a non-heir. So, a paternal grandfather will inherit from his grandson or granddaughter in the absence of his son.
5. Full brother. This is a person who has the same father and same mother with the deceased.
6. Consanguine brother. This is a person who has the same father but different mother with the deceased. (Related by blood with the deceased).
7. Uterine brother. This is a person who has the same mother but different father with the deceased.
8. Full brother's son or his male descendant. In the absence of the son, the grandson replaces him. If the grandson is also absent, the great-grandson "jumps" and take the place of the son.
If a female appears, she equally has the privilege of "jumping," then the line terminates. The difference here is that the descendants all have to be males; such that when a full brother is absent, his son replaces him and the trend continues. Whenever a female emerges, she is not entitled to "jump," and the line terminates. That is what is meant by "male descendants."
9. Consanguine brother's son or his male descendant.
10. Full paternal uncle. Father's elder or younger brother from the same father and mother.
11. Half paternal uncle. Father's elder or younger brother from the same father but different mother.
12. Full paternal uncle's son or his male descendant.
13. Half paternal uncle's son or his male descendant.
14. Husband. A husband will inherit from his wife if she dies before him. Likewise, if a man divorces his wife with one or two pronouncements (i.e. revocable divorce) and she dies WHILE in her *Iddah* (i.e. waiting period), he will inherit from her because technically, she remains his wife. However, if the divorce is irrevocable (three pronouncements), he will **not** inherit from her whether the *Iddah* has expired or not.

Allah says in Q (4:12);

"You shall inherit the half of what your will leave if they die childless. If they leave children, a quarter of what they leave shall be yours after payment of any bequest they may have bequeathed or debt."

15. Patron. A man who sets a slave free will inherit from the slave if the later has no heir.

FEMALE HEIRS

Female heirs are nine (9):

1. Daughter. A daughter will inherit from her father and mother. This provision does not extend to her children. That is to say, her children cannot replace or represent her to inherit from their (maternal) grandfather or (maternal) grandmother in her absence.
2. Son's daughter. If a son has a daughter, she will inherit from the son's father or mother (her paternal grandparents) in the absence of the son. The rule also applies to son's son's daughter, son's son's son's daughter, and so on. This has been explained earlier under "grandson or his descendants."
3. Mother. When a son or daughter passes on, his/her mother is entitled to a part of his/her estate. She cannot be excluded no-matter what happens.

4. Either grandmother. In the absence of mother, both grandmothers i.e. maternal and paternal will inherit from a deceased. Here, the “ascendant rule” applies, such that if one or both grandmothers is/are absent, the great-grandmothers will take their place(s) and inherit from the deceased.

5. Full sister. Allah says in Q (4:176);

“They ask you. Say ‘Thus Allah instructs you regarding the person who has neither parents nor children. If a man dies and has a sister, she shall inherit half of what he leaves...’”

6. Consanguine sister.

7. Uterine sister.

8. Wife. A wife will inherit from her late husband. She cannot be excluded.

Allah says in Q (4:12);

“Your wives shall inherit one quarter of what you leave if you die childless. If you leave children, they shall inherit one eighth, after payment after payment of any bequest you may have bequeathed or debt.”

She will also inherit from him if he dies after divorcing her with one or two pronouncements (revocable divorce) provided her *Iddah* has **not** elapsed. But if the divorce is irrevocable (three pronouncements), she will not inherit from him whether her *Iddah* has elapsed or not.

However, if the husband were to be “insensitive” and divorces his wife irrevocably DURING his final illness in which he dies, the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence have divergent opinions:

- As-Shafi’i - She will NOT inherit from him whether or not the *Iddah* has expired.
- Abu-Hanifa - If the *Iddah* has not expired, she will inherit from him, otherwise, she will become a non-heir.
- Ahmad ibn Hambal - She has the right to inherit from him whether the *Iddah* has expired or not provided she has not married another person.
- Malik - She will inherit from him even if the *Iddah* has expired or she has married another person.

9. Patroness. A woman who sets a slave free will inherit from him/her so long as he/she has no heir.

NON-HEIRS

Non-heirs are those relatives not entitled to any part of the deceased’s estate. They include:

1. Daughter’s sons and daughters and their descendants.
They will inherit through their father’s (daughter’s husband’s) line only. Their mother’s line is cognate.
2. Sister’s sons and daughters and their descendants.
This refers to all the three types of sisters: full, consanguine and uterine. Their children will inherit through their father’s line only as the case with daughter’s children.
3. Daughters of full brother.
4. Daughters of consanguine brother.
5. Daughters of full brother’s son.
6. Daughters of consanguine brother’s son

7. Sons and daughters of uterine brother.
8. Sons and daughters of uterine sister.
9. Daughters of full paternal uncle.
10. Daughters of half paternal uncle.
11. Daughters of full paternal uncle's son.
12. Daughters of half paternal uncle's son.
13. Paternal aunt, her children and their descendants.
14. Maternal uncle, his children and their descendants.
15. Maternal aunt, her children and their descendants.
16. Maternal grandfather's mother.
Given that maternal grandmother (the wife of maternal grandfather) is an heir in the absence of mother, if the maternal grandmother is also absent, who takes her place? Her mother. Not her husband's mother. Therefore, maternal grandfather's mother is a non-heir.
17. Paternal grandmother's father.
A paternal grandmother is an heir in the absence of mother; but in her absence, her mother replaces her, not her father.

IMPEDIMENTS TO INHERITANCE

Impediment in this case means barring an heir from getting his/her share of the deceased's estate due to certain circumstances. These include:

1. Murder.
An heir who deliberately murders the deceased will neither inherit from the latter's estate nor from the blood money. If the murder is accidental, he/she will inherit from the deceased's estate but not from the *blood money*.
2. Difference of religion.
A Muslim does not inherit from a non-Muslim relative no-matter how close they are, and vice-versa. For instance, a Muslim father who has a non-Muslim son will not inherit from him and the other way round.
3. Simultaneous death.
When two or more people who are rightful heirs of one another like father and son, husband and wife, etc die at the same time maybe under a collapsed building or in similar circumstance, and it is uncertain who died first, they will not inherit from each other. But if it's clear that the husband died before the wife for instance, she will be listed among the surviving heirs of the husband and given her share of his estate. Thereafter, her heirs will inherit her estate plus her share of the husband's estate.
4. *Li'an* (Cursing for adultery).
This happens when a man denies the fatherhood of his wife's pregnancy and they end up swearing and cursing themselves as prescribed by Allah in the Qur'an (24: 6 - 9).
"And for those who accuse their wives and have no evidence except their own, let each of them testify by swearing four times by Allah that his charge is true, calling down in the fifth time up on

himself the curse of Allah if he is lying. But they shall spare her the punishment if she swears four times by Allah that his charge is false and calls down Allah's wrath up on herself if it is true."

The child that results will inherit from his mother only.

5. Slavery.

A slave and everything he owns belongs to his master. As far as he remains a slave, he will not inherit from his relatives and they will not inherit from him. The logic is that if he inherits, whatever he gets belongs to his master and if his relatives are to inherit from him, they will actually be inheriting part of the master's estate.

6. "Emergency marriage".

This refers to a marriage that takes place when either the bride or groom is in a state of ill-health with a 50:50 percentage of survival and death or the percentage of death is higher. The healthy partner will not inherit from the sick one if he/she dies as a result of that illness. Conversely, the sick partner will not inherit from the healthy one supposing the latter incidentally dies before the former. But if the sick partner fully recovers, then either of them dies, this rule will not apply.

MAKING A WILL

1. Writing a will is recommended in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad once said:

"It is not permissible for any Muslim who has something to will to stay for two nights without having his last will and testament written and kept ready with him." (Bukhari).

2. Especially in non-Muslim countries, Muslims are advised to write a will to appoint an Executor, and to affirm that they wish their estate to be distributed according to Islamic guidelines.

3. It is also advisable for Muslim parents to appoint a guardian for minor children, rather than relying on non-Muslim courts to do so.

4. The will should expressly show one's wealth (physical and cash), debts (lent and borrowed), wives and children and all people he/she looks after or under his care.

5. As regards to the amount of wealth one can bequeath, the Prophet PBUH said that up to **one-third** of the total assets may be set aside for payment of a bequest of one's choice.

6. The *Will* cannot be made for someone who is already getting a share in inheritance, that is, the beneficiaries of such a bequest may not be "fixed heirs" - family members who inherit automatically according to the divisions outlined in the Quran.

7. Making a bequest to someone who already inherits a fixed share would unfairly increase the share of that individual over the others. the Prophet PBUH said;

"Allah has appointed for everyone who has a right what is due to him, and no bequest must be made to an heir." (Abu Dawud & Ibn Majah)

8. One may, however, bequeath to individuals who are not one of the fixed heirs, other third parties, charitable organizations, etc.

9. The *will* cannot deny anyone their due share. It can be used for someone who will otherwise not get a share (e.g: orphan grandchild, non-Muslim family member, e.t.c) or can be used in charity.
10. Under Islamic law, all legal documents, especially wills, must be witnessed. A person who inherits from a person cannot be a witness to that person's will, as it is a conflict of interest.
11. It is recommended to follow the laws of one's country/location when drafting a will so that it will be accepted by the courts after your death.
12. A *Will* is only applicable/actionable **after** death. It can be changed and updated again and again during life time of a person. The final version will be used.
13. It should be updated from time to time because one's wealth and debts also keep on changing and one's preferences in the will may also change.
14. Making a wrong will is a major sin e.g.bequeathing more than **one-third** of wealth, making a will in favor of a heir who is already getting a share or denying share from a legitimate heir. It should be corrected during life of the person, otherwise heirs should correct it after the death of the deceased.
The prophet PBUH said; *"A man may do good deeds for 70 years but if he acts unjustly when he leaves his last testament, the wickedness of his deed will be sealed upon him, and he will enter the Fire. If a man acts wickedly for 70 years but is just in his last testament, the goodness of his deed will be sealed upon him and he will enter the Garden (of Paradise)."* (Musnad Ahmad & Ibn Majah)
15. A will can be **written or verbal** but in any case it must be witnessed by two people who are believers, honest, and do not have any conflict of interest in inheritance or *will*.
16. A will written under force or fear/intimidation is not valid and cannot be relied on in Islam.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ISLAMIC LAW OF INHERITANCE

1. It is one instrument that distinguishes Muslims from non-Muslims.
2. It is a source of wealth for Muslim community in cases where one dies and leaves no heirs or relatives.
3. It helps to eliminate cases of disputes over property distribution after one's death.
4. It is one device applied by Islam to bring about equality among people.
5. It is a form of Ibadat and one who follows the right procedures gets rewards from Allah.
6. It promotes justice among the relatives of the deceased especially the heirs.
7. By writing a will and revisiting it strengthens the faith of a believer by thinking about death.
8. It helps to eliminate murder and man-slaughter in society because victims are not lawful beneficiaries of the deceased's estate.
9. It is one measure introduced by Prophet Muhammad PBUH to uplift the status of women in society.
10. It shows how principled and civilized the Muslim society is compared to other religions.
11. It is a form of Sunna and one who follows it fulfills the prophet's order of writing a will.
12. It shows the purity of Islam because a Muslim does not inherit from a non-Muslim relative no-matter how close they are, and vice-versa.

ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON EQUALITY AND BROTHERHOOD.

EQUALITY

1. Islam teaches that in the sight of Allah, all people are equal, but they are not necessarily identical. There are differences of abilities, potentials, ambitions, wealth and so on.
2. The limitations in these examples are natural. The social limitations are those imposed by the society as a result of experience and practice; they are intellectual attitudes to aforementioned traits.
3. There is for example, the established difference between the ignorant and the learned. No one would assign a major responsibility in society to an ignorant person.
4. Yet, none of these differences can by themselves establish a status of superiority of one man or race over another.
5. The stock of man, the colour of his skin, the amount of wealth he has and the degree of prestige he enjoys has no bearing on the character and personality of a person as far as Allah is concerned.
6. The only distinction which Allah recognizes is the difference in piety; the goodness and spiritual excellence of a person.
7. In the holy Qur'an, Allah says **Q (49:13)**;
“O mankind! Indeed We created you from a male and female, and have made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Indeed the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous. Indeed Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.”
8. From the above verse, no nation is created to be above other nations or to rise above them. Man's worth in the eyes of men and in the eyes of Allah is determined by the good he does and by his obedience to Allah.
9. The differences of race, colour or social status are only subsidiary. They do not affect the true stature of man in the sight of Allah.
10. Further still, equality does not depend on where one lives or comes from. Allah says in **Qur'an (2:177)**;
“Righteousness does not consist in whether you face towards the east or west. The righteous man is he who believes in Allah, and last day, in the angels and the book and the prophets...”
11. Furthermore, the value of equality is not simply a matter of constitutional rights or the agreement of noblemen or condescending (superior) charity.
12. It is an ultimate duty of every Muslim to understand the principle of equality and to adhere to it seriously as it is illustrated in the holy Qur'an.
13. The principle of equality in Islam is based on the following perceptions;
14. All men are created by one and eternal God, the Supreme Lord of all.
15. All mankind belong to the human race and share equally in the common parentage of our father Adam.

16. Allah is just and kind to all His creatures. He is not partial to any race, age or religion. The whole universe is His Dominion and all people are His creatures.
17. All people are born equal, in the sense that no one brings any possession with him, and they die equal in the sense that they take back nothing of their worldly belongings.
18. All people are equal before Allah because no man is immortal as per **Q (3:185)**;
“Every soul shall taste death. You shall receive your rewards only on the Day of Resurrection.”
19. Allah judges wrongdoers on the basis of everyone’s evils and according to his own deeds. Therefore, all men are equal.
 Allah says in **Q (9:68)**; *“Allah has promised the hypocrites, both men and women, and the unbelievers, the fire of hell.”*
20. In the same way, Allah rewards good doers without discrimination. So we should also not discriminate our fellow human beings in our daily lives.
 Allah says in **Q (16:97)**; *“We shall reward the steadfast according their noblest deeds. Be they men or women, those that embrace the faith and do what is right We will surely grant a happy life; We shall reward them according to their noblest actions.”*
21. Allah has conferred on man a title of honour and dignity.
22. All people have the same mission on earth and that is to worship Allah as per **Q (51:56)**.
“I did not create Jinn and mankind except to worship me”
23. The concept of equality in Islam leaves no room for prejudice or persecution, oppression or suppression among the nations and peoples of the world.
24. In addition, cases of ‘chosen and gentile people’, words such as ‘privileged and condemned races’ and expressions like ‘social classes and citizens’ are meaningless according to equality in Islam.
25. While emphasizing the concept of equality, the Prophet PBUH said;
“O mankind! Your Lord is one and your father is one. You all descended from Adam and Adam was created from earth. He who is most honoured among you in the sight of Allah is the most upright. No Arab is superior to a non-Arab, nor a black to a white or a white to a black, except by piety.”
26. In another tradition, the prophet PBUH was asked *“who among men is the most favoured by Allah?”* He replied *“A man who does the most good to people.”*
27. Therefore, it would be unrealistic to assert the absolute equality of human beings some are naturally talented while others are not but they may be equal in other things, a morally upright person supersedes a crook in terms of behaviour but they may be equal otherwise.
28. Another clear illustration is the position of a woman in Islam. A woman is equal to man in all spheres of life but they are not identical in trait, gifts and abilities.

CASES OF INEQUALITY IN SOCIETY TODAY

1. Harassment such as inappropriate jokes, name-calling or displays like posters or cartoons directed to a person because of their race, colour, sex, or gender, sex orientation e.t.c.
2. Wage discrimination e.g a woman being given a lower wage than her opposite sexual mate doing the same job.
3. Discrimination in hiring e.g failure to pass job interviews based on inappropriate questions about one's religion or health limitations or child care arrangements.
4. Sex discrimination e.g a woman being fired due to pregnancy.
5. Discrimination based on disability e.g the injured being laid off or failure to secure a job due disability.
6. Discrimination based on family status e.g failure to get an apartment because the landlord does not want children.
7. Racial prejudice e.g the Africans vs Europeans.
8. Discrimination based on colour.
9. Discrimination based on language.
10. Social discrimination e.g social stratification in kingdoms, urban dwellers and rural people.
11. Economic inequality i.e between the rich and the poor.
12. Political discrimination where political leaders are given due consideration what they call 'layman'
13. Cultural inequality i.e that some cultures are better than others and that kings are semi-gods.
14. National inequality i.e that some countries are super powers and therefore they harass the weak ones.
15. Physical discrimination e.g some girls are unmarried because they are 'ugly' and some boys because they are not 'handsome.'

CAUSES OF INEQUALITY IN SOCIETY

1. Difference in education standards. Educated people are better than the illiterates.
2. Cultural and traditional beliefs e.g in some societies women are lower in status than men.
3. Inheritance i.e some people are richer than others because they inherited from the parents/guardians.
4. Death; some people are orphans while others are not.
5. Regional imbalances due to difference in resource endowment.
6. Racism and nepotism.
7. Difference in skills and natural talents e.g professional footballers are better off than locally established footballers.
8. Difference in religious righteousness i.e the most honoured in the sight of Allah are the righteous.
9. Physical differences e.g some people are born lame, stammering while others are dumb and deaf.
10. Difference in personal creativity and aggressiveness for wealth.
11. Illnesses such as chronicles which make some people permanently weak and unable to work for themselves and disseminated in society.
12. Permissiveness and natural hatred i.e some people discriminate others as a matter of fact while others without a reason.
13. Military and economic superiority of some countries vs weak countries e.g USA and Western countries vs African and Asian countries.
14. Poor land tenure system especially in Africa.
15. Lack of Islamic knowledge among Muslims regarding equality and brotherhood in Islam.

BROTHERHOOD

1. Islam is the religion of peace, love and affection. It teaches a lesson of brotherhood between Muslims which is referred to as Muslim brotherhood.
2. Islamic brotherhood is divided into three types. That is, blood brotherhood, special brotherhood and religious brotherhood.
3. Blood brotherhood is a natural relationship whereby a person shares the same blood with another person and therefore, they have a common descent (ancestry). This is the most emphasized in the holy Qur'an. Allah says in **Q 17:36**, "And give your relatives their due..."

Allah further says in **Q 16:90** *"Allah commands justice, the doing of good and tolerance to relatives and He forbids all shameful deeds and injustice and rebellion..."*

4. From the above verse, a Muslim must be tolerant to his relatives and talk to them politely, give them priority in giving charity and restrain from distancing them.
5. Special brotherhood is the relationship that develops as a result of people living in the same community like school, village, district, country and others. It occurs irrespective of whether people are of the same religion, ancestry or race.
6. According to Islam, the entire world is a brotherhood of Allah's people whom He created. However, it establishes brotherhood on the basis of faith.

The Prophet PBUH said; *"If a person loves his brother, he should inform him of his fact"*

7. Muslim brotherhood is the basis of the Muslim Society and making friends among Muslims opens the way toward better understanding and building a better Muslim community.
8. Muslim brotherhood is not based on economic interests, race or colour but on the rejection of falsehood and acceptance of the truth as revealed by Allah (that is Islam).
9. Brotherhood in Islam is not only based on faith but it is also part of faith. The Prophet PBUH said;

"You cannot enter paradise unless you become a total believer and you cannot become a total believer unless you love each other."

10. Furthermore, all acts of worship that are declared pillars of Islam have a collective form which shows the importance of Muslim brotherhood that one should get the benefit while doing with other Muslim brothers.
11. In addition, in the holy Qur'an, Allah addresses **believers in general** but not **an individual believer**. So believers are brothers in religion just as Allah described them in the **Q (49:10)**;

"The believers are nothing else than brothers. So make reconciliation between your brothers and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy."

12. Muslims are brothers because they all share the same beliefs, work towards the same goals and share the same code of behaviour.
13. Muslim brotherhood is further based on the fact that all people have the original parentage i.e we are all descendants of Adam and Eve.

Allah says in Q (49:13);

“O mankind! Indeed We created you from a male and female, and have made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Indeed the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous. Indeed Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.”

14. From the above verse, all mankind is but one family, brothers and sisters.

15. Still, the verse clarifies that the criteria for judgement in the eyes of Allah do not depend on colour, profession, gender, or wealth but on piety. Anyone who is righteous is honoured in the eyes of Allah.

16. Allah said another verse, Q (3:103);

“Hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided. Remember the favour of Allah upon you, when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became brothers by his favour.”

17. From the above verse, Allah commanded us to stay united because He made us brothers by creating love in our hearts.

18. More so, brotherhood in Islam means purifying one’s heart of all enmity, hatred, and grudge for those who have faith, right from the prophet’s time to date.

Allah says in Q (59:10);

“They say: ‘Our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith and do not put in our hearts any resentment toward those who have faith. Our Lord, you are kind and merciful.’”

19. In Islam, the Muslim society is like a building which is supported by its bricks all together. Therefore, Muslim brotherhood is necessary for a strong Muslim community to enable us fight off the enemies of Islam and save our embattled Muslims brothers.

The Prophet PBUH said;

“The Muslims are like a single man. If the eye is afflicted, then the whole body is afflicted. If the head is afflicted, then the whole body is afflicted.”

20. According to Islam, Allah helps and blesses a Muslim who helps a Muslim brother. Such a person will also be helped in the hereafter. The Prophet PBUH said;

“He who relieves the hardship of a believer in this world, Allah will relieve his hardship on the day of judgement. He who makes easy what is difficult, Allah will make it easy for him in the world and the hereafter. He who conceals his faults of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his faults in the world and the hereafter, for Allah helps the servant as long he helps his brother.”

21. As brothers, Muslims are prohibited from looking down upon others with contempt, seeking faults in and being unduly suspicious of one another. Allah says in Q (49:12);

“O you who believe! Avoid suspicious as much as possible; for suspicion in some cases is a sin. And do not spy on each other behind their backs. Would any of like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? No, you would abhor (detest) it...”

22. From the above verse, vices such as defamation, scoffing, nicknaming, backbiting, spying and suspicion are condemned because they destroy the solid foundation of Muslim brotherhood.

23. In conclusion, a Muslim must treat all people with due respect whether believers or non-believers, family members or just fellow human beings to portray the true picture of Islam.

ECONOMIC TEACHINGS OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

FEATURES AND UNIQUENESS OF THE ISLAMIC ECONOMIC SYSTEM

1. The Islamic economic system is unique in its kind, combining the best features of capitalism, communism and socialism without their shortcomings.
2. It is built on solid foundation and divine guidelines unequalled in the present existing economic systems of the world.
3. It involves principles prescribed to check on the economic activities of a Muslim, involving production, exchange and distribution of wealth within the limits of Islam.
4. These features/principles include the following;
5. Under the Islamic economic system, all the sources of wealth belong to Allah and as such no single class of people is justified to claim exclusive rights over them.

Allah says in **Q (3:189)**; *“And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and Allah has power over all things.”*

From the above verse, all the wealth got from the natural resources like lakes, rivers, land and space belong to all people. No man is free to use them exclusively except in accordance with the commercial ethics of Islam.

Accordingly, man is a mere trustee of the wealth on earth and must not behave as if he was the absolute master because real ownership and mastery lie with Allah. He will be answerable before and accountable to Allah for the way in which he uses the trust given to him.

6. Islam allows man full liberty to exploit all the natural resources of the universe i.e moon, sun, mountains, oceans e.t.c and thereby earn a living from them. He is free to turn them into what can enable him earn wealth.

Allah says in **Q (45:12)**; *“It is Allah who has subdued to you the ocean so that ships may sail upon it at His bidding; so that you may seek His bounty and render thanks to Him.”*

He also says in **Q (45:13)**; *“He has subjected to you what the heavens and the earth contain; all is from him. Surely, there are signs in this for thinking men.”*

A Muslim is free to do any kind of work provided it is lawful in sharia. There is no work in Islam that is contemptible as long as it is done in the limits of Islam because one's work is his dignity. The prophet PBUH said;

“It is better that a person should get a rope and bring a bundle of wood on his back to sell so that Allah may preserve his honour than begging from people regardless of whether they give him or refuse.”

7. A Muslim is free to earn wealth from agriculture, industry, trade or any lawful profession in Islam. Agriculture is encouraged because it has been made easy for him as a divine favour. However, caution must be taken not grow unlawful crops which are harmful for eating or which have no any other use except what is harmful.

As far as industry is concerned, the Qur'an mentions many industries and it terms them as Allah's favour and bounty. A Muslim is free to carry out any lawful industry he likes.

The prophet PBUH said; *"No one earns his food better than the one worked with his hands and the prophet of Allah, David, earned his food by working with his hands."*

The holy Qur'an encourages Muslims to involve in trade and commerce. They are advised to undertake journeys for trade, which Allah refers to as 'seeking the bounty of Allah.' Allah says in

Q (2:198); *"It shall be no offence for you to seek the bounty of your Lord..."*

A Muslim is free to seek employment in the service of government, organization or an individual. However, he should be able to do the job satisfactorily as required of him by his employers.

8. In doing business, a Muslim must follow certain rules laid down by the holy Qur'an. One must write financial contracts in presence of witnesses to avoid possible misunderstandings.

One is required to ensure proper management of weights and measures by avoiding fraud. Qur'an (83:1-3) warns against giving false weights and measures.

Usury is strongly condemned in Islam because of its spiritual, social and economic implications in society.

Allah says in **Q (2:188);** *"Do not usurp one another's property by unjust means, nor bribe with it the judges in order that you may knowingly and wrongfully deprive others of a part of their possession."*

Islam declares it unlawful for a Muslim to beg without a genuine reason, thus losing his dignity. The prophet PBUH said;

"He who begs without need is like a person holding a burning charcoal in his hand."

It further condemns slavery because it reduces the dignity of man by owning him as one's legal property, thereby extracting cheap and forced labour from him.

9. Under the Islamic economic system, a Muslim has freedom to enterprise and private ownership of wealth but his ownership is not absolute because Islam does not allow some people to live extravagant life while others are suffering.

It therefore prohibits Muslims from accumulating too much wealth because it prevents money from entering into circulation and according to **Q (3:180, 9:34-35)**, such accumulated wealth shall turn into fire that will burn their bodies and eat up their limbs on the day of judgement.

To ensure that money is not kept in the hands of the few, Islam establishes several measures such as the institution of zakat, the law of inheritance and others, intended to redistribute income.

10. Islam allows man to spend the wealth he obtains in a manner that fits his interest but in the limits of sharia. The Prophet PBUH advised that the best expenditure is the one in the cause of Allah e.g feeding the poor, wayfarers and others.

Islam strongly warns against squandering wealth and the holy Qur'an refers to wasters as brothers of the devil. Allah says in **Q (17:26-27);**

“...Do not squander wastefully, because the wasteful are the devils’ brothers; and the devil is ever ungrateful his Lord.”

Furthermore, Islam discourages Muslims from giving money to careless people who may corrupt or misuse it either due to lack of reason or bad management. That is why orphans have to be tested first before caretakers appropriate their inheritance to them.

11. In conclusion, Islam sets appropriate measures for a proper and stable economic system which makes it a unique one from the other modern systems.

LABOUR AND WORK ETHICS IN ISLAM

1. Labour is defined as human effort both mental and physical that is directed towards production. Physical labour is the use of manual effort to do work while mental labour uses skills to perform work.
2. The holy Qur’an recognizes both physical and mental labour. For example Q (11:37-38) tells us how Prophet Nuhu physically constructed his Ark while Q (34:13) praises artisans during Prophet Sulaiman.
3. Islam encourages us to work hard to improve our lives by exploiting the natural resources of Allah. However, exploiting these natural resources requires labor as a primary factor of production.
4. Prayer is the fundamental act of worship but Allah says that immediately after completing prayer, Muslims should disperse in the universe and look for Allah’s bounty.

Allah says in Q (62:10); *“disperse in the land and seek the bounties of Allah”*

5. Labour is a potential act of worship because all legitimate activities and efforts used with pure intentions are possible acts of worship in the meaning of Islam.

Allah says in Q (18:30); *“...Indeed, Allah will not allow to be lost the reward of any who does a good work”*

6. The work we do on earth is not only evaluated and rewarded by our fellow human beings but it is also appreciated and rewarded by Allah.

The prophet PBUH said; *“Allah loves, when one of you is doing something, that he/she does it in the most excellent manner”*

7. Islam discourages abuse of welfare systems or exploit people’s kindness when the person is able to seek work and earn his living.

The prophet PBUH said; *“Charity is not permissible for someone who is rich or to someone who is able-bodied.”*

8. Since work is one of the highest forms of worship, Islam does not recognize any kind of mutual reliance because the prophet PBUH himself was a work.

9. In Islam, work must be done seriously because one’s success in worldly affairs as well as in the hereafter relies upon how hard he works.

10. While working, man has to endure hardship in order to win better life and happiness. Allah says in Q (94:6); *“Indeed, with every difficulty there is relief.”*

11. According to Islam, work is a trust from Allah which a person must perform hoping to be accountable and answerable before Allah on the day of Judgement.
12. Work must be done carefully and patiently because patience is considered very important in a Muslim's life in order to be successful in his work.
13. In Islam, all works must be done sincerely for the sake of pleasing Allah since it creates relationships between man and God, man and nature and society and even man and his soul that seeks to bring all these into one path- the path which leads to worship of Allah.
14. In doing work, a Muslim must practise justice among Allah's creatures because in Islam, it is considered as the unity of spiritual and material values.
15. Time is important in a Muslim's life. Therefore, it should be used properly in whatever he does because he will have to account for every second of his life in the hereafter.
16. A Muslim's work should be directed towards production of what is lawful in Islam. For example, the production of wines or other intoxicants is prohibited in Islam. Likewise, any activity connected with gambling, prostitution or other "indecentencies" is restricted.
17. The method of one's work should not cause excessive harm to Allah's given resources that are meant to benefit of all mankind. The Qur'an speaks repeatedly against spreading mischief or corruption in the land. Prophet Muhammad PBUH spoke of the punishment of anyone who kills a sparrow without a legitimate reason e.g. for food, or one who cuts a tree for no good reason.
18. The production process of one's work should not cause harm to others e.g. building a noisy factory in the middle of a residential area or preventing access to natural resources e.g. beaches or waterways. This is based on the instruction of the Prophet: *"One should not harm himself or others."*
19. In a situation where some harm is inevitable, a careful weighting of relative harms and benefits should be made. Furthermore, a party that may be harmed must be compensated, based on the cardinal rule in Islamic Law that harm must be removed or compensated if inevitable.
20. According to work ethics, productive resources are not to be left idle in the name of private ownership, especially resources that are crucial to the lives of people.

The Prophet PBUH said; *"If one of you possesses a piece of cultivable land, let him cultivate it. And if he is not able to cultivate it by himself, let him give it to his brother"*
21. . In Islam, work is sacred and a Muslim should not despise a fellow Muslim for the work he does as long as it is lawful in sharia.

The Prophet PBUH said; *"It is better that a person should get a rope and bring a bundle of wood on his back to sell so that Allah may preserve his honour than begging from people regardless of whether they give him or refuse."*
22. For production to be efficient, Islam emphasizes that health and strong labour should be employed. Prophet Shu'aib employed Moses for this reason as per **Q (28:26)**.
23. Labour should be educated and trained in order to perform better and efficiently because in the Qur'an Allah makes it clear that the learned are better than the illiterate.

24. Islam allows a person to move from one place to another or from one occupation to another in search of greener pasture.

Allah says in Q (4:100); *“He that flees his homeland for the cause of Allah shall find numerous places of refuge in the land and great abundance.”*

25. In Islam, a worker must be paid for his services before his sweat dries up. That is immediately after finishing his work.

26. Workers must be treated by their bosses as members of the same family. According to the prophet PBUH, slaves and servants must be given the same food and clothing as their employees.

27. Workers should not be burdened with the work which they cannot do but rather they should be given work that is within their ability.

28. Workers should be given wages appropriate to the work they do and should never be cheated after completing their tasks.

The prophet PBUH said; *“Allah will be an enemy of three persons on the day of judgement...the third person is the one who employs a person and gets full work from him but does not pay him his wages”*

29. The worker is liable to suitable medication from his employer in case he falls sick and should not be denied his pay because of sickness.

30. Employers are encouraged to first spend on their workers and children if they are to give charity.

31. Islam advises that jobless members of the society should be catered for by the state through unemployment fund.

32. It is totally forbidden for employers to cause any form of harm to their workers e.g abusing, beating or molesting them.

33. The employer must always be kind and sympathetic to his workers. It is Islamic for the boss to visit his servants and ask them about their health.

34. Workers should be paid adequate compensation for the accidents they suffer while at their work places or during work.

35. Workers should be given good accommodation so that their health and efficiency are not affected by the poor living conditions.

36. Employers should not fine their workers for minor mistakes committed at worker unless they prove that mistakes were done deliberately and purposefully.

37. If a worker is given any form of work, he should do it efficiently and honestly. Here, the prophet PBUH said;

“If any of you undertakes to do any work, Allah loves to see him doing it well and efficiently.”

COMMERCIAL ETHICS IN ISLAM

1. These are rules and regulations that govern business transactions in Islam.
2. Every Muslim doing any business must follow them because in Islam, some businesses are lawful while others are unlawful.
3. Allah says in Q (2:275); *“... but Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest.”*
He also says; *“Then when prayer is over, spread over the globe and seek the bounties of Allah ...”*
4. The Prophet PBUH was himself a trader and transacted as an agent of Lady Khadija. He once said;
“Take to trade because there are nine portions in trade out of ten portions of provision.”
5. Islam prohibits trading in “unlawful” items that are used to commit sin such as wine, intoxicants, idols and others.
The prophet PBUH said; *“When Allah prohibits a thing, He prohibits the eating of its price as well.”*
6. A Muslim must deal in things he legally acquired. Legitimacy of the method of acquisition of property to deal in excludes theft, force, cheating of other of other people’s property and other crooked ways.
Allah says in Q (4:29); *“Believers! Do not consume your wealth among yourselves illegally, but rather trade with it by mutual consent.”*
7. A Muslim should be pay whatever is due on the property he is dealing in as determined by Allah (Zakat) for Allah to purify and bless his business.
8. Furthermore, one should not hide any known defect in an item offered for sale. The buyer should be informed about such defect and it is up to him/her to accept to buy it or not and at what price.
9. Honesty in all dealings is an ethical requirement, including the fulfillment of all contracts and commitments. Allah says in Q (23:8); *“And those who keep their trusts and promises”*
10. One aspect of honesty in business required by Islam is to give the full weight and measure.
Allah says in Q (17:35); *“And give full measure when you measure, and weigh with an even [honest] balance. That is good and better at the end”*
He also says in Q (26:181-182); *“Give full measure and do not be of those who cause loss [to others]. And weigh with an even [honest] balance”*
11. A Muslim should refrain from the exploitation of the ignorance or desperate needs of others by giving them less than a fair price or wage.
Allah states in Q (7:85); *“...Give just weight and measure and do not defraud others of their possessions...”*
12. One form of exploitation which the prophet PBUH forbade is where persons who do not intend to buy a commodity simply keep bidding the price upwards often in conspiracy with the seller, so as to get others “stuck” in the deal.

13. Islam encourages Muslims to allow sellers to reach the market and get full knowledge of market prices. Therefore, it is forbidden for some middlemen to go to the outskirts of the town where there is a frequented market and intercept out-of-town merchants or farmers who are bringing their products to sell in the market.
14. Islam prohibits the sale of an item which is not available and whose delivery is doubtful. For example selling fish in the river or selling agricultural products before the plant becomes viable and takes roots. Exception to that are made for necessity, where fairness is ascertained.
15. Islam prohibits unfair monopolies which are designed to create an artificially higher price or to create artificial shortages. The prophet PBUH said; *“He who monopolizes is sinful”*
He further said; *“Whoever monopolizes foodstuff for forty days, he has dissociated himself from Allah and Allah has dissociated Himself from him.”*
16. The Prophet forbade also the practice where a town dweller withhold and store foodstuff that belongs to a desert dweller, wait until the price goes up possibly due to this artificial shortage, then he sells that foodstuff and thus get a higher commission for his services.
17. It is lawful in Islam for sellers to compete in order to attract buyers. However, attempting to “snatch” a customer who has already negotiated a deal with another seller is regarded as unethical, unless the earlier negotiation broke down or was cancelled for some other reason.
18. It is the responsibility of every individual Muslim to ensure that Islamic business ethics are enforced. It is the appeal to the person’s conscious, “fear” of Allah and the desire for His blessings in this life and in the life hereafter. Allah says in **Q (2:281)**;
“And fear a Day when you will be returned to Allah. Then every soul will be compensated for what it earned, and they will not be wronged.”
19. Both men and women are allowed to sell and buy from one another. There should be no sex discrimination in business. However, every transaction must be in the confines of Islam.
20. It is discouraged in Islam to sell land. The Prophet PBUH recommended that one should sell his land or house when he is going to the money to buy another land or house.
21. The taking of oath when selling anything is prohibited in Islam. The prophet PBUH said that swearing produces a ready sale but blows out the blessings.
22. The buying or selling of stolen property is prohibited in Islam. The prophet PBUH said that one who buys a stolen property with the knowledge that it was stolen, shares in the sin and shame of stealing.
23. Furthermore, Islam forbids seeking wealth through taking usury (ribah) whether the rate of usury is high or low. Allah curses the usury giver, taker and witness.
24. Credit transactions by mutual consent are expressly allowed in Islam. The prophet is reported to have obtained grains on credit from a Jewish trader and used his coat of mail as a security.
25. It is allowed for a Muslim to make advance payment on a commodity he intends to buy as agreed upon with the seller. However, transactions which involve uncertainties are not recommended.
26. Earning wealth through gambling is totally forbidden in Islam. This means getting something too easily without working for it.

ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

1. Islam puts much emphasis on weights and measures. It fundamentally discourages cheating by means of weights.
Allah says in **Q (17:35)**; *“Give full measures whenever you measure and measure with a balance that is correct. That is the most right and the most advantageous in the end.”*
2. The holy Qur’an commands Muslims to weigh with full justice. Allah states in **Q (16:125)**;
“Call men to the path of your Lord with wisdom and mild appeal. Reason with them in the most polite manner.”
3. Allah describes people who cheat by weights and measures as tricksters. That is people who cheat by deceiving others.
4. The holy Qur’an in **83:1-3** describes people who cheat others by weights and measures as having no empathy (kind feelings for others).
5. Cheating by means of weights and measures break Islamic brotherhood because such people are after themselves only yet the Prophet PBUH said;
“A Muslim is the one who wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself.”
6. Allah promises to handle the fraudsters (impostors) on the day of Day of judgement because here on earth, it is hard for man to find out fraud (deceit).
7. Cheating by weights and measures is a grave sin which led to the destruction of a nation of Madyana where Prophet Shu’aib was sent as per **Q (7:85-93)**.
8. Prophet Muhammad PBUH is reported to have prayed to Allah to bless honest dealers. He prayed;
“O God! Bless the measure of the people of Madina.”
9. The prophet PBUH further emphasized that goods should be measured or weighed before being sold to any potential buyer.

ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON RIBAH (USURY)

1. Literally, the word Ribah means to increase, to grow, to exceed, or be more than but in sharia, it means a term that is used when two parties exchange an item of the same kind, and in return one party receives extra of what he gave.
2. The most common application of Ribah is on monetary transactions relating to “loans” and “credits” and such transactions like advancing money on interest, keeping deposits in a bank for the sake of earning interest, or getting concessions in rates of goods or commodities against advance payments of price, mortgaging e.t.c
3. Islamic law does not limit Ribah application to Loan or financial transactions only. In fact the image of Ribah is spread across larger transactions involving any exchange of items between two parties, as far as the items are of same kind, and one item is exchanged for the other for either more or less.
4. Ribah is considered amongst the seven terrible sins namely, shirk, magic, suicide, consuming ribah, unlawfully taking orphan’s money, fleeing from battlefield and accusing chaste- believing women.

Allah states in Q (3:130):

“O you who have believed, do not consume usury, doubled and multiplied, but fear Allah that you may be successful.”

He also said in Q (2:175); *“Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest”*

5. The Prophet PBUH said in his farewell sermon:

“God has forbidden you to take Ribah, therefore all ribah obligation shall henceforth be ignored. Your capital, however, is yours to keep...”

6. Quran openly prohibits Ribah, and since it is an undisputed source of guidance, all Muslims unanimously agree on the prohibition of Ribah without any difference of opinion among any school of thought on prohibition of Ribah in Islamic Sharia.
7. According to Islam, a person who deals with Ribah will stand on judgment day as one who is being beaten by Satan into insanity. Here Allah made it clear that “trade” and “ribah” are not the same, and that He forbade “ribah” and allowed “trade”.
8. He further stated that whoever accepts guidance of Allah must immediately stop dealing in Ribah, and those who return to Ribah after Allah’s guidance has reached them are dwellers of fire, because Allah destroys “Ribah” and He reward those who give Charity.
9. Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) cursed the one who deals with Ribah. He cursed the receiver and the payer of ribah, the one who records it and the two witnesses to the transaction because they are all alike.
10. Islamic law considers Ribah as tool of oppression and a means to unjustly take others money by exploiting their needs and circumstances. Hence it forbids Ribah and promotes Charity as an alternative.
11. Islamic law also consider Ribah as a medium for hoarding money by the crooked, and it warns against those who accumulate wealth with this unjust way.
12. Alternatively, Islam on one hand distributes wealth by implementation of Charity, Zakat and Laws of Inheritance, and on other hand, vigorously encourages spending of money to help the needy.
13. The crimes of dealing in Ribah are so serious that Allah has declared war against those who deal in Ribah. The Prophet (PBUH) has cursed anyone who deals with Ribah, the one who takes it, one who pays it and one who records it, they are all “equal”
14. Muslims around the world traditionally avoid eating pork and alcohol, whereas, Ribah is considered much worse than that.
15. The Prophet (PBUH) declared consumption of Ribah worse than adultery: worse than “to a man committing adultery with his own mother”.

WHY IS IT PROHIBITED IN ISLAM?

1. Ribah is a means of consuming people's wealth unjustly. Allah says in Q (4:161);

"And for their taking of usury while they had been forbidden from it, and their consuming of the people's wealth unjustly. And we have prepared for the disbelievers among them a painful punishment."

2. Allah prohibits accumulating wealth by consuming Ribah. Allah states in Q (3:130);

"O you who have believed, do not consume usury, doubled and multiplied, but fear Allah that you may be successful."

3. Islam promotes giving out wealth in charity and prohibits accumulating it, especially when it is unjustly accumulated like Ribah. Allah says in Q (2:276);

"Allah destroys interest and gives increase for charities. And Allah does not like every sinning disbeliever."

4. Ribah eaters are beaten by Satan into insanity. Allah states in Q (2:275);

"Those who consume interest cannot stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except as one stands who is being beaten by Satan into insanity..."

5. Allah wants us to give up ribah because He sent divine guidance to teach us how to amass wealth.

He says in Q (2:278);

"O you who have believed, fear Allah and give up what remains of interest, if you should be believers."

6. Allah vowed to declare war on ribah dealers as He says in Q (2:278-279);

"O you who have believed, fear Allah and give up what remains [due to you] of interest, if you should be believers. And if you do not, then be informed of a war [against you] from Allah and His Messenger..."

7. The Prophet (PBUH) cursed people who deal in Ribah. He cursed the receiver and the payer of ribah, the one who records it and the two witnesses to the transaction and said: *"They are all alike"*

8. It is a grave sin which the prophet PBUH said that it is more dangerous than a person who commits adultery.

The Prophet (PBUH) said: *"Ribah has seventy three segments, the least serious being equivalent to a man committing adultery with his own mother."*

9. Ribah is prohibited because it carries a heavy punishment from Allah on the day of judgement.

The Prophet (PBUH) said: *"On the night of Ascension I came upon people whose stomachs were like houses with snakes visible from the outside. I asked Gabriel who they were. He replied that they were people who had received ribah."*

He also said: *"God would be justified in not allowing four persons to enter paradise or to taste its blessings: he who drinks consistently, he who takes ribah, he who usurps an orphan's property without right and he who is undutiful to his parents."*

10. Ribah creates an environment of selfishness, self-centeredness, and heavy heartedness. This attitude is prohibited in Islam as it creates hatred, hostility in society, and destroys mutual trust and kindness.
11. Islam promotes giving out. As the Prophet (PBUH) use to say that giving hand is better⁷⁶. Hence, Islam always promotes charity and helping hands. Allah says in Q (30:39);
"And whatever you give for interest to increase within the wealth of people will not increase with Allah. But what you give in zakat, desiring the countenance of Allah – those are the multipliers"
12. It was prohibited to protect the wealth of people so that no one takes it away by illegal or in unjust means as today Ribah is legalized, even when it is inherently unjust and illegal!
13. Islam is pure and it promotes purity in food, in life, in spending, in earning and in thoughts. Its purpose is to purify us inwardly and outwardly. Hence it ask people to find pure and just ways to earn money where is no injustice or disguise. "One man earning should not be other man's loss".
14. Ribah reinforces the tendency for wealth to accumulate in the hands of a few, and thereby diminishes human beings to concern their fellow men.

HOW TO AVOID RIBAH

1. Having faith that Allah will provide for us and our families.
2. Not taking out loans that incur interest.
3. Choosing lawful investments.
4. Renting and saving cash for a home instead of mortgage.
5. Being cautious (wary) of the contracts we sign and having a student of knowledge to check them.
6. Opening up bank accounts without interest i.e chequing accounts.
7. Making bill payments on time so as not to incur a late penalty.
8. Borrowing money from family or friends where possible.
9. Not buying what you simply do not have the money for i.e live within your means.
10. Dealing with Islamically compliant banks.
11. Accepting/organizing a 'Goodly Loan', this is a loan by means of which one intends to show kindness to another, which does not involve ribah.
12. Attending seminars and events on halal (lawful) investments.
13. Learning from others how they have done it to get out of the current ribah systems.

SUMMARY

1. Islamic law prohibits ribah in all its form.
2. Ribah is a tool of oppression that allows elites and rich to suck the block of poor and needy.
3. Ribah consumer are at war with Allah and his Messenger Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)
4. Linguistically the word Ribah means to increase, to grow, to exceed, to be more.
5. The basic example of Ribah is in monetary credit transaction, where borrower has to pay "interest" on loaned amount.
6. In Sharia meaning "Ribah" is a term that is used when two parties exchange item of same kind, and in return one party received extra (or in excess) of what he gave. A simple example is when

gives 100 units of Gold and received 120 units of Gold in return. The extra or excess 20 units are considered “Ribah”.

7. Ribah is opposite of Charity (Zakat). While it seems to ribah-consumer that their money increase with Ribah, but in reality money decrease with Ribah, and money increase with Charity (Zakat). This is testified by Allah in Quran. However, a ribah-eating brain cannot comprehend such noble thought.

Q 2:276 *“Allah destroys interest and gives increase for charities. And Allah does not like every sinning disbeliever.”*

8. Islamic law promotes Charity and forgiveness. If a needy person cannot repay loan, it is considered Kamal to forgive his loan.

Q 2:280 *“And if someone is in hardship, then [let there be] postponement until [a time of] ease. But if you give [from your right as] charity, then it is better for you, if you only knew.”*

9. Ribah cannot be justified by any reason. It is neither like “trade”, nor like “rent”, nor like “profit”. In fact, it is a reward of laziness where lender wants to make money without working.

10. Prophet (PBUH) prohibited giving ribah, taking ribah, consuming ribah, recording of ribah, and witnessing ribah, and considers them all alike.

11. Whoever live in ribah will have his eternal abode in hellfire.

Q 2:275 *“But whoever returns to [dealing in interest or usury] – those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein.”*

ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON ZAKAT (POOR’S DUE)

DEFINITION OF ZAKAT

1. The word Zakat comes from the Arabic verb **zakat**, which means to grow, to increase and to purify. When said about a person, it means to improve or to become better. Consequently, Zakat means, blessing, growth, cleanliness and betterment.
2. In the Sharia, the word Zakat refers to the determined share of one’s wealth prescribed by Allah to be distributed among the deserving categories of those entitled to receive it.
3. Zakat is a divinely ordained institution and is regarded both as a right of Allah as well as the right of the poor. In fact, an Islamic government can forcibly take Zakat from the rich if they withhold it.
4. Zakat is the third pillar of Islam and it is always mentioned alongside prayer. For example, prayer and Zakat are interlinked in 28 places in the Qur’an. It is only in two verses that it is mentioned alone.

Allah says in Q (2:277); *“Those that have faith and do good works, attend to their prayers and pay zakat, will be rewarded by their Lord and will have nothing to fear or to regret.”*

5. Zakat is an act of worship and as emphasized in the Qur’an; its major objective is to purify the payer and his wealth as per Q (9:103).

According to Islam, Zakat washes away sins and impurities in the same way that prayer washes away sins and impurities. This is why it is mentioned in the sayings that Zakat carries the “dirt” of people.

6. The individual who sincerely pays his Zakat most definitely becomes the recipient of the promised rewards and approval of Allah.

Q (2:276) states; *“Allah will deprive usury of all blessing, but will give increase for deeds of charity: For He does not love the one who is ungrateful and wicked.”*

7. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) explained the above verse in the following words:

“When a slave of Allah pays Zakat, the Angels of Allah pray for him in these words: ‘O Allah! Grant abundance to him who spends (in your cause) and destroy him who does not spend and restricts himself to his wealth.’” (Bukhari)

8. According to Islam, when a Muslim pays Zakat, Allah increases his wealth, although this is abstract to many people. However, the Prophet PBUH said;

“Charity does not diminish wealth.” (Muslim)

9. Furthermore, as regards the payment of zakat, the majority of jurists stipulate that intention is a prerequisite for paying zakat since it is an act of worship and all forms of worship require intention.

10. As regards the punishment for zakat defaulters, Prophet Muhammad PBUH said;

“He who is given wealth by Allah but he does not pay its Zakat, that wealth is made for him, on the Day of Judgment, into the form of a huge bald serpent with two horns, encircling that person and squeezing him all day, then holding him by lips telling him, ‘I am your wealth, your treasure that you hoarded.’”

11. Not only did the Prophet PBUH issue a stern warning with regard to the punishment in the Hereafter, but he went on to warn of a punishment in this life as well, both from Allah and from the State. He said;

“Zakat is never intermingled (combined) with any amount of wealth without destroying and rotting it.” (Bukhari).

12. From the above hadith, if a person does not pay zakat, the part that would have been paid will be a cause for ruining that wealth and if a person takes Zakat as a recipient without deserving that it and mixes it with his wealth, it will be a reason for rotting all his wealth.

13. It is the duty of the Muslim leader to enforce the payment of zakat and to fight the zakat defaulters. This was one of the causes of the Riddah after the prophet’s death, during Abu Bakar’s caliphate.

14. As for delaying the Payment of Zakat, it may be delayed for certain valid reasons, such as when there is a lack of liquid funds, otherwise the delay or negligence in the payment of Zakat is not permitted and is in fact sinful.

15. As regards the transference of zakat to another Area, the general principle is that it must be distributed in the same area where it is collected. The local poor and needy have a priority since the Zakat is collected from their neighbours, kith and kin.

HISTORY OF ZAKAT

1. Zakat before the Advent of Islam

- a) The history of Zakat is the same as that of prayer. It is evident from the Qur'an that like prayer, its directive always existed in the Sharia of the previous Prophets. When the Almighty asked the Muslims to pay it, it was not something unknown to them.
- b) All the followers of the religion of Prophet Ibrahim were fully aware of it. For this very reason **Q (70:25)** describes it as *"A specified right."* Thus it was a pre-existing practice which the Prophet (peace be upon him), with necessary reformations, upheld at the command of the Allah.
- c) The Qur'an gives examples in several verses telling us how Zakat was imposed on the previous Prophets. For example: Zakat of Prophet Ismail is mentioned in **Q (19:54-55)**;
"Then you shall tell of Ismail; he, too, was a man of his word, an apostle and a prophet. He enjoined prayer and zakat on his people and his Lord was pleased with him."
- d) Zakat of the Jews is mentioned in **Q (2:83)**;
"And when We made a covenant with the Children of Israel: Worship none save Allah and be good to parents and to kinfolk and to orphans and the needy and speak kindly to mankind; and establish prayer and pay Zakat."
- e) Zakat to the children of Prophet Ishaq and Prophet Yakuub is stated in **Q (21:73)**;
"We ordained them leaders to guide at our behest and enjoined on them charity, prayer and zakat."
- f) Zakat of Prophet Isa is mentioned in **Q (19:30-31)**;
"He said: Lo! I am the slave of Allah. He has given me the Scripture and has appointed me a Prophet. And has made me blessed wherever I may be and has enjoined upon me prayer and Zakat so long as I remain alive."

2. Zakat in the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him)

- a) The first verses to be revealed to the prophet PBUH about zakat in Mecca were in the general form of voluntary payments and it was left to the faith and the brotherly feelings of individuals to decide what and how much to give in Zakat.
- b) It was in Madina after the arrival of the Prophet PBUH that zakat became an obligation on Muslims. The verses in Madina gave clear directives, ordering the payment of Zakat and since that time the Prophet PBUH used to send out Zakat workers to collect and distribute the due Zakat.
- c) The Qur'an does not give the definition of the wealth on which zakat is payable, except in a few cases, only the general principles are given without the details, e.g:

1. Gold and silver:

"And there are those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah. Announce unto them a most grievous penalty." Q (9:34)

2. Crops and Fruits:

“Eat of their fruit in their season, but render the dues that are proper on the day that the harvest is gathered.” Q (6:141)

3. Earnings of Trade:

“O you who believe, give of the good things which you have earned.” Q (2:267)

4. Wealth from beneath the earth:

“And of that which we have produced for you from the earth.” Q (2:267)

5. Furthermore, the Qur’an mentions Zakat in general and the word **amwal** (i.e. property or wealth or earning) is used as in the **Q(9:103)**;

“Out of their wealth take sadaqthereby purifying and sanctifying them.”

Q (51:19); *“In their wealth and properties is the right of the poor, the beggar and he who is in deprivation.”*

6. It was Prophet Muhammad PBUH who gave detailed specifications of the kinds of Zakatable wealth, the minimum exempt of each of them and the applicable rates. He also gave the details of the categories of people that should receive Zakat.

WHO MUST GIVE ZAKAT?

In general, most Muslim jurists agree that Zakat is obligatory on a person who fulfills the following qualities:

1. The person should be mature i.e. has reached the age of puberty.
2. The giver must be sane because nothing good or bad is done by a mad person.
3. The giver must be a freeman because captives or those in bondage are among its recipients.
4. The person must be owning the prescribed Nisab amount. The net amount of one’s wealth liable for zakat.
5. The wealth from which one is to pay zakat should be of a productive nature i.e one from which a profit can be got e.g business merchandise, livestock, agricultural harvests e.t.c
6. However, there is disagreement amongst Muslim jurists on whether or not Zakat is compulsory on the wealth of minors and the insane.
7. Imaam Shafi’i reports the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

“Invest the fund of the orphansso they may not be used up by Zakat.”

This Hadith implies that there is an obligation of Zakat on the wealth of minors and the insane. Such obligations become the responsibility of their guardians.

WHAT WEALTH IS SUBJECT TO ZAKAT?

1. The Qur’anic reference to items subject to Zakat is rather general. In **Q (9:103)**, Allah mentions the word *“amwal”* (wealth) while in **Q (2:267)** He mentions, *“Whatyou have earned,”* and *“What we have produced for youfrom the earth.”*
2. Hence, in the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) it became clear that Zakat was levied on camels, sheep, gold, silver, agricultural output and goods designated for trade.

3. Certain items were exempted, these included things used for personal purposes such as clothes, household furniture and durable commodities, etc.
4. It must be noted in this regard that Zakat was imposed on agricultural products, livestock, and trade inventories, gold and silver.
5. Except for personal and family things, nothing of substantial value, of the time, was left outside the domain of Zakat. Land was almost worthless unless it was used in agriculture, and houses were commonly inexpensive.
6. On the basis of such texts, Muslim jurists have formulated various opinions and rules about what wealth are subject to Zakat. These may be categorized as follows:
 - a) those who believe that only items specifically prescribed in the Qur'an and Sunna are subject to Zakat, for example dates, raisins, wheat, sheep, camels, assets acquired for the purpose of resale, gold and silver.
 - b) those who include items similar in nature to those mentioned above but not specifically mentioned by the Prophet (peace be upon him), e.g. vegetables, debts, wages, salaries, professional income and the return generated by fixed assets.
 - c) those who include all the above as well as contemporary items of income and wealth – including fixed assets. Muslim jurists agree that we do not pay zakat from personal and consumable wealth.
7. Furthermore, they agree that even from among the wealth that is generally subject to Zakat, Zakat is only taken if this wealth fulfills the following conditions:

Ownership: The wealth must be fully owned by the potential payer. This ownership must be absolute and not restricted, except as provided by the law of the country.

Growth: The wealth must have the ability to grow or increase or multiply, or is itself a result of a process of growth, such as animals or agricultural products.

However, Muslim scholars also deem money, gold, silver and merchandise to have the potential of growth as it is usually made to grow through trade.

Zakat is meant to help relieve the poor without impoverishing the rich, by having the rich to pay from their surplus, i.e. taking a little from the plenty. Imposing Zakat on wealth that does not grow reverses this purpose, since Zakat is paid year after year, over and above other living expenses.

Nisab: For wealth to be subject to Zakat it must first attain a minimum value. In several Hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) established certain minimum values for the different wealth and exempted anyone who owns less than the minimum from the payment of Zakat.

However, once a person owns the minimum of any wealth, then the whole amount of that wealth becomes subject to Zakat.

The amount of Nisab must be over and above what is required to satisfy the immediate basic needs of the payer, including family responsibilities and due debts.

Passage of one year: Since Zakat is a yearly obligation, the wealth should be held for a year before it is charged with Zakat.

However, this condition is restricted to livestock, money and business assets and does not apply to agricultural products, fruits, honey, extracted minerals and found treasure as the latter are subject to Zakat at the time of harvest or when discovered.

In summary, the following are items on which zakat is payable:

Cash; zakat is payable from saved money after deducting all the required basic needs, held in cash or bank after a year. The Nisab is 2 ½ % of the money saved.

Business merchandise; zakat is payable on all merchant goods irrespective of whether they were got through buying, gift, marriage, booty or inheritance, provided the goods were intended for sale at the time of possession. The amount to be paid is 2.5% of the Nisab value.

Buried treasure; precious materials like gold and silver are subject to zakat payment irrespective of whether they are in form of coins or dust as long as the amount owned constitutes Nisab. The Nisab for gold is 2.5% from a minimum of 82.5 grams while for silver, Nisab is 577.5 grams with 2% paid in zakat.

Agricultural produce; zakat is paid from both livestock and crops. For livestock, zakat payable depends on the kind and number of animals owned e.g the Nisab for sheep is 40 sheep and one year female sheep is paid while out of 121 sheep, two female sheep are given.

The Nisab for goats is 40 goats and a one year she-goat is payable in zakat while between 121 and 200 goats, two she goats are given out.

When sheep and goats are mixed, the Nisab is 40, depending on what is more than the other. If there are more goats than sheep, a female she-goat is given in zakat.

The Nisab for cattle and buffalos is 30. Between 30 and 40 heads of cattle, a one year young calf is given out in zakat. When they reach 40, a cow of two years is given in zakat.

The Nisab for camels is 5. Between 5 and 19 camels, one sheep/goat is given in zakat. When they reach 20, one year she-camel is given out, at 36 camels, a two year old she-came is given and at 46 camels, a three year she-camel is payable.

As for crops, zakat depends on the nature of production. If the land was irrigated by rain, 10% of every 240kgs is given out in zakat and if the land was artificially irrigated, 5% of every 240kgs is paid out in zakat.

RECIPIENTS OF ZAKAT

THE DISTRIBUTION OF ZAKAT

According to Islam, there are eight categories of people who should receive zakat. The Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have said:

“Allah verily did not accept the judgment of a Prophet(peace be upon him) or anybody else in the distribution of Zakat, so He gave the Judgment on it. He divided it into eight parts.”

1. The prophet’s words refer to the message in **Q (9:60)** which says;

“Sadaq (i.e. Zakat) is for the poor, the needy, those employed to administer [the funds], those whose hearts have been reconciled [to the truth], for those in slavery, those in debt, in the cause of Allah and for the wayfarer; [thus it has been] ordained by Allah, and Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom.”

2. From the above verse, the following are the eight categories of people to receive zakat.

Al-Fuqara: The Poor; According to the majority of Muslim jurists, the poor are those who do not have any assets and have no means by which they can earn their living.

However, the **Hanafi** jurists defined the poor as those who have money lesser than the amount on which Zakat is payable and that they are worse than the needy in regard to satisfying their basic needs. However, some scholars hold the opposite view.

Al-Masakin: The Needy; According to the majority of jurists, the needy are the people whose earnings do not cover their basic needs.

However, the **Hanafi** jurists identified them as “*those who have no earnings at all.*”

The **Hanafi** and **Maliki** jurists consider them to be more deserving of Zakat than the poor.

However, the Hambali and Shafi`i jurists put the poor as being more deserving of Zakat.

Actually, this dispute in categorisation has no effect, since both the poor and the needy are among the categories entitled to receive Zakat.

Al-‘Amilina ‘Alayha: Administrators of Zakat; this term applies to all those serving in the field of Zakat, including those responsible for collecting, storing, guarding, registering and distributing it. They shoulder all Zakat related activities.

Al-Mu’allafati-Qulubuhum: Reconciliation of Hearts (The new converts); This term applies to people who have embraced Islam or who are inclined to the Truth of Islam.

Fir-Riqab: For those in Bondage or War captives; Zakat may be allocated to help Muslims free themselves of bondage (slavery) or as ransom to set free war captives.

Al-Gharimin: Those in Debt; Zakat may be used to pay off debts that the debtor is struggling to pay off, so long as these debts were not incurred in an act contrary to Islamic law.

Fi-Sabilillah: In the Cause of Allah; Muslim jurists differ on who or what can be covered under this category, although most seem to agree that it can be used in the defense of Islam. In the wider sense, however, this category covers all methods of promoting the Islamic value system, whether through propagation or intellectual confrontation.

Ibnas-Sabil: The Wayfarer; A wayfarer refers to a traveler who left his home for a lawful purpose and for whatever good reason does not possess enough money to return home, even if he is rich in his own country.

3. As regards the Manner of Distributing zakat, the zakat giver is freed from its obligation as soon as he grants full ownership and possession of it to any of the above-mentioned categories.

This can be done either by giving a certain amount of money to meet his basic requirements or by giving him a means of production or tools of trade to help him in becoming self-empowered.

4. The proceeds of Zakat at the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) was in most cases distributed immediately after collection, as reported by many workers who often said that they used to come back from their Zakat missions empty handed, the way they started their journeys, since everything collected used to be distributed on the spot.

NON-RECIPIENTS OF ZAKAT

Muslim jurists agreed that Zakat cannot be given to the following people:

1. The rich (except when such are among the workers of Zakat or the wayfarers).
2. Those capable but not willing to work.
3. Non-Muslims and those who fight against Islam.
4. Ascendants, descendants and wives of the payer.
5. The family of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

IMPORTANCE OF ZAKAT IN ISLAM

1. Zakat helps the giver to attain guidance on earth and success in the hereafter. Allah says in Q (31:4-5);

“Those who perform prayer and give zakat and they have faith in the hereafter with certainty; such are on guidance from their Lord and such are the successful.”

2. Zakat purifies the wealth of the giver as Allah says in Q (9:103);

“Take zakat from their wealth in order to purify them and sanctify them with it and invoke Allah with it...”

3. Zakat cleanses the giver’s heart from all kinds of social mischiefs e.g cruelty and greed and misery. Thus, he no longer keep envy and jealousy.
4. It instils in the giver the sense of social responsibility as well as in the receiver the sense of social security and belonging to the Muslim community.
5. It reduces the tension that might have cropped up in the Muslim community between the rich and the poor. This is because without zakat, the poor have no good feelings for the rich and always wish them misfortunes.
6. Zakat is mentioned repeatedly in the holy Qur’an side by side with prayer. The qualities of a believer are described as establishing prayer and practicing regular payment of zakat.
7. Zakat is the third pillar of Islam, so it is a form of worship which has to be fulfilled by every Muslim of defined qualifications.
8. Zakat is a means of closing the gap between the rich and the poor. The concentration of wealth in hands of the few is checked using zakat.
9. It is a charity paid in the cause of Allah that is used to develop the Muslim community by building schools, hospitals, and mosques and in forbidding evil.
10. Zakatil Fitir helps a believer to purify his fast of the month of Ramadhan from the faults committed in the holy month as well as enforcing the enjoyment of the poor and needy on Eid-al-Fitir.
11. Zakat acts a link of all Allah’s messengers because it was an obligatory duty for all. Verses such as Q (21:73), Q (5:12), 19:55 and Q (19:31) refer to zakat for different prophets.
12. Allah mentions zakat as the means by which to attain Allah’s mercy as Allah says in

Q (7:156); *“With My Punishment I visit whom I will; but My Mercy extends to all things. That (Mercy) I shall ordain for those who have God-consciousness and give their Zakat and those who believe in Our Signs.”*

13. Also, zakat is a precondition to achieve victory as Allah mentions in **Q (22:40-41)**;
“Allah will certainly aid those who aid His cause; for verily Allah is Full of Strength, Exalted in Might, they are those who, if We establish them in the land, establish regular prayer and give their Zakat, enjoin the right and forbid wrong: with Allah rests the outcome of all affairs.”
14. Zakat is a sign of brotherhood in religion. Here Allah says in **Q (9:11)**;
“But if they repent, establish regular prayers, and give their Zakat, they are your brothers in Faith.”
15. Zakat is a distinctive feature of the faithful community. The holy Qur’an describes believers as protectors of one another who enjoin what is just and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, pay their Zakat and obey Allah and His Messenger.

PROBLEMS FACING ZAKAT COLLECTORS AND DISTRIBUTORS IN UGANDA

1. Disunity among Muslims. This has made it hard for the Muslims to know who is to give zakat.
2. Ignorance among Muslims about zakat. Many Muslims in Uganda do not understand the details of zakat e.g what it means, when and how to give it e.t.c
3. Some areas are far deep in villages such that it is very difficult for zakat collectors to reach them.
4. Majority of the Muslims are poor. So zakat collected is very little.
5. Lack of enough information to determine the number of Muslims who should give and receive zakat.
6. Muslims have a problem of paying zakat and other government taxes because Uganda is not a Muslim country.
7. Language barrier is also a problem for the collectors of zakat because Uganda is a country with many tribes speaking different languages.
8. Low levels of faith among the rich who are supposed to pay zakat. They see no need of paying zakat.
9. Corruption and embezzlement of funds in the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council has also discouraged many able Muslims from paying zakat.
10. Political instabilities in some areas have also made it hard to collect and distribute zakat.
11. Lack of qualified personal charged with the work of collecting and distributing zakat.
12. Poor transport and communication in some areas is also a problem for zakat collectors and distributors in Uganda.
13. There is a problem of nepotism whereby the zakat distributors give it to their close relatives.
14. Zakat collectors are affected by bad weather conditions like rain and sunshine.

ZAKAT AND SADAQ

Sadaq is any voluntary work a person done in the service of Allah. Sadaq is rendered willingly by a person and it can be in any form like a gift or physical help like fetching water for an elderly person.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ZAKAT AND SADAQ

1. Zakat is compulsory while sadaq is optional.
2. Zakat is a pillar of Islam while sadaq is not a pillar of Islam.
3. Zakat has a fixed amount from which it is paid but sadaq is not fixed.
4. Zakat is paid once in a year but sadaq can be paid several times.
5. Zakat is paid by only rich Muslims while sadaq is paid by both the rich and the poor.
6. Zakat **must** be paid to Muslims only while sadaq can be offered to any person.
7. Zakat purifies the wealth of the giver while sadaq does not.
8. Failure to pay zakat is punishable by Allah but one who fails to offer sadaq is not punishable.
9. Zakat must be collected but sadaq is not collected.
10. Zakat is collected from five specific categories of items but sadaq is given in any form.
11. Zakat is paid to eight categories of people but sadaq is offered to any person.

POLITICAL TEACHINGS IN ISLAM.

Features and uniqueness of the Islamic political system

1. The Islamic form of government is unique in its structure, function and purpose. It is not based on party politics nor is it unconstitutional.
2. It is different from modern governments which stand for expansion, aggression, and exploitation of the weak.
3. The Islamic state is based on democracy in the truest sense of the word. The Islamic political system is based on the following features (pillars);
4. Sovereignty: In the Islamic state, sovereignty does not belong to the ruler nor to the people themselves but it belongs to Allah. The people just exercise it as a trust from Allah so as to enforce His law and establish His will. Allah says in **Q (67:1)**;

“Blessed is He in whose hand is the kingdom and has power over all things.”

5. Constitution: In a Muslim state, the holy Qur’an is the supreme law of the land. The ruler and other people in authority must rule and judge by it. Failure to judge by the Qur’an without a genuine reason renders the rulers and the ruled transgressors.

Allah says in the **Q (17:9)**;

“This Qur’an guides to what is most right.”

However, if the Qur’an is silent about an issue, Muslims resort to the other principle sources of sharia such as Hadith, Ijma, Qias and R’ay.

6. Office of the head of state: Under the Islamic political system, the head of the state is both a political and spiritual leader. In performing his duties, the leader considers himself responsible to Allah first and then execute his political authority in accordance with the Islamic law.
7. Election: The head of the Islamic state must be elected by the people from the people and for the people on the basis of adult majority vote. The ruler must be chosen from the best qualified citizens on the basis of his proved past services, fitness to rule, fear of Allah and regard for other people’s rights.

Family background, wealth, race, language and age are secondary features in choosing a leader. Only faith is the best quality. Allah says in **Q (49:13)**;

“...the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous of you.”

The same criteria should be applied when appointing other officers of the state to assist the ruler. The prophet PBUH said;

“Whoever entrusts a man to a public office, whereas in his society there is a better man than this trustee, has betrayed the trust of Allah, of the messenger and of the Muslims.”

He also said; *“When government is entrusted to those undeserving of it, then wait for the doom.”*

8. Oath of allegiance: Once the leader is elected by Majority of the people, all the male citizens of the country must swear their allegiance (commitment) to him. Historically, Prophet Muhammad PBUH received an oath of allegiance when he was made the head of the state of Madina and all the orthodox caliphs received theirs on assumption of office.

9. Supremacy of the law: In an Islamic state, all people including the leader are equal before the law. The prophet PBUH established an Islamic state in which the authority of the head of state was controlled and the law was one for all, including the prophet PBUH himself.

Apart from the fixed salary which is paid to him from the public, the head of state has no special privileges. In his capacity, he can be sued in courts of law like other members of the community. For example, Umar bin Khattab, second caliph, was once sued in court of law and had to defend himself.

10. Division of labour: Under the Islamic political system, the leader has to carry out administration with the help of ministers and other public servants. Over centralization of power has room in an Islamic political system.

11. Consultation: The head of the state must work in consultation of the advisory council. All important state matters must be decided through consultation of any kind.

The prophet PBUH said; *“To consult is an essential part of religion. Whoever does not have anything good to say should keep quiet.”*

He also said; *“When people consult each other, they are guided to the right course in their affairs.”*

12. Obedience: It is compulsory for all Muslims to respect the laws of the Islamic government and to follow its orders as long as they do not involve disobedience to Allah and His messenger. Allah says in Q (4:49);

“O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the messenger and those in authority among you and if you differ in anything, refer it to Allah and His messenger.”

The prophet PBUH said; *“Hear and obey even though a Negro slave is appointed to rule over you.”* **Bukhar**

He also said; *“To hear and obey authority is wajib so long as one is not commanded to disobey Allah; he should hear and obey.”*

He further said; *“He who obeys me, obeys Allah and he who disobeys me, disobeys Allah, and he who obeys the Amiir (leader) obeys me and he who disobeys the Amiir disobeys me.”*

13. Good service: The head of the Islamic state and his officials are required to work for the good of the people, to be gentle to them and desist from causing any harm to the nation.

They are asked to live a simple life, to be accessible to those who need their immediate attention, to be God-fearing, to help the poor and protect Muslim interests.

Allah says in Q (22:41); *“Those who, if We give them power in the land, establish worship and pay the poor due and enjoin kindness and forbid inequity.”*

The Prophet PBUH said; *“Whoever Allah grants to rule people and does not manage their affairs for good, will not smell the scent of paradise.”*

14. Justice: This is the major aspect of the Muslim state. A ruler is not expected to make distinction when exercising justice. He should be fair to all people including enemies and haters. Justice must be

made regardless of colour, race or religion as long the people are law binding and peaceful citizens. Allah says in **Q 38:26**);

“O David! Surely We have made you a ruler in the land, so judge between men justly.”

15. Fundamental rights: One of the main responsibilities of the Islamic state is to maintain the fundamental rights of the citizens, such as freedom of thought, expression, developing talents, approve or disapprove things according to their honest judgement and others.

However, in exercising his freedom, one should be in the limits of Islam and must not go against public interest. Again, his independent opinion should not go against the majority opinion of other people, provided the majority view is line with Islam.

Allah says in **Q (3:103)**; *“And hold fast all of you together to the cable of Allah and do not separate.”*

16. Supervision: Under Islamic political system, every Muslim has a right to supervise the conduct of the administration and question its handling of public affairs, using his best means.

If the administrators misuse their power, they are removed from office and Muslims have power to put in new ones.

17. Independence: The Islamic state must be independent of the control of political parties or any foreign interests. It has to exercise its due authority on behalf of Allah and in His cause only.

ESTABLISHMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN ISLAM

1. Justice refers to fair treatment of people or the characteristic of being fair when making a reasonable judgement.
2. According to the holy Qur’an, Muslims must establish justice while executing their duties since Allah Himself is the best of judges. Allah says in **Q (95:8)**;

“Is Allah not the best of judges?”

Q (4:135) says; *“Believers, conduct yourselves with justice and bear true witness before Allah even though it be against yourselves, your parents or your kinsfolk...”*

3. Islam teaches that shirk is the greatest injustice to Allah and that is why He does not forgive one who commits it.
4. According to Islam, Prophet Muhammad PBUH is the greatest example of a just ruler the world has ever had. Allah says in **Q (33:21)**;

“You have a good example in Allah’s Apostle for anyone who looks up to Allah and the last day and remembers Allah always.”

5. One of the basic responsibilities of the Islamic State to its citizens is to provide justice and to practically establish institutions to run its affairs.
6. One such institution is the Judiciary. It is established to administer justice among the people.

7. Islam lays down that to maintain a proper standard of justice it is necessary that recompense of a good should in no case be less than what a person has earned.
8. Likewise, the penalty for a wrong should not exceed the wrong or transgression committed.
9. The Islamic moral system encourages justice because it is a source of peace in society as Allah says in **Q (7:29)**; *“Say; My Lord enjoined justice...”*
10. Even if it means one to give witness on himself or his parents, he should do so with utmost justice.
11. Justice means that richness or wealth or status or pride cannot force a Muslim to commit injustice because all of them count nothing before Allah.
12. According to the holy Qur’an, one of the reasons for sending messengers is that Allah wanted them to administer justice among men. **(57:25)** says;

“We have sent our apostles with clear signs and brought down with them scriptures and the scales of justice so that men might deal with fairness.”
13. The holy scriptures which Allah sent with the messengers were intended to act as reference when standing out for justice. For example Allah says about the Qur’an that it judges to the most right.

Q (17:9) states; *“This Qur’an will guide to that which is most right...”*
14. Establishing justice is one of the shields against punishments on the day of judgement. Prophet Muhammad PBUH said that a just person will be in Allah’s shadow the day when there will be no shadow apart from that of Allah.
15. Justice is important in all aspects of life including buying or selling, judging or being judged, even it is to an enemy.
16. In order to enforce justice, Islam allows freedom of worship and does not force a person to do what he cannot bear. Allah says in **Q (2:286)**;

“Allah does not charge a soul with more than it can bear, but it will be requited for whatever good and whatever evil it has done.”

Prophet Muhammad PBUH also allowed freedom of worship while drafting the Madina constitution, doing justice to the Jews.
17. For effective justice to be established, Islam requires that before Hudud punishments are administered, there must be witnesses in order to reach fair judgement.
18. It is Islamic to pay judges handsome wages and promptly, in order not to be corrupted while administering justice. This was a common practice of caliph Umar bin Khattab.
19. Likewise, for actual justice to be done in courts of law, Islam necessitates that the judges and the offender should be able to understand each other. The medium of communication should be understandable to all.
20. In Islam, real justice can be implemented only when the holy Qur’an is the constitution of the land because it guides to what is most right.
21. Justice must be practised even at home especially in polygamous families. The husband must practise justice among the wives.

Allah says in Q (4:3); *“...marry such women as seem good to you: two, three or four of them. But if you fear that you cannot do justice, marry one only...”*

22. Justice must also be done on war captives. A war captive has the option to remain under the custody of the Islamic state or to be ransomed by his native country.

THE CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP IN ISLAM

Leadership is the ability to persuade others to seek defined objectives with devotion. It is the human factor which binds a group of people together and motivates it towards the set goals.

In Islam, leadership is a trust from Allah and it is a sacred position that can solve the problems of people and guide them to the eternal betterment of here and hereafter.

QUALITIES OF A GOOD LEADER

1. Faith; the leader must believe in the core Islamic beliefs, and considered as a true Muslim by his words and deeds. So, if anyone does not believe in Islamic beliefs and ideology, he must not be considered as a leader of Muslims Q (49:13)
2. The second basic quality of a good leader is that has to be a Man, not a woman.

Allah says in Q (4:34); *“Men have authority over women because Allah has made the one superior to the other and because they spend their wealth to maintain them.”*

In Islamic history we also find the proper implementation of this condition. No woman was appointed as a leader of a state in the early era of Islam, even in the so called Islamic reign of Umayyad and Abbasid period woman did not hold that position.

3. The leader must be of a mature age with sound mind and physical condition. Maturity gives him the experience and patience to face the modern challenges using his mental and physical strength.
4. The leader should be a citizen of that territory where Muslims are the majority of total population or where the other Muslims are living peacefully with full religious freedom. This condition is also important for selecting the head of the State, not for the leader of smaller group as per Q (8:72).
5. Piety; a good leader has to be pious and perfect in his conduct and behaviors to the others; Ethics and moral lessons of Islam should be applied in all of his works. In fact, righteousness is that virtue on which the leadership of Islam is based.

Allah declares in Q (21:105); *“And verily we have written in the Scripture, after the reminder: My righteous slaves will inherit (lead) the earth.”*

6. Justice; this is the fair treatment of people in all matters of life. It is an essentially fundamental characteristic a leader must possess.

Allah Ordered in Q (5:8); *“O you who believe! Be committed witnesses for Allah in equity, and do not allow your hatred for other men to turn you away from justice. Deal justly, justice is nearer to piety...”*

Even in the circumstances where judgment goes against one’s interest, Islam commands Muslims to be fair and just.

Allah says in Q (4:135);

“O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witness to Allah, even if it be against yourselves or your parents or your kin and whether it be against rich or poor, for Allah protects both.”

Prophet Muhammad PBUH said;

“One who will be under the shadow of Divine mercy on the day of judgement is one who accepts a trust when it is offered to him and restores it willingly to the rightful claimant when he is asked to do so and is the one who judges others exactly he would do to himself.”

7. Patience and tolerance: this is also an essential quality for a leader as it helps him to face criticism positively, failure in desired success, and debate on decision making e.t.c.

Allah says in Q (47:31);

“Surely, We shall test you till We test those who strive hard and the patient...”

8. Trust or trusteeship; this is an important concept of Islamic leadership. It is a psychological contract between the leader and his followers in which he promises his best to guide, protect and treat them with justice. A leader must enjoy this trust with highest degree of responsibility.

9. Dependence on Allah; this quality means that a leader must completely surrender to Allah his plans, policy and strategy for the successful result of his works. If he does so, then any kind of failure does not make him frustrated. Besides this, gives him courage to take proper decisions in facing any problem.

Allah says in Q (3:159);

“...when you have made a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust in Him.”

10. Consultation; a leader must share views and exchange opinions in any vital matter with his followers.

Allah says in Q (3:159);

“And consult with them in affairs and when you are have reached a decision, put trust in Allah.”

Consultation was a common practice in the history of early Islamic leadership that not a single decision was made without consulting the followers. Even prophet PBUH used to consult with his companions.

11. Accountability; this is a vital component for the leadership. A leader is responsible for his deeds and he is accountable to his followers and Allah.

Prophet PBUH clearly said;

“Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible of his flock. The Amir (ruler) who leads people is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock.”

12. Knowledge and wisdom; a good leader should be knowledgeable in Qur’an and hadith to enable him comprehend issues wisely and come up with wise decisions.

He should have knowledge of sharia, current political situation, contemporary trends of international politics, proper utilization of limited resources, demands and psychological needs of his followers etc.

13. Spirit of sacrifice. A good leader should sacrifice his interests for the interest of the state and his followers to avoid attracting chaos and disorder in the land.
14. Honesty; a good leader must refrain from lying, cheating or stealing. He should never bear testimony of falsehood. He should always tell the truth irrespective of whether it affects him, relative, friend or enemy.
15. Kindness; the leader should always feel sympathetic to the aggrieved members of the state. He must extend help to the poor, old, young and other feeble members of the society and he should always be with them both in time of joy and sorrow.
16. Power; a good leader should have power to control the people and cope with situations bravely enough to implement tough decisions.
17. Forgiveness; a good leader should be forgiving to those who annoy him just as Allah forgives the sins of His servants. **Q (15:85)**says; *“So forgive! O Muhammad with a gracious forgiveness.”*

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A LEADER

1. Establishing justice; Q 57:25 and 38:26
2. Provision of good service; by being simple and working for the good of the people.
3. Enforcing Islamic practices like prayer, fasting, zakat, dressing, forbidding evil e.t.c Q 22:4
4. Enforcing fair judgement and resolve cases without bias.
5. Maintenance of internal security and stability in the state.
6. Enforcing punishments as prescribed by sharia and dealing with those who go against it.
7. Formulating Ta’azir punishments in absence of divine law.
8. Supervising state affairs and the working of the state officials.
9. Appointing competent and honest officials in offices of responsibility and on merit.
10. Establishing a sound financial administration to create a self-sustaining economy by ensuring the payment of zakat.
11. Guarding the territorial boundaries of the Islamic state against external aggression.
12. Fighting the critics of Islam but after failing to embrace Islam.
13. Promoting fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, expression, work e.t.c
14. Seeking consul from his subjects to avoid working as a dictator.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LED (CITIZENS)

1. Electing the head of state from the best qualified candidates on the basis of faith, fitness and proven past services Q 4:58
2. Swearing an oath of allegiance by all Muslim men to the ruler.
3. Obeying the ruler and his officials as per Q 4:59.
4. Supervising state affairs and those in authority using their best means.
5. Deposing ‘corrupt’ rulers who misuse their authority.
6. Being law-abiding citizens as per Q 7:85 unless war is waged against them.
7. Inviting towards good and forbidding evil Q 5:3.
8. Defending their state against external invasion.
9. Fighting oppressive and dictatorial rule in the land.
10. Honouring one another’s life and property just like the Prophet PBUH said in his farewell speech.
11. Paying zakat and other dues necessary to run the state.

THE NATURE, ROLES AND DUTIES OF AN ISLAMIC GOVERNMENT

THE NATURE OF AN ISLAMIC GOVERNMENT

1. The Islamic state is a universal community based on complete equality, regardless of considerations of race, colour and ancestry.
2. According to the holy Qur'an, Islam is not only a religion but also a unifying social bond under the Islamic state.
3. Under the Islamic state, believers are a single community distinct from other people because they believe in one God and in His Messenger, Muhammad.
4. The Islamic state however, recognizes the presence of people of other faith and must co-exist in peace and harmony as fellow citizens.
5. Furthermore, in expanding its territories, the conquered people should not be regarded as people of the new territories as subjects but as citizens.
6. The Islamic state is perceived as a vehicle of achieving order and security in the community, and implementing the basic mission of Islam. That is commanding good and forbidding evil.
7. The main duty of the Islamic state is to enforce sharia and it is a necessity only if it can fulfill this purpose.
8. Protecting the faith and implementing the law of Islam is a ***fundamental duty of the state*** as we read to this effect, in the **Qur'an (3:110)**;

"You are the best Ummah created for mankind. You command good and you forbid evil and you believe in Allah."

9. In a Muslim state, the holy Qur'an is the supreme law of the land. It is the source of laws which the ruler and other people in authority must use.
10. Islam proposes a welfare state and this is known from the overall emphasis in the Qur'an and the Sunna on helping the helpless, the needy and the poor. The Qur'an thus speaks plainly of a basic right when it stipulates:

Q (51:19) *"And in their wealth there is a right for the one who asks and the destitute"*

The prophet PBUH said; *"He whom God has made an administrator over the affairs of Muslims but remains indifferent to their needs and their poverty, God will also be indifferent to his needs and poverty."*

11. It is not only the state in Islam but also the individuals who must play their role in community's welfare efforts by giving what they can of their property and service to those who need help. The Qur'an thus condemns those who refuse to grant a small kindness when they can easily afford it:

Allah says in **Q (107:4)**; *"Woe to those worshippers who neglect their prayer, who make a show, yet refuse a small kindness".*

12. Authority in the Islamic state is entrusted in the office of the **Imam**. He is the central figure in the state who is entrusted by the community with general authority by virtue of the contract of representation upon his election.

13. The *Imam* then delegates his power to other officers of state, ministers, governors and judges, all of whom represent him in their various capacities.
14. With the exception of judges whose position in respect of enforcing the sharia is parallel to that of the Imam himself, all other officials act in effect as delegates and assistants to the head of state.
15. In an Islamic state, the head of the state is both a political and spiritual leader. In performing his duties, the leader considers himself responsible to Allah first and then execute his political authority in accordance with the Islamic law.
16. The Islamic state is also a consultative state. It is bound by the requirement of consultation and due regard for the wishes of the community and the general consensus of the advisory council.
The prophet PBUH said; *“To consult is an essential part of religion. Whoever does not have anything good to say should keep quiet”*
17. The powers of the head of state are also limited by reference to the fact that he acts in the capacity of the trustee of both God and the community of which he is an employee and representative.
18. In an Islamic state, the community is entitled to depose the head of state in the event of a serious breach of trust, open deviation from the Sharia, or loss of capacity to discharge his duties.
19. Furthermore, government officials, including the head of state, are subject to the rule of law in precisely the same way as other members of the community. They are accountable for their conduct and enjoy no special immunity or privilege before the court of justice.
20. The head of state is elected by the community through consultation, nomination and pledge of allegiance.

ROLES AND DUTIES OF THE ISLAMIC GOVERNMENT

1. It is charged with enforcing fair judgement and forbidding evil.
Allah says in **Q 3:110**; *“You are the best nation that has ever been raised up for mankind. You enjoin justice and forbid evil.”*
2. It is responsible for the welfare of the needy and poor member of community.
Allah says in **Q 51:19**; *“...they used to sleep but little ... and in their wealth was a due to share to the beggar and to him who is proud to beg.”*
3. It liable for promoting the teachings of the holy Qur’an and the Sunna of Prophet Muhammad PBUH.
Allah in **Q 4:59** states; *“O believers! Obey Allah and obey the apostle and those in authority among you. Should you differ in anything refer it to Allah and His messenger...”*
4. It should promote the rule of law (democracy) and absence of despotism in the land and ensure that the rights of the ruled take part in the management of their public affairs in a way that is consistent with national interest.
5. It should manage freedom of opinion, of belief, of education, of ownership and personal freedom. Personal freedom includes freedom of movement, right to security and right to shelter.

6. It is responsible for promoting equality of all mankind without discrimination, based on sex, ethnic origin, language or creed. That means that people in the same circumstances must be judged by the same rules.

The prophet said: *“Your God is one; your father is one; the red are not preferred to the black, nor the Arabs to non-Arabs, except in piety.”*

7. Protection of the faith is one of the responsibilities of the Islamic state. This implies that all state powers must not act in contrary with Tawheed or the values drawn from it.

8. Protection of life is another duty of the Islamic state. Rulers are directly responsible for protecting human life and capital punishments must be safeguarded severely and with complicated reviews.

9. The state must take full responsibility for providing health and education to its citizens which must be done under socially accepted standards, approved by society.

10. It should honour treaties with other states and with the non-Muslims and fight those who break agreements with it.

Allah says in Q (9:4); *“Proclaim a woeful punishment to the unbelievers except those idolaters who have fully honoured their treaties with you and aided none against you.”*

11. The government is responsible for developing and exploiting natural resources of the state both in the interests of the present and future generations.

12. It has the obligation to develop the country’s economy organizing competitive markets and production centres. It must also ensure production of lawful commodities and establishment of infrastructures like roads.

13. The government is responsible for protecting the property of its citizens and guarantee them rights to own homes, productive assets and developing their human capital.

14. Furthermore, the government must ensure ribah that does not exist in the land because it is a form of exploiting the poor. Therefore, zakat collection must be among its cardinal duties.

15. It is further supposed to keep the territorial integrity of the nation and ward off external aggression.

RIGHTS OF NON-MUSLIMS IN AN ISLAMIC STATE

1. The right to life and honour; Islam regards the life of a non-Muslim as sacred as that of a Muslim. He cannot be deprived of his right to life save in accordance with sharia and If he suffers the loss of life or property at the hands of a Muslim, the offender will be dealt with in accordance with the law and he will have to make good for that.

The prophet PBUH said; *“He who wrongs a man to whom a covenant has been given or burdens him above his capacity, I shall advocate against him on the Day of Judgement*

2. A Muslim can neither torture a non-Muslim nor can he insult him in any way.

The Prophet is reported to have said: *“He who tortures a non-Muslim is like the one who has frustrated me. I shall frustrate against him on the Day of Judgment who has counteracted him.”*



3. Islam allows its non-Muslims the freedom of movement and profession but they are restricted from going to certain places such as mosques and settling in holy places. Such restrictions are also necessary from the law and order point of view because if non-Muslims enter the sanctuaries of Muslims and something unusual happens, it will injure the feelings of one another and jeopardize their cordial relations.
4. Similarly, they are also permitted to visit foreign countries in connection with their business activities subject to certain conditions common for all. They are, however, not allowed to visit a state or states hostile to the Islamic state.
5. They are entitled to ransom. If a non-Muslim living in a Muslim state is held captive, he must be ransomed by the Islamic state just as it can do to its Muslim citizens.
6. Islam does not permit the rulers of the Islamic state to detain or arrest a non-Muslim citizen unless he actually breaks the law of the land.
7. Islam grants non-Muslims the right to education using their own beliefs. They are also allowed to stick to their ancient cultural patterns and preserving their native languages.
8. Like its Muslim citizens, the Islamic state guarantees to the non-Muslim citizens the right to family and its secrecy. No one can enter their houses without their permission.
9. Likewise, non-Muslims have been given a choice to get their civil cases decided either according to the Islamic law or according to their own personal laws. Legal relations among themselves shall be governed by the law of their own religion unless if they opt for sharia.
However, in punishing the crimes against humanity, such as adultery, murder, theft, robbery, assault e.t.c, the same law was applicable to all and sundry in the state.
10. Islam does not impose its own way of life or faith on others because according to the teachings of Qur'an "there is no compulsion in religion". However, this does not mean that Muslims should not preach Islam. Muslims may invite non-Muslims to the fold of Islam but in a decent, cultured and behaving manner. They are, however, forbidden to compel others to embrace Islam. It follows that non-Muslim minorities of the Islamic state can freely and fearlessly perform their religious ceremonies in places of their worship.
11. Likewise, non-Muslims are allowed to perform their rituals within the places of their worship. In towns where they are in majority, they may also perform their religious functions outside their churches and synagogues. They have also been given the liberty to beat their trumpets for religious ends any time in the day or night but must respect Muslim prayer time.
12. In fact, in safeguarding the rights of non-Muslims, Islam has given them such liberal concessions as to give them the liberty of maintaining even those practices which are forbidden to Muslims. For example, the consumption of intoxicants is forbidden to Muslims but the non-Muslims have the liberty not only of consumption but also of its manufacture.
13. Islam provides equal opportunities to its non-Muslim citizens in the economic field of their life. They are given the freedom to adopt any profession subject to the common law of the country. However, they cannot practice Ribah which is prohibited for all and sundry in the Islamic state.



14. It is important to note that if any of the non-Muslims becomes destitute, crippled or sick, he has as much claims on the state treasury as any other Muslim.
15. A non-Muslim citizen of the Islamic state cannot offer his services for any political office for which he is not fit just as a Muslim is in the same state. Nor of course, a non-Muslim can be overburdened with such responsibility because political services in the Sharia are not their rights.
16. Non-Muslims have a right to fair representation in the legislative assemblies. Trustworthy persons from among the non-Muslims may also be entrusted with other important responsibilities that involve no matter of belief of the Muslim population. In fact, the most amazing feature of the Abbasid caliphate has been the preponderant number of non-Muslims in the different departments of the state.
17. What the Islamic state demands of the non-Muslims is loyalty to the state in the matter of its stability and law and order. Their loyalty to the state is like that of the Muslim citizens. Hence their loyalty should not be suspected until otherwise proved.

QUR'ANIC TEACHINGS ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. International relations refers to how countries and people of the world relate with each other. It includes matters such as foreign policies, boundary disputes, immigration and travel regulations and international agreements.
2. Islam advocates for the prevalence of international peace and harmony so as to remove any possibility of friction and wars. Allah says in **Q (8:72)**;

“Those that have embraced the faith and migrated and fought for the cause of Allah with their wealth and their persons, and those that sheltered and helped them, shall be friends to each other.”

3. Islam promotes international peace because all peoples of the world are the same and are brothers and sisters after being created from a single soul.

Allah says in **Q (4:1)**; *“O men! Have fear of your Lord, who created you from a single soul. From that soul He created its mates and through them He bestrewed the earth with countless men and women.”*

4. Another justification for harmonious international relations is found in **Q (49:10)**;

“The believers are nothing else than brothers. So make reconciliation between your brothers and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy.”

5. The Prophet PBUH emphasized the importance of international reconciliation during his farewell speech. In his remarks, he underlined that all people are equal before Allah irrespective of colour.

“O mankind! Your Lord is one and your father is one. You all descended from Adam and Adam was created from earth. He who is most honoured among you in the sight of Allah is the most upright. No Arab is superior to a non-Arab, nor a black to a white or a white to a black, except by piety.”

CAUSES OF INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS

1. Feeling of national pride and superiority. Some countries are militarily and economically superior to others which forces them to pursue aggressive policies against the weak ones.
2. Domination of one group by another in domestic sphere or of one people by another in the international sphere is a significant cause of international conflicts.
3. The attempt by one nation to take undue advantage of the weakness of other nations e.g Israel against Pakistan, Russia against Ukraine.
4. International dislikes and jealousies cause international conflicts e.g countries like U.S.A and Israel do not believe in the existence of Muslim countries and they are envious of their progress and Islam.
5. Failure on part of some countries to honour international agreements with other countries.
6. Unsatisfactory policies between governments and their subjects which create civil wars in their countries.
7. Political institutions that are unable to manage differing group interests peacefully, to provide adequate guarantees of group protection, or to accommodate growing demands for political participation, can fracture societies.
8. Balance of power in the world like the need to keep the top position as 'super power' has landed USA and North Korea in conflict almost on verge of war while Russia and USA have remained in conflict for decades.
9. Advancement in technology. Countries like North Korea have developed modern technology that has helped them to produce nuclear weapons and therefore they feel strong enough to fight the 'super powers' of the world.
10. Colonial legacy; colonial masters sowed seeds of hatred

ISLAMIC SOLUTIONS TO CURRENT INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS

1. Islam teaches equality of all mankind. Allah says in Q (49:13);
"O mankind! Indeed We created you from a male and female, and have made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Indeed the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous. Indeed Allah is Knowing and Acquainted."

From the above verse, Islam eliminates the false belief of superiority of one nation over the other and the attitude of racial prejudice that are sources of international conflicts.

2. It further prohibits Muslims from deriding (ridiculing) one another. This means that a developed country or 'super power' should not despise another nation because it may be that the nation despised today may lead the other tomorrow.
3. In case of breakout of international conflict or war, Islam advocates for reconciliation. So it is better to solve the conflict amicably before resorting to war.

Allah says in Q (49:11); *"The believers are nothing else than brothers. So make reconciliation between your brothers and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy."*

4. Islam encourages Muslims to honour people's lives and property. This condemns any form of human exploitation that causes international conflicts.

Allah says in **Q (2:189)**; *“Fight for the sake of Allah those that fight against you but do not be aggressive. Allah does not love the aggressors.”*

5. Furthermore, Islam encourages believers to help one another in righteousness and piety but not to help each other in sin and transgression. If this is observed, it would bring about international peace.

6. Islam insists on the observance of international treaties and adherence to them. Such treaties should not only be kept with those who are party to them but also with their allies.

Allah says in **Q (9:1)**; *“A declaration of immunity by Allah and His apostle to the idolaters with whom you have made agreement.”*

7. In situations where the believers are attacked, Allah grants Muslims to take up arms and fight back. He says in **Q (22:39)**; *“Permission is hereby given to those who are attacked because they have been wronged.”*

8. An Islamic state is prohibited from making war upon the allies of a friendly country even when such allies form part of an enemy empire provided they do not directly attack Islam.

9. Once war is declared, care must be taken to avoid injuring innocent people including women, children, nurses and the old. Only active combatants should be killed.

10. Islam emphasizes that war should be fought only if there is an objective of removing obstacles in the spread of Islam or for any genuine reason sanctioned by the Prophet PBUH.

11. During the course of war, unnecessary damage must be avoided such as destroying crops, trees and buildings unless the enemy absolutely uses them as cover places.

12. Proposals of truce from any of the warring party should not be rejected on grounds of suspicion that it is acting dishonestly or buying time so long as it is not apparent.

Allah says in **Q (8:61)**; *“If they insist on peace, make peace with them and put your trust in Allah. Surely Allah is the Hearing the Knowing. Should they seek to deceive you, Allah is all-sufficient for you.”*

13. However, if one party violates the agreement, Islam says that they should be fought.

Allah says in **Q (8:56)**; *“If you fear treachery from any of your allies, you may throw back to them their treaty fairly. Allah does not love the treacherous.”*

14. Islam advocates for the formation of an international body like the United Nations to arbitrate between the warring nations by bringing them into peaceful reconciliation.

15. Furthermore, during the negotiations, countries which are not part of the conflict should act as mediators but not to involve in the conflict or to side with one party.

16. Finally, Islam stresses good service by governments to their subjects and ensuring prosperity for all. This is intended to minimize cases of oppression that usually lead to wars.

THE FIGHT AGAINST OPPRESSION AND AGGRESSION

1. Oppression means exercising authority or power in a cruel or unjust manner while aggression means violent conduct towards a person or group of persons or nation. Islam does not tolerate any form of harassment and hostility because they are forms of tyranny.
2. Various kinds of oppression include insulting, degrading, abusing or imprisoning a person; also accusing a person falsely or hurting a person physically. The Noble Quran says in **(16:90)**;

“Allah commands justice, good conduct, and tolerance to kith and kin, and He forbids immorality, bad conduct and oppression.”

The Prophet said narrating from Allah: *“My servants, I have made oppression unlawful for Me and unlawful for you, so do not commit oppression against one another.” (Muslim)*

3. Another form of oppression is to usurp someone’s property or to take it out without the owner’s permission, or not to return the rights of it to its owner etc.
4. Similarly, another way of usurping a right is to forcefully take up a position reserved for someone else.

The Prophet PBUH said: *“No doubt! Your blood, your properties, and your honor are sacred to one another like the sanctity of this day of yours, in this sacred town (Mecca) of yours, in this month of yours.”*

The Prophet repeated this statement again and again. After that he raised his head and said, *‘O Allah! Haven't I conveyed Your Message to them? Haven't I conveyed Your Message to them?’*

5. While describing a bankrupt person on the day of judgement, the prophet PBUH said that he is an oppressor who threw abuses upon others, brought calumny (defamation) against others and unlawfully consumed the wealth of others and shed the blood of others and beat others.
6. Helping an oppressor in any way whatsoever is unlawful e.g. to hand over a cane to someone so that he can beat an innocent person, or to help in any way to confine him in a specified space. Both are equally responsible for the act of injustice.
7. There is no difference between the actual oppressor and the one who support him because it is possible that if there is no one to assist the oppressor he may not be able to oppress.
8. The Holy Quran has highlighted the root causes of oppression and tyranny. Allah says in **Qur’an (42:27)**;

“And if Allah were to enlarge the provision for His servants, they would have committed tyranny throughout the earth. But He sends down in an amount which He wills...”

He also says in **Q (96:6-8)**; *“Indeed, man transgresses all bounds, because he sees himself self-sufficient. Verily, to your Lord is the return of all.”*

From the above two verses, wealth is one of the causes of oppression. The rich oppress the poor and needy because they think they are self-sufficient and expect nothing from them.

9. In order to fight against oppression and aggression, the prophet PBUH taught us the following prayer;

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“In the name of Allah, my Lord, I seek refuge in You from falling into error or going astray, or wrongdoing others or being wronged, and from behaving or being treated in an ignorant manner.”

10. The prophet PBUH further condemned oppression by warning believers of a punishment on the Day of Judgment. He said;

“Whoever has wronged his brother, should ask for his pardon before his death, as in the Hereafter there will be neither a Dinar nor a Dirham. He should secure pardon in this life before some of his good deeds are taken and paid to his brother, or, if he has done no good deeds, some of the bad deeds of his brother are taken to be loaded on him in the Hereafter (Bukhari)

FORMS OF OPPRESSION AND AGGRESSION

1. Fighting; in Islam fighting is openly forbidden as a form of harassing and insulting a person. Fighting is allowed only in instances of combating oppression and the tyranny of non-Muslims.

Allah says in Q (22:39);

“Permission [to fight] has been given to those who are being fought, because they have been oppressed. And indeed, Allah is competent to give them victory.”

2. Threatening With a Weapon: Pointing a piece of iron, such as a dagger, knife, sword, or a gun at a person, even in fun, has the effect of creating grief and fear. It also puts the person in danger so it is forbidden for a Muslim to frighten another person, or put him at risk. The prophet PBUH said;

“He who points a weapon towards his brother, the angels invoke curse upon him even if he is his real brother.” (Muslim)

3. Intimidation: This is an act of threatening someone else and frightening that person enough to make him or her do what the oppressor wants. The Messenger of Allah PBUH said:

“Whoever points at his brother with a piece of iron, the angels will curse him until he stops it, even if it is his brother through his father and mother.”

4. Verbal oppression: This includes name calling, abusing, dishonoring, cursing, mocking, taunting, teasing and verbal threats etc. It also involves verbal threats of violence against someone's personal property.

5. Dishonouring: It is not permissible to disgrace or humiliate anyone even a sinner. Prophet PBUH said;

“The most prevalent kind of usury is going to lengths in talking unjustly against a Muslim's honour.”

If someone is abused then he is allowed to pay back but should not exceed the limits. Exceeding the limits may be uttering the bad words twice. So the oppressed one becomes the oppressor. The prophet PBUH said;

“When two persons indulge in hurling (abusing) one another, it would be the first one who is a sinner so long as the oppressed does not transgress the limits.”

He also said; *“The most hated man in the Sight of Allah is the one who is the most quarrelsome of the opponents.” (Bukhari)*

However, it is highly appreciated that a person forgives and does not take revenge by abusing back. The prophet PBUH said;

“The believer, who mixes with people and endures patiently their hurtful words, is better than the person who does not mix with people nor show patience under their abuse.” (Bukhari)

He also said: *“And if a man abuses and shames you for something which he finds in you, then do not shame him for something which you find in him; he will bear the evil consequences for it.”* (Abu Dawud)

6. Cursing: This is a form of oppression which involves blaspheming a person. The Holy prophet did not allow cursing even if it is an animal.

The Messenger of Allah said; *“A true believer should not be an invoker of curse.”* (Muslim)

7. Mocking: It is not permissible in Islam to make fun of someone’s actions, traits or habits in a way that people find it funny and laugh. Whether it is done verbally or by actions or gestures, there is no doubt that such a behavior is intolerable. Mimicking by actions or gestures is more aversive than verbal mocking, because it contains more intense scorn.

8. Taunting: This means to provoke someone with insulting remarks or reproach (blame) someone in a disrespectful way. To make jokes or taunt the Prophet and Muslims was the act of the unbelievers of Mecca in the Prophet's times. The Messenger of Allah PBUH observed:

“He who believes in Allah and the Last Day should either utter good words or better keep silence; and he who believes in Allah and the Last Day should treat his neighbor with kindness.” (Muslim)

9. Harshness: Islam strongly condemns coarseness and violence but gentleness, mercy and kindness are its essence. Allah says in the Glorious Quran (3:159);

“And by the Mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from you.”

10. Misconduct: To behave in an improper, immoral or unlawful manner is called misconduct and it is not allowed in Islam.

The messenger of Allah PBUH said: *“The most perfect believers are those having the finest character.”* (Abu Dawud)

He also said; *“The worst people are those whom the people desert or leave in order to save themselves from their dirty language or from their transgression.”* (Bukhari)

11. Obscenity: This originates from fierceness and shamefulfulness. It is either motivated by the intention of hurting others or is a practice acquired from socializing with evil and immoral people, who are accustomed to insulting others. Whatever the case, Allah The Almighty has forbidden crude language in the verse Q (7:33);

“Say: the things that my Lord has indeed forbidden are: shameful deeds, whether open or secret; sins and trespasses against truth or reason; assigning of partners to Allah, for which He has given no authority; and saying things about Allah of which you have no knowledge.”

12. To Remind Someone of a Favor: This is normally done by niggard (miser) and conceited/arrogant people who feel that by doing a favour to someone, they have done something great. This torments the person being given hence subjecting him to oppression and aggression. The Holy Prophet PBUH said:

“Allah will not talk to three types of people on the Day of Judgment: the one who gives people things in order to remind them of his favors upon them...” (Muslim)

13. Social alienation: This means distancing of people from each other or boycotting them. This shows a lack of sympathy which oppresses the one being boycotted unless it is done as a Ta’aziir punishment. Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said:

“It is not permissible for a Muslim to have estranged relations with his brother beyond three nights, the one turning one way and the other turning the other way when they meet; the better of the two is one who is the first to give a greeting (salaam).” (Muslim)

This hadith highlights the merit of Salam (salutation), a specific and easy way for resuming the relation, because it paves the way for talk and reconciliation.

14. Character Assassination: This refers to making false and damaging statements about someone either due to hostility, hatred, malice or envy. This is totally forbidden in Islam.

Allah says **Q (18:4)**; *“And those who accuse chaste women, and not produce four witnesses, flog them with eighty stripes, and reject their testimony forever. They indeed are the liars.”*

15. Suspicion: This means thinking ill of people or uttering ill about them. As it is prohibited for us to talk to others about people’s defects, it is not lawful to us to think ill of them. The believer should think well of others, presume the best and keep away from doubt and suspicion that have no base, because Allah says in **(Quran: 49:12)**:

“O, you who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin.”

Avoiding suspicion is one of the means of peace of mind, happiness and tranquility, because suspicion encourages one to search and try to find out, and it may lead to spying, and that is usually accompanied by depression, anxiety and distress.

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said; *“Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the worst of false tales.”(Muslim)*

16. Arrogance: The prophet PBUH defined arrogance as “contempt of people and a degrading of the truth”. Arrogance is normally caused by delusion (misunderstanding) i.e when every human being has rejected the truth that was shown to him, then oppression and falsehood prevails. As long as people do not unite on the way of truth, they will not unite on falsehood, and at that time the strongest one will enforce his will. The results of this would be oppression, terrorism, hostility, and sanctity of people’s honours and rights.

17. Envy (Hasad): This refers to the feeling that a person desires for the destruction or removal of a blessing that another person has, a destruction which the bearer of this feeling would himself carry out if he had the power to.

This is quite different to wishing such blessings for one while not desiring for them to be removed from others, because that is, indeed, a positive and commendable wish that leads to contest.

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: *“And two will never be gathered in the heart of a believer: Faith and envy”*

Envy (Ḥasad) is the most destructive emotion which a person may have towards his fellow human being. It causes him to wish evil for others and to be happy when calamity befalls them. The Prophet PBUH said;

“Avoid suspicion, for suspicion is the gravest lie in talk and do not be inquisitive about one another and do not spy upon one another and do not feel envy with the other, and nurse no malice, and nurse no aversion and hostility against one another. And be fellow-brothers and servants of Allah.” (Muslim)

HOW DOES ISLAM ATTEMPT TO FIGHT OPPRESSION AND AGGRESSION?

1. Prompting the Concept of believing in the hereafter. The concept of believing in the hereafter plays a significant role for preventing oppression. According to this belief Allah will resurrect all human beings after their death, and He will gather them from their graves to hold them answerable for their deeds in this world.

On the Day of Judgment, Allah will issue verdicts on His slaves. He will reward the maltreated for his sufferings and punish the oppressor for his injustice. The Prophet said:

“No pain, hardship, sickness or grief befalls a believer, not even worry that befalls him, but some of his bad deeds will be expiated (compensated).” (Muslim).

Allah says in Q (50:18); *“Not a word does he utter but there is a watchman by him, ready to note it.”*

He also says in Q (17:36); *“Do not follow what you do not know. Surely, the hearing, sight and heart, about all these you shall be questioned!”*

2. Excellent Politeness and Forgiveness: In Islam, releasing the desire to punish someone for an offense is a state of grace. The Holy Quran says in (41:34):

“Good and evil deeds are alike. Requite evil with good and he, between whom and you is enmity, will become your dearest friend. But none will attain this save those who endure with fortitude and truly fortunate.”

That’s why Allah has ordered the Muslims to respond kindly and gently, because sometimes this principle, gentleness and kindness can change your peer into the closest friend.

3. Reconciling: Allah commands making peace between Muslims that fight each other. The Messenger of Allah said:

“He is not a liar who reconciles between people, saying good things and conveying good things.” (Muslim)

He also said: *“Do not hate one another, do not envy one another, and do not turn away from one another. Be, O slaves of Allah, brothers. It is not permissible for a Muslim to forsake his brother for more than three days.”* (Muslim)

4. Reporting to concerned Authority: Telling someone of being oppressed or harassed is also a best way for reducing its frequency. This may include parents, a teacher, Qadhi, an organization, police or anyone who can play an influential role for preventing it.

Allah's Apostle said; *“Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or he is an oppressed one.”* People asked, ‘O Allah's Apostle! It is all right to help him if he is oppressed, but how should we help him if he is an oppressor?’ The Prophet PBUH said, ‘By preventing him from oppressing others.’ (Bukhari)

5. Following the Sunna of Prophet Muhammad PBUH because Allah said that we have got a good example in the messenger of Allah.

He says in **Q (33:21)**; *“You have a good example in Allah’s apostle for anyone who looks to Allah and the last day.”*

6. Obedience to authority. When one obeys his authority, he will develop fear for oppression to others because they have power to punish him. Allah says in **Qur’an 4:59**;

“O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the messenger and those in authority among you and if you differ in anything, refer it to Allah and His messenger.”

7. Islam teaches that in trying to do business, one should not be aggressive and cause harm to others e.g building a noisy factory in the middle of a residential area or preventing access to natural resources e.g. beaches or waterways, roads and others.

8. It encourages her followers to be mindful of what we say to others and the Prophet PBUH said that if we do not have what to say, we should keep quiet. This can eliminate verbal oppression.

9. Promoting and spreading salaam. The prophet PBUH is reported to have said that if we spread salaam among ourselves we shall attain love of one another.

10. Islam encourages Muslims to honour people’s lives and property. This condemns any form of human exploitation, aggression and oppression. Allah says in **Q (2:189)**;

“Fight for the sake of Allah those that fight against you but do not be aggressive. Allah does not love the aggressors.”

11. Islam does not condemn oppression on Muslims only but also on people of other faith. Their lives and property are as sacred as those of the Muslims.

12. It further prohibits Muslims from deriding (ridiculing) one another. This means that a rich should not despise a poor/needy one because it may that the poor/needy despised today may be better than the rich tomorrow.

13. Islam introduced the institution of zakat to cleanse the hearts of the rich of all kinds of mischiefs such as cruelty, greed that would cause envy and jealousy from the poor.

14. In addition, zakat imparts a wisdom of responsibility in the giver and suppresses in him the tendencies of arrogance, hence reducing oppression in the community.

15. Islam warns of a strong punishment for the oppressors and aggressors. The Prophet PBUH said that once an oppressor dies without pardon from the oppressed, his good deeds will be paid to one he oppressed and if he does not have them, he will be given more bad deeds from his victim.

16. Islam promotes the principle of equality of mankind, having been created from a single pair of male and female, and that all people are equal in the sight of Allah save for the most righteous. Therefore, one cannot oppress the other based on prejudices like language, colour, tribe, status, wealth and others.

17. Islam prohibits ribah because it is considered as tool of oppression and a means to unjustly take others money by exploiting their needs and circumstances. Hence it forbidspromotes Charity as an alternative.

18. Furthermore, under Islamic brotherhood, Muslims are prohibited from looking down upon others with contempt, seeking faults in and being unduly suspicious of one another.

Allah says in Q (49:12); *“O you who believe! Avoid suspicion as much as possible; for suspicion in some cases is a sin. And do not spy on each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? No, you would abhor (detest) it...”*

From the above verse, vices such as defamation, scoffing, nicknaming, backbiting, spying and suspicion are condemned because they are part of oppression and aggression.

19. Under the Islamic economic system, Islam also fights oppression and aggression by declaring that all the sources of wealth belong to Allah and as such no single class of people is justified to claim exclusive rights over them and thus oppress others using them or the wealth from them.

Allah says in Q (3:189); *“And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and Allah has power over all things.”*

20. Islam allows divorce partly to fight against aggression in marriage arising from cruelty of one partner against the other. If one partner is constantly cruel to another, instead of hurting each other if they are forced to stay together, Islam allows them to separate.

21. Likewise, Islam looks at Zina as one form of oppression, where the adulterer or adulteress violates the virginal purity of the non-adulteress or non-adulterer. Therefore, Allah says in **Qur’an (24:36)**;

“Unclean women are for unclean men, and unclean men for unclean women. But for good women are for good men and good men for good women...”

22. Islam strongly recommends justice as an essentially fundamental characteristic a leader must possess to enable him avoid oppressive policies. Allah Ordered in **Qur’an (5:8)**;

“O you who believe! Be committed witnesses for Allah in equity, and do not allow your hatred for other men to turn you away from justice. Deal justly, justice is nearer to piety...”

Even in the circumstances where judgment goes against one’s interest, Islam commands a leader to be fair and just. This is a clear solution to oppression and aggression.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF JIHAD

1. Jihad is a religious war waged against the enemies of the mission of Prophet Muhammad PBUH enjoined purposely for the advancement of Islam and repelling evil from society.
2. The term jihad appears forty one times in the Qur'an and frequently in the idiomatic expression 'striving in the way of Allah.'
3. In modern times, the term jihad simply means striving to live a moral and virtuous life, spreading Islam as well as fighting injustice and oppression.
4. Western countries especially America and her allies understand jihad as 'military confrontations by Muslim militias against non-Muslims.' Such militias are branded 'Fundamentalists or Fanatics'
5. A person who engages in jihad is called a Mujahid and if they are many they are called Mujahidin.
6. Jihad is an important religious duty for all Muslims and some Sunni scholars refer to it as the sixth pillar of Islam, though this is not true. Muslim scholars have divided jihad into various types.
7. Firstly, Jihad Nafsi (Jihad of the heart): This is the form of jihad in which one guards himself against the devil and its temptations towards evil.
8. This form of jihad involves putting Allah and His messenger ahead of our loved ones, wealth, worldly ambitions and our lives. It is regarded as the greater jihad. Allah says in **Qur'an 2:218**;
"Those that have embraced the faith and those that have left their land and fought for the cause of Allah, may hope for Allah's mercy..."
9. Secondly, Jihad in the cause of Allah (Jihad fi-sabiil-LLAH): This is the use of one's wealth and life to spread or defend the Islamic faith. Allah says in **Q (49:15)**;
"The true believers are those who have faith in Allah and His apostle and never doubt; and who fight in His cause with their wealth and persons. Such are the truthful ones."
 He also says in **Q (61:10-12)**;
"O believers! Shall I point out to you a bargain that will save you from a woeful scourge? Have faith in Allah and His apostle and fight for His cause with your wealth and persons...?"
10. Thirdly, Jihad by one's hand (Jihad bil-yad): This is the use of one's hand to combat evil and establish justice in the land.
11. Islam allows physical jihad which involves the use of physical force by the Muslims to defend themselves against oppression by the enemies of Allah, His messenger, mission and the Muslim Ummah at large. Allah says in **Q (2:190)**;
"Fight for the sake of Allah those that fight you but do not be aggressive. Allah does not love the aggressors."
12. Allah commands Muslims to lead peaceful lives and not to transgress against anyone. If they are persecuted and oppressed, Allah allows them to migrate in search of peace in a tolerant place. Allah says in **Q (2:218)**;
"Those that have embraced the faith and those that have left their land and fought for the cause of Allah, may hope for Allah's mercy..."

13. If Muslims cannot migrate, then Allah allows them to defend themselves against oppression by fighting those who fight against them. Allah says in Q (22:39-40);

“Permission is hereby given to those who are attacked because they have been wronged. Allah has power to grant them victory; those who have been unjustly driven from their homes only because they said ‘our Lord is Allah...’”

14. In Islam, the sincere believers are those who are anxious to sacrifice their lives and wealth in the way of Allah and fight against oppression. Allah says in Q (9:112);

“Those that repent and those that serve Allah and praise Him; those that fast and those that kneel and prostrate; those that enjoin justice, forbid evil and observe the commandments of Allah shall be richly rewarded.”

15. When jihad becomes incumbent upon Muslims and remain indifferent, they are similar Bedouin Arabs who claimed to have faith but had no true and complete faith in their hearts.

16. If Muslims abandon jihad, it is a source of destruction both in this life and hereafter because Allah will deny them His mercy.

17. Jihad is not considered a personal duty but only a general duty which, if accomplished by a sufficient number, the rest will not be condemned for the neglect of that duty. Thus, the administration of jihad is a duty of administration in power.

RULES GOVERNING JIHAD

1. Jihad should be pronounced by the highest ranking office of the Muslim state i.e Office of Commander-in-Chief of the Muslim army (Amir al-Mumin).

2. Before the Muslim Ummah wages war in the cause of Allah or against any kind of evil, there must be justification for it.

3. The justification may be against oppression or aggression by non-Muslims attacking the Islamic state or standing in the way of spreading Islam or fighting sharia.

Allah says in Q (2:190); *“Fight for the sake of Allah those that fight you but do not be aggressive. Allah does not love the aggressors.”*

4. In case of antagonism, where a foreign country attacks a Muslim country, jihad is justified for self-defense.

5. Jihad is allowed in case of dishonouring treaties signed thereby disrupting peace in the land as Allah says in Q (49:9);

“If two parties of believers take up arms against each other, make peace between them. If either of them commits aggression against the other, fight the aggressor until they submit to Allah’s judgement. When they submit, make peace between them in equity and justice...”

6. Jihad is allowed in case of resistance against the spread of Islam or performance of Islamic principles e.g adhan, prayer, pilgrimage.

7. Jihad should be resorted to as the last resort. All possible opportunities should be given to peaceful negotiations.

8. While fighting, Muslims should keep within the limits of Islam e.g fighting only the active combatants.
9. Before the war, Muslims should be ready and well prepared for it e.g having enough army and equipment. Allah says in **Q (8:60)**;
“Let the unbelievers not think that they will escape. They do not have the power to do so. Muster (gather) against them all men and cavalry at your disposal so that you may strike terror into the enemies of Allah and your enemy...”
 The prophet PBUH said; *“And equip yourselves against them with much force as you can. Behold! Power lies in archery. Behold! Power lies in shooting.”*
10. The fighters must exercise mercy and kindness to the captives e.g they should be allowed to embrace Islam if they wish to, they should be released if they pay ransom or they should be allowed to stay if they prefer remaining under the Islamic state.
11. Patience is very vital in fighting jihad. This is got from the prophet’s experience in the various battles like Badr and Uhud.
12. Proposals of truce from any of the warring party should not be rejected on grounds of suspicion that it is acting dishonestly or buying time so long as it is not apparent. Allah says in **Q (8:61)**;
“If they insist on peace, make peace with them and put your trust in Allah. Surely Allah is the Hearing the Knowing. Should they seek to deceive you, Allah is all-sufficient for you.”
13. However, if one party violates the agreement, Islam says that they should be fought.
 Allah says in **Q (8:56)**; *“If you fear treachery from any of your allies, you may throw back to them their treaty fairly. Allah does not love the treacherous.”*
14. During the course of fighting, jihadists should avoid causing unnecessary destruction and damages e.g poisoning wells, burning plantations and killing animals unless for food.
15. Fighters should spare innocent people who are not part of the conflict such as women, the aged, children, nurses and others unless they are used in direct confrontation.
16. The places of worship should be spared and left intact such as mosques and churches unless the enemies use them as hiding places to attack the mujahidin.
17. If war is over and enemies are defeated, Islam should not be forced on them but they should be given chance to decide their own fate.
18. In case a neutral state comes in to mediate between the warring parties, the mujahidin should welcome the mediations unless the enemies refuse.
19. Furthermore, during the reconciliation, countries which are not part of the conflict should act as mediators but not to involve in the conflict or to side with one party.
20. Hypocrisy should be avoided and hypocrites should be killed instantly including one’s relatives if they turn out to be pretenders.

21. As regards the war booty, the spoils belong to those who participated in the war and must be divided after, not before, winning the war. The general rule on the subject is that one fifth is reserved for the state to be used in public works, and the remainder is to be distributed among the participants.

Allah says in **Q (8:41)**; *“And know that whenever you have taken as booty, a fifth thereof is for God and for the Messenger, and for the kinsmen and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer”*

SIGNIFICANCE OF JIHAD IN ISLAM

1. Jihad is a yardstick which tests the faith of Muslims to identify the steadfast in faith and the hypocrites like Abdallah Ibn Ubbay’s pretense during the battle of Uhud.
2. It is a source of rewards for believers because Allah ranks it as the highest form of Ibadat (worship). Allah says in **Q (61:10-12)**;
“O you who believe! Shall I guide you to a trend that will save you from a painful torment? ... strive hard and fight in the cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives.”
3. Jihad keeps a believer alive even after death. This is because the holy Qur’an prohibits believers from thinking of the mujahidin as dead but as alive with Allah. Allah says in **Qur’an 3:169**;
“Do not think of those who are killed in the way of Allah as dead. No! they are alive with their Lord and they have provision.”
4. It is a way of protecting Islam right from the prophet’s time. This is because Allah says in Qur’an **8:60** that jihad strikes fear in the hearts of unbelievers.
5. It encourages Muslims to be active in their religion because Qur’an 4:95 maintains that mujahidin are incomparable in faith.
6. It is a yardstick to measure the degree of one’s obedience to Allah and his messenger and the implication therefrom if he disobeys e.g what happened to the Muslims at Uhud after disobeying the prophet’s orders.
7. Jihad acts as a lesson through which Muslims learn some virtues of Islam e.g position of women, children, nurses and aged in the war.
8. Jihad Nafsi is a means of consolidating one’s faith in Islam. In this case, he invites people to the doing of good and forbidding evil.
9. Jihad through wealth is a means of spreading Islam and improving the conditions of the poor and needy members of the community as well as appreciating Allah’s blessings.
10. It is important to secure and maintain the rights of Muslims which would otherwise be denied by the unbelievers e.g freedom of worship, adhan, dress and others.
11. Jihad is a means of self-exertion in peaceful and personal compliance with the dictates of Islam. The Prophet Muhammad PBUH is also reported to have said;

“Best form of Jihad is to speak the truth in the face of an oppressive ruler”.

12. It is through jihad that the Islamic state is expanded and extended in different parts of the world e.g caliph Umar bin Khattab carried out conquests that led to the spread of Islam up to North Africa. R
13. It instills panic in the hearts of non-Muslims and therefore, plan not to attack Muslim communities.

TRANSLATED CHAPTERS

TAFSIIR (QUR'ANIC EXEGESIS)

- It is the science of discovering the pronunciation, meaning and whatever is needed for the understanding of the Qur'an.

Tafsiir deals with the

- background/circumstances of the revelation of a selected Surat.
- theme of the Surat.
- content/translation of the Surat.
- explanation/general meaning of the content/surat.
- lessons derived from the Surat.

There are 11 selected surat/chapters to be considered and these are:

1. Surat al-Fatiha (01)
2. Surat Dhuha (93)
3. Surat Inshira (94)
4. Surat Tin (95)
5. Surat Qadar (97)
6. Surat Asr (103)
7. Surat Fil (105)
8. Surat Kauthar (108)
9. Surat Nasir (110)
10. Surat Lahab (111)
11. Surat Ikhras(112)

SURAT AL-FATIHA (CHAPTER 01)

BACKGROUND

- It is the first and opening chapter of the holy Qur'an.
- It is believed to be the first chapter to be revealed to the prophet PBUH as a whole with all its seven verses.
- It is a Meccan Surat revealed in the early days of Islam.
- It has seven verses.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF SURAT AL-FATIHA

- The Surat is known by different attributes/names and some of them are:
- **AL-FATIHA** (The opening), because it is the first chapter which opens the holy Qur'an.
- **UMMUL KITAAB** i.e. mother of the book, because it contains the essence (soul) of the holy Qur'an.
- **AL-HAMUD** i.e. the praise, because it contains the most exciting expressions praising Allah.
- **ASAS AL-QUR'AN** i.e the foundation of the Qur'an, because the whole content of the holy Qur'an rests on it.
- **AS-SHIFA** i.e the healing, because if it is read and understood, it heals the soul of the reader and never to go astray.
- **AS-SALAT** i.e the prayer, because it contains good expressions of prayer to Allah.
- **AL-WAQIYYA** i.e the protection, because it protects the reader who understands its essence from going astray.
- **AL-RUQ'YA** i.e the charm, because it protects the reader who understands it from the temptations of Satan.
- **AL-KAN'Z** i.e the treasure, because it provides man with material and spiritual knowledge about Allah.
- **AL-QUR'AN AL-ADHIIM** i.e the great, because it forms part of the Qur'an and it is inseparable from it.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SURAT AL-FATIHA

- It is the first chapter in the arrangement of the chapters of the holy Qur'an.
- It is believed to be the first chapter to be revealed to the prophet PBUH as a whole with all its seven verses.
- It is the chapter which contains the soul of the holy Qur'an because it opens and summarizes it.
- It contains a variety of attributes that describe the qualities and characteristics of the holy Qur'an like al-Fatiha, al-Hamud and others.
- It lays the foundation on which the holy Qur'an rests its fabric since it is the mother of the book.
- It must be read in every prayer and when one does not read it, his prayer is rendered invalid.
- It is the supreme foundation of all prayers and supplications a believer can use to praise Allah.
- While in prayer, it must be repeated in every rakat (unit of prayer), with the shortest prayer having only two units.

THEMES OF SURAT AL-FATIHA

- A theme is a major topic/subject of discussion in a given section of writing.
- Surat al-Fatiha deals with the following themes:
- It opens with a description of the fundamental attributes of Allah like Al-Rahman (The Compassionate), the Rabbi (The Lord) and Al-Malik (The King). These are but a few of the ninety nine attributes of Allah.
- It deals with the concept of Tawheed/monotheism. Allah is described as the sole originator and sustainer of all things.
- It deals with the hereafter expressed in day of judgement that it is real. It is the day when man will return to Allah to account for all his deeds on earth.
- It deals with the principle of religion that it has been there since man's creation. This is shown in the last verses which describe people on whom Allah bestowed His favours, those who tasted His anger and those who went astray.
- It deals with the principle of guidance through Allah's message. Being a prayer, it teaches man that he should always seek assistance from Allah to avail him with the means required to succeed in life on earth and the hereafter.
- It deals with the principles of worship. It describes 'praise' and 'glorification' as being solely for Allah. Therefore, man should find ways of being close to Allah all the time.
- It deals with Allah's mercy and anger. He was compassionate to those who accepted Him and bestowed His favours up on them but He was very harsh to those who denied His messengers and He strayed them.

THE CONTENT/TRANSLATION OF SURAT AL-FATIHA

- Verse 1:** *In the name Allah, the most Gracious, the most Compassionate.*
- Verse 2:** *All praise is to Allah, the Lord of the Universe.*
- Verse 3:** *The most Gracious, the most Merciful.*
- Verse 4:** *Master of the Day of Judgement.*
- Verse 5:** *You alone we worship and you alone we ask for assistance.*
- Verse 6:** *Guide us to the straight path.*
- Verse 7:** *The path of those on whom you bestowed your favours, not of those who incurred your wrath or those who have gone astray.*

THE GENERAL MEANING/INTERPRETATION OF SURAT AL-FATIHA

Verse 1: In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Compassionate.

- The expression "In the name of Allah" means that before reading any part of the holy Qur'an or doing anything, a Muslim is supposed to first mention the name of Allah. All the chapters of the holy Qur'an start with this verse except Surat Taubah (09).
- The term "Most Gracious" means that Allah loves all His creatures and extends His mercy to everybody whether a sinner or a believer.
- The term "Most Compassionate" means that on the Day of judgement Allah will extend His mercy only to those who worshiped Him.

Verse 2: All praise is to Allah, the Lord of the Universe.

- It means that Allah is one and the only Lord for all creatures. He is the creator, owner, organizer, provider, master planner and sustainer of everything.

Verse 3: The most Gracious, the most Merciful.

- It means that Allah is the most kind of all His creatures. He extends mercy to all people no matter one worships Him or not.
- It also means that Allah will be most kind to only those who have obeyed His laws on earth when it comes to the Day of judgement.

Verse 4: Master of the Day of Judgement.

- The expression “Master of the day of judgment” means that on the Day of Judgement Allah will be the only one with order to influence every event of the Day.
- The Day of Judgment is the day when all creatures will assemble before Allah to account for what they did on earth.

Verse 5: You alone we worship and you alone we ask for assistance.

- The expression “You Alone we worship” means that all forms of worship must be directed to Allah and that all other deities are false.
- The expression “You Alone we ask for help” means man seeks assistance from Allah alone both in time of danger and joy. But, Allah needs no help from man.

Verse 6: Guide us to the straight path.

- The expression “Guide us to the straight path” is a prayer sought by the believers for Allah to show them truth, live up to it and follow it.
- The guidance referred to here is for Allah to open one’s heart to receive the truth i.e from shirk to belief (Tawheed) and to understand the preachings of the messengers of Allah and pious men.

Verse 7: The path of those on whom you bestowed your favours, not of those who incurred your wrath or those who have gone astray.

- The expression “The way of those on whom you bestowed your favours” means the way of the prophets, followers of prophets who were steadfast to believe in them, the martyrs and righteous men.
- “Not of those who incurred your wrath or those who have gone astray” means those who disobeyed Allah’s messengers and committed grave sins like Abu Jahal.

THE CONCEPT OF MONOTHEISM AS DISCUSSED IN SURAT AL-FATIHA

Qn: One of the themes of Surat al-Fatiha is the concept of Tawheed. What aspects of this theme are covered in this Surat?

- Monotheism is the belief in the oneness of Allah, which implies that He is one in His person, attributes and works.
- Under monotheism, it is only Allah worthy of all praise and glorification since He is the Lord of the Worlds. This is what is stated in verse two.

- Another aspect of monotheism is that Allah is the only **RABB (LORD)**. He is the sovereign and master who provides, sustains and protects the world. This is also provided for in the second verse of Surat al-Fatiha.
- At the same time, the expression ‘All praise is to Allah, the Lord of the Universe’ is in general agreement with **Tawheed Asmae wa swifaat** which emphasizes Allah’s attributes that they are for Him alone and does not share them with any creature.
- Under monotheism, Allah is described as **ARAHMAN (The most Gracious)** which means that Allah is the most kind of all His creatures. He extends mercy to all people no matter one is a believer or not. This is also shown in verse 3 of Surat al-Fatiha.
- Furthermore, Surat al-Fatiha states in its 3rd verse that Allah is the most compassionate (**ARAHIM**). This is an essential part of Tawheed because on the day of judgement Allah will pardon believers only.
- Surat al-Fatiha talks about worshipping Allah alone which is the core of Islam. Under Tawheed, no one else can be invoked or supplicated or shown any act of worship except Allah.
- In addition, it states in Verse 5 that ‘*You Alone we turn for help.*’ This is a significant expression for Tawheed because under monotheism man must seek assistance from Allah alone both in time of danger and happiness and without any intermediaries or agents.
- The concept of monotheism looks at Allah as the ‘Master of the Day of Judgement.’ This is the day when all mankind will return to Allah and assemble before Him for their final judgement. This important part of Tawheed is expressed in Verse 5 of the Surat.
- It is expressly stressed under Tawheed that a believer must always pray to Allah to guide him to the straight path. This important prayer is permanently found in Verse 6 of Surat al-Fatiha.
- Under Tawheed, a true believer must always mention the name of Allah before doing anything. This is what it means by the expression ‘*In the Name of Allah...*’ found in the first verse of Surat al-Fatiha.

LESSONS DERIVED FROM SURAT AL-FATIHA

Qn: How significant is Surat al-Fatiha to the contemporary life of a Muslim?

- Muslims learn that before doing anything one must first mention the name of Allah as it is in Verse 1 of the Surat.
- Muslims learn the behaviours of prayer that before supplicating to Allah, one has to first praise Him (verse 2).
- Muslims learn that Allah is merciful to all creatures whether believers or non-believers but He will be merciful to the believers only on the day of judgement (verse 3).
- Muslims learn that the day of judgement is real and that Allah will be the Master of the day (verse 4). It is the day when all mankind will assemble before Allah for their final judgement.
- Muslims learn that only Allah is worthy of worship and that from Him alone people should seek assistance.
- Muslims learn that guidance to the truth is hard to achieve without Allah’s grace. So man must always seek direction from Allah.

- Muslims learn that the good end is attained only when one follows those whom on Allah bestowed His grace like prophets, al-swidiq, martyrs and others.
- Muslims learn that one should keep away from sinning in order to avoid Allah’s wrath and anger.
- Muslims learn that the whole universe depends on Allah but for Him does not need support from any creature.
- Muslims learn that Surat al-Fatiha is a key pillar of prayer without which one’s prayer is invalid.

SURAT DHUHA (CHAPTER 93): THE GLORIOUS MORNING LIGHT

BACKGROUND

- Surat Dhuha is chapter 93 in the Qur’an with 11 verses.
- It was revealed in Mecca in the early days of the prophet’s mission just after the “**Futra**” period.
- It gets its name from the first word (**Dhuha**) of the first verse.
- It was revealed to console the prophet after being abused during the Futra period.
- During the Futra period (passive period of 3 years from the first revelation) when the prophet PBUH received no message, the Quraish Meccans started abusing him and laughed at him that his God had forgotten him.
- They also abused him too much and accused him of telling lies and being a false pretender.
- He felt small and deserted but all of a sudden, Allah revealed to him this Surat which made him very happy.
- On receipt of this Surat, the Prophet PBUH pronounced **Takibiir** and commanded his companions to do the same.

THEMES OF SURAT DHUHA

- The Surat opens with an oath followed by a consolation.
- It reminds the prophet of his favours from Allah.
- It deals with mercy and kindness to the needy like orphans and the poor.
- It involves thanksgiving to Allah by proclaiming to others the favours we get from Him.

THE TRANSLATION/CONTENT OF SURAT DHUHA

In Name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most Merciful

- Verse 1: *By the bright forenoon.*
- Verse 2: *By the night when it darkens.*
- Verse 3: *Your Lord has neither forsaken you nor hates you.*
- Verse 4: *And surely the hereafter is better for you than the present.*
- Verse 5: *And indeed your Lord will give you so that you will be well pleased.*
- Verse 6: *Did He not find you an orphan and gave you shelter?*
- Verse 7: *And He found you unaware and He guided you?*
- Verse 8: *And He found you poor and made you rich?*
- Verse 9: *Therefore as for the orphan do not oppress him.*
- Verse 10: *And as for the beggar do not turn away from him.*
- Verse 11: *And proclaim the grace of your Lord.*

THE GENERAL MEANING /INTERPRETATION OF SURAT DHUHA

Verse 1: By the bright forenoon.

- Allah swears upon the early morning hour which signifies the rise of Islam in its early days which came with light to the Jahiliyya Arabs who were in total darkness.

Verse 2: By the night when it darkens.

- The verse refers to the time when the Prophet PBUH stranded without revelation and the Quraish Meccans laughed at him, thinking that Allah had deserted him.
- Some scholars maintain that it refers to that night when the prophet PBUH left Mecca for Madiina.

Verse 3: Your Lord has neither forsaken you nor hates you.

- It refers to the Futra period when the Quraish Meccans frustrated the Prophet PBUH that Allah had forgotten him. It was a consolation to him that Allah was still with him.

Verse 4: And surely the hereafter is better for you than the present.

- The verse means that the prophet should not despair because each moment of his life would be better than the other and that his hereafter will be brighter than his earthly life.

Verse 5: And indeed your Lord will give you so that you will be well pleased.

- It means that Allah's reward on the day of judgement will satisfy and please the prophet PBUH and the believers for their good deeds.

Verse 6: Did He not find you an orphan and gave you shelter?

- It refers to the prophet who lost his parents in infancy but every guardian he got was loving and caring.

Verse 7: And He found you unaware and He guided you?

- It refers to the prophet who was illiterate but Allah taught him the Qur'an, its laws and prophet hood.

Verse 8: And He found you poor and made you rich?

- It refers to the prophet's poor background and how Allah provided for him e.g how He found a rich lady for him (Khadija) and how He made his name popular and famous.

Verse 9: Therefore as for the orphan do not oppress him.

- It is a command from Allah in form of an appeal to the prophet and all mankind to treat orphans with tender and respect, the prophet PBUH himself having grown up as a complete orphan.

Verse 10: And as for the beggar do not turn away from him.

- In this verse Allah asked the prophet PBUH to cater for the needy and not to run away from them.

Verse 11: And proclaim the grace of your Lord.

- It reminded the prophet PBUH of the favours Allah gave him and to proclaim them to others as a way of appreciation.

SIGNIFICANCE OF SURAT DHUHA

- Muslims learn that every difficulty situation is always followed by relief if a person truly believes in Allah.
- It shows that one should never be discouraged by what people say as regards his belief in Allah as long as he is on truth.
- It is a lesson to Muslims that in order for one to gain a good end, he has to strive for it on earth.
- The Surat tells the Muslims to always cater for the orphans, not to mistreat them and to always respect them.
- The Muslims learn that one should not base on his wealth or his status in society to undermine others like what the Quraish Meccans did to the prophet PBUH.
- It is a lesson to the Muslims that they always look after the needy and poor and treat them with care. However, begging is discouraged in Islam.
- Muslims also learn that becoming rich is not one's choice and therefore they should not be arrogant because the wealth they possess. They should use it in the cause of Allah.
- It teaches Muslims that Allah is the source of guidance and that he guides whom He wishes.
- A Muslim learns that he can proclaim his treasures from Allah to others as a way of appreciating Him.

SURAT INSHIRA (CHAPTER 94)

BACKGROUND

- It is a Meccan Surat with eight verses.
- It was revealed after Surat Dhuha.
- It is believed to be the 12th chapter in the order of revelation.
- It gets its name from the first verse from the word 'INSHIRA' which means 'relief.'
- The circumstances which led to the revelation of Surat Inshira were the same as those that led to the revelation of Surat Dhuha.
- It was revealed to console and strengthen the prophet PBUH after the Futra period.

THEMES OF SURAT INSHIRA

- The surat discusses three main themes;
- Allah reminds the prophet SAW of His favours as evidenced in verses Q (94:1-4) where Allah emphasizes that He removed the burden which was weighing so heavily on him.
- Allah commands the prophet PBUH to turn to Him in prayer after the evils of the day.
- Verses Q (94:7-8) encourages man to always turn to Allah and praise Him.

THE CONTENT/TRANSLATION OF SURAT INSHIRA

In Name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most Merciful

Verse 1: Have we not opened your breast for you?

Verse 2: And removed from you your burden?

Verse 3: Which weighed down your back?

Verse 4: And have we not raised high your fame?

Verse 5: Verily, along with every hardship there is relief.

Verse 6: Verily, along with every hardship there is relief.

Verse 7: So, when you have finished, devote yourself to Allah's worship.

Verse 8: And to your Lord turn your intention and hope.

THE GENERAL MEANING/EXPLANATION OF SURAT INSHIRA

Verse 1: Have we not opened your breast for you?

- The verse reminds the prophet PBUH of the problems he faced during the Futra period and after revelation, the prophet PBUH was relieved.
- He was gifted with knowledge and his human nature was purified with mercy and wisdom.

Verses 2 and 3: (And removed from you your burden? Which weighed down your back?)

- The two verses show that the prophet PBUH was stressed with problems posed to him by the Quraish Meccans but Allah solved them for him.

Verse 4: And have we not raised high your fame?

- Allah reminded the prophet PBUH of the fame He gave him e.g how his mission spread and his name is praised whenever it is mentioned.

Verses 5 and 6: (Verily, along with every hardship there is relief)

- Allah assures the Prophet PBUH that there is relief in every hardship. So there is no cause to lose hope in Allah.

Verse 7: So, when you have finished, devote yourself to Allah's worship.

- Allah reminds the prophet PBUH that after finishing his work, he should turn to Allah for worship.

Verse 8: And to your Lord turn your intention and hope.

- Allah commands the prophet PBUH to turn to Him in any hardship and to have full hope in Him.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SURAT INSHIRA TO THE DAILY LIFE OF A MUSLIM

- It is a lesson to the Muslims that work should not stop them from worshipping Allah. At all the time of work man must remember Allah.
- It teaches believers that Allah helps those who strive in His cause i.e propagating His religion.
- It assures believers that Allah is ever there to rescue His pious men. Therefore, whoever is a good doer should be assured of Allah's assistance.
- Man should know that problems and difficulties are part of life. So one should always persevere and have hope in Allah.
- Believers must know that righteous men are hated by evildoers. Therefore, abuses by non-Muslims should not stop them from struggling in the way of Allah and practicing Islam.
- Muslims learn that problems are not permanent. They come and go and that solutions are ever there.
- It teaches man that it is Allah alone who is the final goal for all mankind and hope should be directed to Him.

HOW DOES SURAT INSHIRA RELATE WITH SURAT DHUHA?

Qn: How does Surat Inshira relate with Surat Dhuha?

- Surat Inshira was revealed after Surat Dhuha and it forms an extension of the subject matter of Surat Dhuha.

- Surat Dhuha speaks of the increasing prosperity of Prophet Muhammad’s mission. Surat Inshira indirectly refers to some distinguishing features which constitute a sure guarantee of the ultimate triumph of the prophet’s mission.
- The incidents preceding the revelation the revelation of Surat Inshira and Surat Dhuha are similar. They were both revealed to console and strength the prophet PBUH during the Futra period when Meccans were laughing at him.
- Surat Dhuha mentions the time when the prophet PBUH stayed without revelation and Meccans laughed at him. Surat Inshira was reminding the prophet PBUH the problems he had been facing the time when revelation was not coming to him.
- In Surat Dhuha, Allah talks of providing the prophet PBUH and that he will be satisfied. Likewise, Surat Inshira talks of the prophet’s fame being exalted.
- Both chapters are Meccan chapters. They were revealed in the early days of Prophet Muhammad’s mission.
- Both chapters show Allah’s readiness to protect Islam and His noble prophet Muhammad PBUH.
- However, both chapters are different in terms of Qur’anic arrangement. Surat Dhuha is chapter 93 while Surat Inshira is chapter 94.
- Allah begins Surat Dhuha by swearing His creation i.e dawn and darkness while Surat Inshira starts with Allah confirming to the prophet PBUH on how He relieved him of the burden that weighed upon his back.
- Surat Dhuha has 11 verses whereas Surat Inshira contains 8 verses only.
- Surat Inshira ends with a reminder to the prophet PBUH to turn to Allah in prayer and worship while Surat Dhuha ends by asking the prophet PBUH to proclaim his bounty as a way of appreciating Allah.

SURAT TIIN (CHAPTER 95): THE FIG

BACKGROUND

- This is chapter 95 according to the arrangement of the holy Qur’an.
- It is a Meccan Surat which was revealed after chapter 85 (BuruJ/Mansions of Stars).
- It has 8 verses and takes its name from the first verse in the word ‘Tiin’ which means ‘Fig.’

THE THEMES OF SURAT TIN

1. The first theme is that Allah swears upon His creation i.e Fig, Olive, Mount Sinai and city of Mecca, all of which symbolize specific places and periods of time with a religious bearing in Islam.
2. The fig represents the era of Prophet Adam and his wife when they ate the forbidden fruit and found themselves naked. They sewed fig leaves and made themselves aprons to cover their nakedness.
3. The olive represents the era of Prophet Nuhu when he sent a dove out of his Ark and it returned with an olive branch. Thus Nuhu was glad to know that there were no more floods on the surface of the earth.
4. Mount Sinai signifies the era of Prophet Musa as the place from where he received the Ten Commandments and the mission to liberate the Israelites from the pharaohs of Egypt.
5. The city of security symbolizes Mecca, the birth place of Islam and at the same time the prophet PBUH.
6. The Surat emphasizes righteousness through doing of good and that the righteous will be rewarded abundantly on the day of judgement.

7. It mentions the reality of the day of judgement. This is the day when all mankind will return to Allah for their final judgement basing on their deeds on earth.
8. Another theme of Surat Tin is that it mentions Allah as the Supreme Judge. On the judgement day, Allah will exhibit His explicit fairness and justice. He will not cause to lose any single action of any person.
9. It talks about the creation of man in the best form.
10. It talks about the reduction of man to the lowest of the low if he does evil.

THE CONTENT/TRANSLATION OF SURAT TIN

In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most Merciful

- Verse 1: By the Fig and the Olive,*
Verse 2: And Mount Sinai,
Verse 3: And this city of security.
Verse 4: Indeed We created man in the best image.
Verse 5: Then We reduced him to the lowest of the low.
Verse 6: Except those who believe and do good deeds. They shall have a reward without end.
Verse 7: Then what causes you to deny the last judgement?
Verse 8: Is it not Allah the wisest of all judges?

THE GENERAL MEANING/EXPLANATION OF SURAT TIIN

Verse 1: By the Fig and the Olive,

This verse is interpreted differently by various scholars. According to Muhammad Alusi, Fig and Olive refer to locations i.e Fig refers to Mount Judi where Prophet Nuhu's Ark landed or to Prophet Nuhu himself and the place where his Ark landed.

To him, Olive refers to Jesus who was born in Palestine where Olives grow.

According to Abdallah Ibn Abbas, Zaitun (Olive) refers to Masjid al-Aqiswa (holy mosque in Palestine).

Some scholars interpret the word **Tiin** to mean a period when man clothed himself with Fig leaves.

It can also mean a fruit, which means that a tree can be useful when it has fruits, useless without fruits or when rotting.

Some Muslims interpret Olive to refer to the time of Prophet Nuhu when he sent a dove during the floods and it returned with the Olive branch which signified to him that there were no more floods on earth.

It can refer to the amount of Olives just outside the walls of Jerusalem City on which Jesus sat and taught his disciples about the judgement day.

Verse 2: And Mount Sinai,

It refers to the holy place where Prophet Musa received the Ten Commandments and the mission of liberate the Israelites from the yokes of the Pharaohs.

Verse 3: And this city of security.

Allah refers to the city of Mecca which He gave protection even before the advent of Islam. No one can shed blood in it.

Verse 4: Indeed We created man in the best image.

In this verse Allah testifies that He created man in the best form but not in His image as Christian allege by giving him knowledge which He did not give to other creatures. It is this knowledge that man must use to distinguish between what is good and what is bad.

Verse 5: Then We reduced him to the lowest of the low.

The verse means that man can maintain the image Allah gave him only if he does good deeds. If he rebels against Allah, He will degrade him to the lowest of His creatures.

Verse 6: Except those who believe and do good deeds. They shall have a reward without end.

It means that if man believes in Allah and in the message of prophet Muhammad PBUH and does righteous deeds, he will be rewarded with paradise and will be there forever and ever.

Verse 7: Then what causes you to deny the last judgement?

It refers to people who deny or doubt the truth of the day of judgement whose signs were explained by Allah's messengers.

Verse 8: Is it not Allah the wisest of all judges?

In this verse Allah assures mankind in form of a question that He is the best of the judges. He will judge all creatures without any fear or favour.

LESSONS DERIVED FROM SURAT TIN

1. Man learns that it is Allah alone to swear by His creation and that all mankind must swear by His Name.
2. Muslims learn that Allah created man in the best image far better than other creatures but He did not create him in His image.
3. It is a lesson that man can maintain the best image given to him by Allah only if he follows Allah's commands and believes in Tawheed.
4. The Surat teaches man that believers will have a good end (paradise) and that they will be there forever and ever.
5. It again teaches man that he should prepare for the day of judgement because it is real as Allah Himself wonders about those who deny or doubt its occurrence.
6. It is a lesson to the Muslims to believe in all the prophets of Allah since they all came with the same message of worshipping one God.
7. It is a lesson that no man will be denied justice on the day of judgement for any small deed he does on earth because Allah is the best of all judges.
8. Man's creation in the best image is a lesson to humanity to show best morals which other creatures do not have. Therefore, cases of homosexuality, lesbianism and bestiality are foreign to man.
9. It teaches man that Allah created him with purpose and that is to worship Him alone and to seek His pleasure on earth and hereafter.

10. It assures man that he has a chance to repent after committing a sin. Therefore, no one should despair of Allah's forgiveness.
11. It teaches believers the best virtue of justice. Since Allah is just to all creatures, be it wrongdoers or good doers, man must also practice impartiality among his fellow human beings.

THE NATURE OF MAN AS DESCRIBED IN SURAT TIIN

Qn: Explain the nature of man as described in Surat Tiin (95).

1. Surat Tiin is chapter 95 according to the organization and arrangement of the holy Qur'an.
2. It was revealed in Mecca after Surat Buruj (85).
3. It takes its name from the first verse in the word Tiin.
4. It talks much about man that he was created in the best image but he is liable of being degraded unless he lives a decent life.
5. Allah starts the Surat by swearing up on His creation such as the fig, olive, Mount Sinai and city of security. All these are symbols of specific places and eras connected to a religious bearing concerning Allah's message to man.
6. The Surat shows that man can sometimes be disobedient to Allah's commands. This is seen from the fact that Adam and Hawa ate the forbidden fruit and Allah sent them out of paradise.
7. It appears from the Surat that man is shameful of his actions. After eating the forbidden fruit and found themselves naked, Adam and Hawa sewed the leaves of Fig tree to cover their nakedness, an indication that they were ashamed.
8. In interpretation of Surat Tiin, Fig can refer to a tree which is useful when it has fruits and useless without fruits or when its fruits rot. This symbol refers to man that he is sometimes good and sometimes bad.
9. The Fig can also refer to Jesus' teachings. One day he was very hungry and went to a fig tree. He did not find anything to eat on it and cursed it. It dried instantly. Thus, man can only be good if he has something good to offer and useless when he has nothing to offer.
10. The fig also symbolizes the nature of the fig tree. Under cultivation, it is the finest and most delicious tree but under cold conditions, it is nothing but tiny seeds full of worms and maggots. So, man at his best has a noble destiny while at his worst, he is the lowest of the low.
11. Man takes long to adjust to new situations. This is seen when Nuhu warned his people of the impending floods and told them to enter his Ark but many of them did not listen to him and perished.
12. Man has got a high sensitivity and wisdom compared to other creatures. When the dove that Nuhu sent outside the Ark came back with an olive branch, he knew that the floods had faded off the earth's surface.
13. The Surat presents man as respectful of Allah's symbols even before the advent of Islam. During the pre-Islamic days, the Arabs respected Mecca and none could fight in it.
14. Man can also be seen as an obedient servant. When Musa went on Mount Sinai, he heard a voice that told him to draw nearer the fire. His acceptance to come and to remove the sandals as he was asked because he was in a holy place shows that man complies with Allah's commands.
15. From Surat Tiin, one learns that man was created in the best image like he was given the best knowledge which help him to distinguish between what is good and what is bad. It is under this that cases of homosexuality; lesbianism and bestiality have no room in Islam.

16. Man was also created in the best structure and mould. This means that physically man is the best of Allah's creatures but does not in any way resemble Allah.
17. When man is young, he is at his best. He is born pure with a natural tendency to do well. However, he has also been given a large measure of freedom, will and action to mould himself as he chooses.
18. Man has also been endowed with great natural power and qualities to make unlimited moral progress and to rise spiritually. So he has to keep high so as to exhibit those attributes.
19. Man can rise high spiritually and become the best when he believes in Allah and submits to His commands like observing prayer and sadaq.
20. If man follows the guidance of Allah's messengers, he shall prosper and will receive the everlasting reward from Allah. He will be the happiest in the end. So the righteous are to enjoy in the hereafter.
21. However, despite man being created in the best structure and mould, he can only maintain his original purity if he does well and submits to Allah's commands.
22. If man misuses his God-given powers and makes the wrong use of the opportunities that came his way, Allah causes him to sink to the lowest of the low.
23. By emphasizing in the last verse that Allah is the best of the judges, the chapter presents man as an unjust creature especially among fellow creatures and that Allah is the only best judge of all judges.
24. Verse 7 of Surat Tiin depicts man as an impostor who denies what he has not seen i.e the day of judgement. Therefore, man's nature depends on the fact that seeing is believing.

**SURAT QADAR (CHAPTER 97): THE NIGHT OF POWER
BACKGROUND**

1. This is one of the early Meccan chapters with five verses only.
2. It gets its name from the first verse of the surat in the word 'Qadar'.
3. The word Qadar is generally prescribed to mean the 'Night of power'.
4. It is the night in which the holy Qur'an is believed to have been revealed from the seventh heaven to the first heaven.
5. The night of power is reported by the prophet PBUH to fall in one of the odd nights of the last ten days of Ramadhan.
6. The prophet PBUH taught that any Ibadat one does in the night of power is better than one who does the same deed in a thousand months.
7. The night of power is the major theme discussed by Surat Qadar.
8. That is why some scholars interpret Qadar as 'determination' to mean the day when the fate of man was determined by Allah when He sent to him the final message.

THE CONTENT/TRANSLATION OF SURAT QADAR

In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most Merciful

- Verse 1: Indeed, We have sent it down in the Night of power.*
- Verse 2: And what will explain to you what the Night of power is?*
- Verse 3: The Night of power is better than a thousand months.*
- Verse 4: Therein come down the Angels and Holy Spirit by Allah's permission with all command.*
- Verse 5: There is peace until dawn.*

GENERAL INTERPRETATION/EXPLANATION OF SURAT QADAR

Verse 1: Indeed, We have sent it down in the Night of power.

It refers to two incidents. Firstly, the night when the holy Qur'an was revealed from the preserved tablet to the first heaven.

Secondly, it means the night in which man's destiny is determined such as matters of birth, death, provisions and calamities for the whole year as decreed by Allah.

Verse 2: And what will explain to you what the Night of power is?

Allah arouses the attention of mankind towards to what the night of power is.

Verse 3: The Night of power is better than a thousand months.

The verse explains the night of power that it is better than a thousand months.

The prophet explained that one who does a good deed in the night of power is better than one who does the same deed for a thousand months.

Verse 4: Therein come down the Angels and Holy Spirit by Allah's permission with all command.

The verse explains that in the night of power all angels including Jibril descend on earth with salutations of peace to the believers.

Verse 5: There is peace until dawn.

The verse indicates that throughout the night, the angels pray for the believers until dawn.

LESSONS DERIVED FROM SURAT QADAR

1. It is a Qur'anic testimonial of the time in it was revealed i.e the Night of Power.
2. It also shows Qur'anic authenticity by confirming to its critics that it is Allah who revealed it in the Night of power Q (97:1).
3. It describes the importance of the night of power to the believers that one who does something good is better than one who does the same thing for 1000 months.
4. It is a reminder to the Muslims that they should increase their piety and remembrance to Allah in the last ten days of the month of Ramadhan.
5. It helps a believer to stand up at night and praise Allah because He sends angels to pray for the believers.
6. The Surat shows that Allah answers the most difficult questions posed by the critics of Islam such as the concept of the revelation of the Qur'an.

Qn: What are the Muslim beliefs and practices about the Night of power in relation to Surat Qadar (chapter 97)?

BELIEFS

1. Most of the Muslims believe it is in the last 10 days of the month of Ramadhan.
2. It is believed that the prophet PBUH put more emphasis on the 27th day of Ramadhan.
3. It is believed that it is better than 1000 months if it finds one doing good.
4. It is believed that at night angels come down on earth led by Angel Jibril and pray to those who worship Allah.
5. It is believed that the Night of power is full of blessings.

6. It is believed that it is the night when the holy Qur'an was revealed from the tablet preserved to the first heaven.
7. It is believed that during the Night of power the weather is very cool and calm.
8. It is believed that when this night finds you awake, Allah gives you whatever you like.
9. It is believed that there are a few stars in the sky during the Night of power.
10. It is believed that there is little darkness during the Night of power i.e the light is dim.
11. Some Muslims believe that there is a certain animal seen on that day.

PRACTICES

1. People spend the night in mosques and others in their homes praying to Allah.
2. There is too much recitation of the holy Qur'an.
3. Some Muslims spend much in terms of charity (sadaq) e.g cooking food and invite others to eat.
4. Some Muslims organize seminars and spend time learning Islam.
5. Others take time without sleeping trying to see what happens on that day.
6. People forgive each other for the sake of that day.
7. There is too much praise and invoking of Allah.

SURAT ASR (CHAPTER 103): THE RUNNING TIME

BACKGROUND

1. It is one of the early Meccan chapters revealed after Surat Inshira.
2. It is one of the shortest chapters in the Qur'an with three verses only.
3. It takes its name from the first verse in the word 'Asr' meaning the 'evening time'.
4. Some scholars say that the late afternoon prayer (Asr) derived its name from the same word.
5. However, as used here the word 'Asr' means the passage of time through ages.
6. It was revealed to warn the Quraish Meccans who had till then refused to believe in the message of the prophet PBUH that time was running out of them.
7. It was a reminder to the prophet PBUH to caution the believers that they should be steadfast in Ibadat because time is not on their side.
8. It is the most poetic chapter of the holy Qur'an and its literature summarizes the whole of the holy Qur'an.
9. Imam Shafie said that if it was the only revealed Surat to mankind, it would be enough to summarise Islam (religion).
10. The language of Surat Asr is poetic and concise and that so much has been condensed in it. Therefore despite its shortness, its verses are quite meaningful and convey a lot of significance in one's life.

THEMES OF SURAT ASR

1. It deals with the importance of time in man's execution of Allah's commands.
2. It further deals with the importance of time by Allah swearing it in the first verse.
3. It emphasizes the doing of good by man by having good rapport with his fellow mankind.
4. It deals with the impact of laziness on man's observance of Ibaadat.
5. It deals with the invitation of others towards the doing of good and forbidding evil.
6. It deals with the two major virtues of truthfulness and patience.

THE TRANSLATION/CONTENT OF SURAT ASR

In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most Merciful

Verse 1: By the time.

Verse 2: Indeed, man is in loss.

Verse 3: Except those who believe and do righteous deeds and enjoy one another truth and patience.

THE GENERAL MEANING/EXPLANATION OF SURAT ASR

Verse 1: By the time.

Time is one of Allah's creatures. By swearing up on it, He wanted to show mankind its importance in his life and that its knowledge lies with Allah alone.

By referring the word 'Asr' to 'evening time', it means that a believer must check himself in what he has done throughout the day whether it pleases Allah or not.

Verse 2: Indeed, man is in loss.

It means that believers must evaluate their dedication to Allah. Lazy people will find that at the end of the day have not done anything to save their souls from the torment of hell i.e whoever follows his heartily desires and earthly life has nothing in hereafter.

Verse 3: Except those who believe and do righteous deeds and enjoy one another truth and patience.

It means that faith and righteousness are the only ways man can avoid loss or the torment of hell.

It means that after fulfilling one's duties of Ibadat, he should turn his attention to inviting others to doing good and shunning evil. This is because if it is not done, one can be corrupted by the evils of the society.

The verse further means that the beneficiary of this world is one who follows the truth (Islam) and observes patience in whatever he does and invites others towards it.

THE LESSONS A BELIEVER DERIVES FROM SURAT ASR

1. It teaches man that time is one of the characteristics of Allah who is eternal.
2. It is a lesson to believers to carefully use their time on earth to prepare for future life.
3. It is a lesson for believers not to curse time because it is a characteristic to do with Allah and it is for this reason that a believer should not celebrate birth days and end of year festivals.
4. It shows that one to benefit from this world is a believer who is righteous and pious.
5. It is a lesson that believers should do righteous things only and invite others towards good. This means one should be honest to himself and the society.
6. It is learnt from the Surat that wrongdoers are the losers on this earth and the hereafter.
7. It teaches man the two virtues of truthfulness and patience.
8. It is learnt that inviting others to Islam is a duty prescribed up on every Muslim.
9. It is a lesson that we should judge ourselves before Allah judges us on the final day.
10. It teaches man that belief is not enough unless one accompanies it with good deeds like patience, truthfulness, prayer, sadaq and others.

SURAT AL-FIIL (CHAPTER 105): THE ELEPHANT

BACKGROUND

1. It is an early Meccan Surat with five verses.
2. It gets its name from the last word of the first verse, 'fiil' which means 'elephants'.
3. It was revealed referring to an event that occurred some fifty days before the birth of Prophet Muhammad PBUH.
4. In 570AD, the Christian king of Yemen, Abraha Al-Ashram, attempted to divert Arabs from making pilgrimage to the Kaaba.
5. However, his efforts were frustrated by the Arabs' refusal to give up their allegiance to the Kaaba.
6. As a result, Abraha Al-Ashram organized a large army of about six thousand men with thirteen elephants to go and destroy the Kaaba.
7. Abraha's army marched to Mecca through Taifa where they got support from the tribe of Banu Thaqif.
8. On their way to Mecca, Abraha's force seized about two hundred camels belonging to AbdulMutwalib, the prophet's grandfather.
9. By then, the Arabs were too weak to resist the elephant army and so they left their homes and hid in the surrounding mountains.
10. When AbdulMutwalib met Abraha, he did not talk about his intention to destroy the Kaaba but he only asked him to return his camels to him.
11. Abraha was surprised so much and said to him; "I came to destroy the Kaaba and your religion, the place that all Arabs come to you to visit, then you say to me 'return my camels back to me!'"
12. AbdulMutwalib then said to him; "I am the owner of the camels but the house (Kaaba) has its owner who is sure to protect it.
13. At this moment, Allah sent against Abraha's army birds in flocks and struck them with stones of baked clay (Sijiil).
14. Abraha's army was destroyed completely and it was left like dried up grass eaten by animals.

THE THEMES OF SURAT AL-FIIL

The main theme of the Surat is to show Allah's power in protecting His mission. His power was expressed in guarding the Kaaba and in the subsequent battles fought by the prophet against the infidels.

THE CONTENT/TRANSLATION OF SURAT AL-FIIL

In Name Of Allah the Most Merciful the Most Gracious

Verse 1: Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the owners of the elephants?

Verse 2: Did He not make their plots go astray?

Verse 3: And He sent against them birds in flocks.

Verse 4: Striking them with stones of baked clay.

Verse 5: And He made them like dry leaves eaten up by cattle (animals).

THE GENERAL MEANING/EXPLANATION OF SURAT AL-FIIL

Verse 1: Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the owners of the elephants?

Firstly, by referring to an event that occurred before the prophet's birth, Allah wanted the Quraish Meccans to learn a lesson from it and then desist from opposing Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

Secondly, Allah blames those whom He protected from Abraha's invasion and yet they questioned the message of His prophet Muhammad PBUH.

Verse 2: Did He not make their plots go astray?

The verse reminds the Meccans of how Allah strayed the plans of Abraha and his forces. It therefore means that Allah's plans are better than the plots of unbelievers. Therefore, the Meccan plans against the prophet PBUH were to be unsuccessful like that of Abraha.

Verse 3: And He sent against them birds in flocks.

It means that Allah frustrated Abraha's army by sending to him the weakest of His creatures (birds). Therefore, the Meccan plans against the prophet PBUH were very insignificant to Allah.

Verse 4: Striking them with stones of baked clay.

Some scholars say that 'Sijil' refers to any stone made out of hard clay while others contend that it means that every Abraha's soldier was written on a specific stone that hit him directly by a specific bird. So there were no stray stones.

Verse 5: And He made them like dry leaves eaten up by cattle (animals).

The verse means that Abraha's army was destroyed beyond recognition. It was a caution to the Quraish Meccans and the critics of Islam that Allah can ruin them in the same way or even worse if they continued to oppose the prophet PBUH.

THE LESSONS MUSLIMS DERIVE FROM SURAT AL-FIL

1. It is a confirmation to the believers that Allah is the sole protector of His holy places i.e Mecca and the Kaaba.
2. It is a lesson to the believers that those whom Allah bestows with His favours and turn against Him will face His wrath on the day of judgement like the favours Allah gave the Arabs by defending them against Abraha and later turned against His prophet.
3. Muslims learn that the most powerful on earth are the weakest in the sight of Allah. That is why He destroyed Abraha's elephant army with just mere birds.
4. We also learn that Allah protects those who believe and have trust in Him like the case of AbdulMutwalib and his encounter with Abraha.
5. It is a lesson that Allah protected Islam long before the advent of Prophet Muhammad PBUH and will continue to protect it.
6. It is a lesson that Allah is watchful of the plots of the enemies of Islam and He is ready to frustrate them.
7. Much respect should be accorded to the holy places of worship such as mosques, churches, Kaaba and others. They should not be destroyed even during holy wars.
8. It is a lesson to man that before disobeying Allah, he should reflect first up on what He will do to him.

9. It is a lesson that Allah has many ways of dealing His enemies. That is why in this case He used mere birds to destroy Abraha's forces of elephants.
10. It cautions Muslims to reflect on what happened in the past and act according to Allah's laws i.e they should learn from the past.
11. It teaches man to exercise equality with fellow man because power and wealth counts nothing in the sight of Allah. That is what Abraha thought could work.
12. It shows the importance of the Kaaba as a centre of worship that must be protected and guarded like when Allah protected it against the invading army of Abraha.
13. People learn that Allah can and has all the power to destroy any individual however strong one may be. The army of elephants was so strong that no one could engage it but Allah destroyed it within a twinkle of an eye.
14. The tiny stones that destroyed Abraha's army are meant to caution mankind on how dangerous hell-fire is. If just stones picked out of it could destroy such a strong force, then the sinners to be thrown in it must be careful.
15. The advice Abdul Mutwalib gave to the Arabs to move out of Mecca to hide from Abraha's army made the Quraish Meccans to start journeying to different areas of the Arabian Peninsula. Thus, setting a fertile ground for the propagation of Islam.
16. People learn that with prayers and dedication to Allah, nothing can happen to the believers. Seeing that they would not stage a fight against Abraha's army, the Arabs led by Abdul Mutwalib prayed to Allah to save them from the enemy and He responded immediately by destroying it with a plague.
17. Surat Fil gives part of the historical background of the Kaaba, the place of pilgrimage and Qibla for every Muslim in the world.
18. Muslims also learn that they should not be worried about their security and the security of Allah's symbols like the Kaaba because He is the Supreme guardian over them.
19. It is a lesson that Allah's manifestation of His power is unpredictable and strange. That is all signs were working in favour of Abraha but all of a sudden he was destroyed by birds carrying baked stones which he could not expect.
20. It is a lesson that Allah knows the plots against His mission and always acts at an appropriate time against the plotters, just as He did to Abraha.

SURAT KAUTHAR (CHAPTER 108): THE ABUNDANCE

BACKGROUND

Surat Kauthar is chapter 108 according to the arrangement of the chapters in the holy Qur'an.

Though it is known by different names, it is commonly called 'Kauthar' (the abundance).

It is a Meccan chapter though some scholars contend that it was revealed in Madiina.

It is among the shortest chapters in the Qur'an with three verses only.

In the early days of Islam, the prophet PBUH lost all his children except Fatima.

The Quraish Meccans laughed at him that he was cut off as he did not have a son to succeed him.

He felt so grieved until when Allah revealed to him Surat Kauthar confirming to him that those who mocked him were indeed the destitutes.

THEMES OF SURAT KAUTHAR

The main theme of Surat Kauthar is to remind the prophet PBUH and his followers that those who mock him and reject Islam are cut off from all good.

It orders the prophet PBUH to be thankful to Allah for the favours He gave him both before and after his mission.

It brings glad tidings to the prophet PBUH that he is the recipient of the abundant good on earth and hereafter.

It offers caution that worldly possessions do not determine that someone is good. True goodness is found in a healthy soul that is thankful to Allah.

THE CONTENT/TRANSLATION OF SURAT KAUTHAR

In Name Of Allah the Most Merciful the Most Gracious

Verse 1: Indeed We have granted you al-Kauthar.

Verse 2: Therefore, turn to your Lord in prayer and sacrifice.

Verse 3: Indeed one who hates you will be the cut off.

THE GENERAL MEANING/EXPLANATION OF SURAT

Verse 1: Indeed We have granted you al-Kauthar.

The verse expresses certainty that Allah granted the prophet PBUH al-Kauthar.

According to the prophet PBUH, Kauthar is a river in paradise whose water is sweeter than honey and whiter than milk. He and his followers will drink from it on the Day of judgement.

To some Qur'anic commentators like Abdallah ibn Abbas, Kauthar refers to all the good things Allah prepared for Prophet Muhammad and his followers which includes a river in paradise for quenching their thirst on the day of judgement.

Verse 2: Therefore, turn to your Lord in prayer and sacrifice.

The verse instructs the prophet PBUH to pray to Allah and to sacrifice to Him alone. Prayer and sacrifice are mentioned here because they are the best means of drawing a person nearer to Allah.

The verse also means that all forms of worship must be directed to Allah alone.

Verse 3: Indeed one who hates you will be the cut off.

It is a strong warning to the Quraish Meccans who used to mock the Prophet PBUH and the critics of Islam that they will have no good end in the life to come.

The Prophet PBHU said; ***“None of you will have faith until he loves me more than he loves his soul, father and children.”***

THE LESSONS DERIVED FROM SURAT KAUTHAR

1. It describes the lofty status Prophet Muhammad PBUH in this life and the hereafter.
2. Verse 2 of the Surat instructs believers to establish all acts of worship solely for Allah and therefore avoid shirk.

3. It shows the evil consequences of hating the Prophet PBUH and the message he came with.
4. Believers must be thankful to Allah for the many favours He gave them, the best of which is being Muslims (Islam).
5. Mankind is reminded that wealth and children do not determine one's righteousness and therefore should avoid being arrogant.
6. It teaches man that righteousness is found in a healthy soul that is fearful and thankful to Allah.
7. It is a motivation to the believers to continue worshipping Allah as He prepared for them a river in paradise with the sweetest and whitest water from which they will drink on the day of judgement.
8. Believers should continue having trust and hope in Allah even when they lose something they like most just as the prophet PBUH lost all his children except Fatima.
9. Believers should continue worshiping Allah in best way possible even if a section of people laugh at them or abuse them as long as they are doing the right thing.
10. Muslims should take prayer and sacrifice as exceptional forms of worship because even Allah mentions them in the Surat.
11. It confirms the Day of Judgment by describing the good things believers will have on that day like the river called Kauthar.

DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN SURAT KAUTHAR AND SURAT DHUHA

SIMILARITIES

1. Both chapters were revealed to console the prophet PBUH. Surat Dhuha consoled him from the abuses of the Quraish Meccans during the Futra period and Kauthar comforted him after losing almost all his children except Fatima.
2. Both chapters express the commands of Allah to his noble prophet PBUH. Surat Dhuha instructs the Prophet PBUH not to oppress the orphans and needy while Kauthar instructs him to observe prayer and sacrifice.
3. Both chapters remind the prophet PBUH of the favours Allah gave him. Surat Dhuha in Verses 6 & 7 talks about Allah's favours to the prophet PBUH as an orphan and Surat Kauthar talks about the abundant good the prophet PBUH will enjoy in the hereafter.
4. Both chapters talk about Ibaadat (worship). Surat Dhuha reminds the prophet PBUH to turn to Allah for worship after the great day of work and Kauthar mentions praying and sacrificing.
5. Both chapters emphasize Tawheed. Surat Kauthar shows that prayer and sacrifice should be offered to Allah only and Surat Dhuha instructs him to turn to Allah only for worship.
6. Both chapters show that the hereafter is better than life on earth. This is reflected in Verse 4 of Surat Dhuha and reference is made to Verse 1 in Surat Kauthar.
7. Both chapters were revealed after the Quraish Meccans' mockery to the prophet PBUH. Surat Dhuha referred to their mockery during the Futra period while Surat Kauthara after the death of his children.
8. Both chapters were revealed in Mecca during the early stages of the prophet's mission.
9. Both chapters derive their names from the first verses. Surat Kauthar from the word **Kauthar** and Surat Dhuha from the word **Dhuha** both in the first verse of the chapters.
10. Both chapters teach man the act of being patient just as the prophet PBUH was during the two circumstances that led to their revelation.
11. Both chapters show that Allah was there for the prophet PBUH during the time of difficulty.

DIFFERENCES

1. The circumstances which led to the revelation of Surat Dhuha involved the Quraish Meccans laughing at the prophet PBUH during the Futra period while those of Surat Kauthar involved the death of the prophet's children.
2. Surat Dhuha is chapter 93 according to the arrangement of the chapters in the Qur'an while Surat Kauthar is chapter 108.
3. Surat Dhuha was the first to be revealed. Surat Kauthar came later.
4. Surat Dhuha talks about Ibadat in general while Surat Kauthar talks about specific forms of Ibadat i.e prayer and sacrifice.
5. Unlike Surat Kauthar, Surat Dhuha talks about the prophet's infancy (life as an orphan).
6. Unlike Surat Kauthar, Surat Dhuha commands the prophet PBUH to proclaim his favours from Allah in Verse 11.
7. Surat Kauthar has three verses only shorter than Dhuha with 11 verses.
8. The destiny of unbelievers is not clear in Surat Dhuha while in Surat Kauthar, Allah makes it that unbelievers are the losers on the day of judgement.

SURAT NASR (CHAPTER 110): THE DIVINE SUPPORT

BACKGROUND

1. It is the 110th chapter according to the arrangement of the chapters in Qur'an with three verses only.
2. It is the third shortest chapter of the Qur'an after Surat Asr and Kauthar.
3. It is a Madinan Surat revealed to the prophet PBUH after his migration to Madiina.
4. However, some scholars consider it a Meccan Surat because it was revealed to the prophet PBUH during an occasion of the prophet's farewell pilgrimage, two months before his death.
5. It derives its name from the word 'Nasr' which appears in the first verse. It means 'victory' or 'help' from Allah.
6. Although Q (5:3) is generally believed to be the last verse to be revealed to the prophet PBUH, Surat Nasr is said to be the last chapter to be revealed to him as a whole.
7. It was revealed to bring glad tidings to the prophet PBUH concerning his victory over the Quraish Meccans, conquest of Mecca and great influx in Islam.
8. Some scholars maintain that Surat Nasr was revealed as a sign showing that the prophet's death was drawing nearer and that is what Allah was informing him about. That is why Abu Bakar wept so much when the prophet PBUH was delivering the message in this Surat.
9. For this reason, it is reported that after the revelation of this Surat, the prophet PBUH concentrated much on praising Allah and he was always heard saying "praise and glory to be Allah."

THE THEMES OF SURAT NASR

The main theme of Surat Nasr is about the prophet's victory in his mission, conquest of Mecca and influx into Islam by the end of his mission.

The prophet's victories were witnessed in many incidences including victories attained in the battles against the Quraish Meccans e.g the battle of Badr, Uhud and others.

Another theme of the Surat Nasr was the fulfillment of Allah's promised victory of Islam all over the world. Allah promised that Islam would gain victory over the people of Mecca and

polytheism (idolatry). This was witnessed when the prophet PBUH conquered Mecca and destroyed all the idols around the Kaaba.

Surat Nasr also talks about how man should show appreciation whenever he receives any favour from Allah. This is because man's victory which the prophet PBUH witnessed during his mission is also a favour from God. So one should show gratitude to Allah by praising and thanking Him.

Lastly, the Surat indirectly talks about the accomplishment of the prophet's mission after successfully preaching against idol worship and other Jahiliyya practices. In fact, he died two months after its revelation.

THE CONTENT/TRANSLATION AND GENERAL MEANING/INTERPRETATION OF SURAT NASR

Qn: Examine the content of Surat Nasr.

- Approach - Give brief introduction about Surat Nasr.
- Give the translation/content of each verse and explain it or give its meaning.

In Name Of Allah the Most Merciful the Most Gracious

Verse 1: 'When comes the Help of Allah and Victory.'

The verse means that Allah had determined the victory of Prophet Muhammad PBUH and his victory was in two forms. The first victory came during the battles against the Quraish Meccans like Badr, Uhud and others while the second victory came during the conquest of Mecca. After the conquest of Mecca, all the idols around the Kaaba were destroyed which meant that Islam had won over monotheism.

Verse 2: 'And see the people enter Allah's Religion in crowds.'

The verse means that as a result of the victory the Muslims gained over the Meccans, many tribes that had hitherto resisted embracing Islam started to convert to Islam in large numbers.

It can also mean that after a peaceful conquest of Mecca, many people from within and outside Mecca started coming to the prophet PBUH to pay allegiance to him.

Verse 3: 'Celebrate the praises of your Lord, and pray for His Forgiveness. Truly He is Ever-forgiving.'

The verse means that since Allah had fulfilled His promise to the prophet PBUH, he should give thanks to Him in appreciation.

It can also be interpreted to mean that since the mission of the prophet PBUH had successfully been accomplished despite the hardships it started with, Allah commanded the prophet PBUH to thank Him for the success and also to pray for forgiveness of his followers for their past mistakes.

It further means that the prophet PBUH should ask for Allah's protection against the weaknesses that may find their way into the Muslim community on account of lack of adequate training or education of the new Muslim converts at large.

The expression '*Truly He is Ever-forgiving*' carries a significance of repentance that Allah is merciful and will always forgive His servants who sincerely repent to Him.

THE LESSONS DERIVED FROM SURAT NASR

1. Believers must show appreciation to Allah for whatever favour they receive. They should praise and thank Him as a way of showing that they are grateful to Him for what He does for them.
2. Muslims should seek Allah's forgiveness all the time because no man is perfect. When man asks for forgiveness, Allah is merciful and will surely forgive him.
3. It is a lesson to Muslims to always seek truth by submitting to the cause of Allah. This is seen by the great influx in Islam that implied that reality had overpowered falsehood.
4. Believers should glorify the Name of Allah and ask for His forgiveness and mercy. This is the way of showing that one is a perfect servant of Allah.
5. Man learns that asking for forgiveness is an act of worship. This is so because even the prophets who were taken to be the most righteous creatures of Allah are also asked to seek for Allah's forgiveness and mercy.
6. It shows Allah's predetermination of events because according to Q(110:1) Allah promises the prophet PBUH help and success in his mission and it was shortly fulfilled.
7. The Surat is a guard against arrogance because all victory is from Allah. No man should boast around because of achieving success because it is Allah's favour.
8. Muslims learn that no one knows when to succeed or to fail but it Allah who determines one's fate. He determine the time, form and purpose of the success or failure of His creatures.
9. It justifies Jihad in Islam. This because according to this chapter, man is entrusted with Islam and he must guard it by all means available to him.

SURAT LAHAB (CHAPTER 111): THE FLAMES

BACKGROUND

1. This is an early Meccan Surat which is chapter 111 according to the arrangement of the holy Qur'an.
2. It is one of the shortest chapters of the holy Qur'an with only five verses.
3. Abu Lahab (father of the flames) and his wife are the people mentioned in this chapter.
4. The chapter takes its name from Abu Lahab whose real name was Abu Uzza, mentioned in the first verse.
5. The circumstances surrounding its revelation came at the time when the prophet PBUH declared his public call.
6. When Allah commanded the prophet PBUH to start preaching in public, he called all the Meccan tribes to gather on mountain Swafa.
7. On gathering, the prophet PBUH started addressing by asking them whether he had ever told them a lie to and their response was no.
8. He also asked them whether they would believe him if he had told them that there was an enemy behind mount Swafa coming to attack them. They all responded affirmatively.
9. He then told them that he was a messenger of Allah, they should believe him and that he was inviting them to worship one God so that they could be saved from the impending punishment.
10. No sooner had he finished delivering his message than when Abu Lahab stood up and in a loud voice he said "is it for this that you have called us here? May you perish oh you Muhammad!"
11. The prophet PBUH felt frustrated and stopped talking. He felt belittled and hurt.

12. It was at this moment that Allah sent to him Angel Jibril with the message contained in Surat Lahab condemning Abu Lahab and his actions towards the prophet PBUH.

THEMES OF SURAT LAHAB

1. The Surat starts by mentioning Abu Lahab and his reaction to the prophet's call in which he belittled him and decried his message.
2. It also mentions Abu Lahab's wife, Ummu Jamil, and whatever she did to frustrate the prophet's mission.
3. It continues to show that neither wealth nor children or wives have anything to do in the sight of Allah as Abu Lahab thought when abusing the prophet PBUH. In fact, he died a pitiful disease in which wealth and children did not save him.
4. It also shows the immediate response of Allah to Abu Lahab's evil reaction to His messenger by promising him to perish in ever-burning fire. This happened shortly when Abu Lahab was seized by a strange disease believed to be contagious and he died unattended to.
5. It talks about Allah's punishments to the disbelievers and those who try to stop His mission. Such punishments can be effected here earth and others in hereafter.

THE CONTENT/TRANSLATION OF SURAT LAHAB

In Name Of Allah the Most Merciful the Most Gracious

Verse 1: *Perish the hands of the Father of Flame! And perish him.*

Verse 2: *No profit to him from all his wealth, and all his gains.*

Verse 3: *He shall soon burn in a Fire of Blazing Flame.*

Verse 4: *And his wife shall carry the cracking wood as fuel!*

Verse 5: *Around her neck is a twisted rope of palm-leaf fibre.*

THE GENERAL MEANING/INTERPRETATION OF SURAT LAHAB

In Name Of Allah the Most Merciful the Most Gracious

Verse 1: Perish the hands of the Father of Flame! And perish he.

The verse was a reaction of Allah to the words of Abu Lahab, the prophet's uncle, confirming that it is Abu Lahab to perish with his both hands after his evil reaction to the prophet's call.

Verse 2: No profit to him from all his wealth, and all his gains.

It means that wealth and children count nothing in the sight of Allah because this is what tempted Abu Lahab to ridicule the Prophet PBUH. In fact his wealth and children never saved him when he was attacked by a strange contagious disease because everyone feared to come nearer to him.

Verse 3: He shall soon burn in a Fire of Blazing Flame.

This verse was a statement Allah used to reply to Abu Lahab's unfortunate words of pride and arrogance. It means that Abu Lahab's punishment was not to end on earth but he will also suffer severely after death.

Verse 4: And his wife shall carry the cracking wood as fuel!

It refers to Abu Lahab's wife called Ummu Jamil who used to slander the Prophet PBUH and went about abusing him.

She also used to collect thorns and scattered them in the prophet's way. She was always seen carrying thorns and she was nick named Carrier of Thorns. The expression '*carrier of firewood*' is an Arabic idiom referring to a person who slanders, a description which fitted Ummu Jamil's behavior towards the Prophet PBUH.

Verse 5: Around her neck is a twisted rope of palm-leaf fibre.

The verse refers to the precious necklace that Ummu Jamil sold and vowed to use the proceedings in the campaign against the prophet PBUH. Allah promised to make her a heavy and hot necklace of items of fire that she will bear in hell after death.

It also refers to how Ummu Jamil met her death. It is said that she was returning from where she had gone to collect the thorns tying the rope around her forehead when he slipped and the rope strangled her to death. Her body was found later bearing a rope around her neck.

LESSONS DRAWN FROM SURAT LAHAB

1. It means that each one will be responsible for whatever he does on earth and he will be rewarded or punished accordingly just as Abu Lahab and his wife, Ummu Jamil, suffered.
2. Muslims should not fear to spread Islam because Allah is ever ready to protect those who strive in His cause just as He protected the Prophet PBUH against Abu Lahab and his wife.
3. Man is warned against disobeying Allah. Abu Lahab cursed the prophet PBUH when he was delivering Allah's message, only for him to suffer a pitiful death.
4. Muslims learn to use their wealth for what benefits their souls because there is no difference between the rich and poor before Allah and that material wealth cannot protect wrongdoers from Allah's wrath.
5. It is a lesson to Muslims to endure hardships and at the same time pray hard to Allah to rescue them. This is what the Prophet PBUH did when he was confronted by Abu Lahab and his wife.
6. It is important to know that Allah will punish wrongdoers who spread mischief among people just like how Abu Lahab and Ummu Jamil did.
7. We learn from the Surat that evil-doers will perish by the very means they wish to destroy others. That is how Abu Lahab and his wife were destroyed.
8. It is a lesson that those who do not respect the personality of Prophet Muhammad PBUH are in total loss. Allah is annoyed with them and will punish them.
9. From the Surat, the persecutors of Islam cannot succeed in this earth and on the day of judgement, they will suffer the gravest punishment.
10. The chapter shows the miraculous nature and authenticity of the holy Qur'an. This is evidenced in the immediate response of Allah to Abu Lahab's evil words.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SURAT FIL (105) AND SURAT LAHAB (111)

1. Both chapters mention the enemies of Allah's mission. Surat Fil talks about Abraha and his elephant army while Surat Lahab talks about Abu Lahab and his wife.

2. Both chapters emphasize Allah's power in protecting His mission. He protected the Kaaba by destroying Abraha's elephant army in Surat Fil while in Surat Lahab, he protected the prophet himself.
3. In both chapters, the enemies of Islam were punished in the same way. A divine scourge in form of aggravated small pox befell them with deadly pustules (pimples) which killed them.
4. Both chapters show people who use their powers and material gains to frustrate Allah's mission. Abraha wanted to use his church at Sariah to divert people from the Kaaba while Abu Lahab used his riches and power to abuse the prophet PBUH.
5. Both chapters show how Allah comes to the rescue of His helpless people. He rescued the Arabs from Abraha's elephant army and at the same time He protected the prophet PBUH from Abu Lahab's abuses.
6. However, in Surat Lahab, the enemy of Islam is mentioned by name (Abu Lahab) and he was denounced while in Surat Fil, the enemy of Allah (Abraha Ashram) was referred to indirectly using the attribute '**owner of the elephant**'.
7. The events that led to the revelation of Surat Fil took place before the advent of Prophet Muhammad PBUH while the event that led to the revelation of Surat Lahab took place at early stage of the revelation of Islam.
8. The main theme of the revelation of Surat Fil was about Abraha's intention to destroy the Kaaba while Surat Lahab was a reaction of Allah to Abu Lahab's cruelty to the prophet PBUH.
9. Surat Lahab makes reference to Abu Lahab's wife but Abraha's wife is not referred anywhere in Surat Fiil.
10. Surat Lahab is chapter 111 while Surat Fiil is 105 according to the arrangement of the Qur'an.
11. In Surat Fiil, Allah mentions **how He destroyed** the enemies of His mission but in Surat Lahab He mentions **how He will deal** with Abu Lahab.
12. Although both Abraha and Abu Lahab were prompted by power, wealth and children to block Allah's message, children and wealth are only mentioned in Surat Lahab that both of them will not benefit Abu Lahab.
13. Surat Fiil mentions the plots of the enemies of Islam and how Allah strayed them but in Surat Lahab, Allah only mentions Abu Lahab and his wife.

SURAT IKHLAS (CHAPTER 112): THE ONENESS/PURITY

BACKGROUND

1. Surat Ikhlas is probably one of the first chapters to be revealed to Prophet Muhammad PBUH.
2. It is a Meccan Surat by the fact that it has the characteristics of Meccan chapters such as being poetic and concepts of Tawheed.
3. It derives its name from the word **Ikhlas** which means '***purity of Allah***' which is the main theme of the Surat.
4. The chapter discusses one main theme i.e the concept of monotheism or oneness/purity of Allah.
5. It is a short chapter with only four verses.
6. It was revealed as an answer to the questions raised by the Meccan Quraish before the prophet PBUH about the Nature of Allah.
7. The Meccans on hearing the prophet PBUH preaching against their gods thought that he was possessed by evil spirits or he wanted material gains or leadership in society.

8. As a result they sent a man called **Utbah bin Rabia** with cunning proposals to the Prophet PBUH to convince him to stop preaching against their gods but he refused.
9. He assured them that he was neither possessed nor in need of any material or economic gains or power from them but he wanted them to believe in only one God, Allah.
10. They were not satisfied with the prophet's explanation and they approached him again and asked him the nature of his God.
11. It is said that hardly had he answered them when he received the message contained in chapter 112 describing the Nature of Allah.
12. That is why the chapter starts with the expression 'say', an indication that Allah was responding to the question raised by the Quraish Meccans.

THE THEMES OF SURAT IKHLAS

The main theme of Surat Ikhlas is describing the divine nature of Allah by dealing with Islamic monotheism in the strict sense of the word.

THE CONTENT/TRANSLATION AND GENERAL MEANING/INTERPRETATION OF SURAT IKHLAS

In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most Merciful

Verse 1: "Say" 'He is Allah, the One and only'

This is a permanent command to the prophet PBUH and all mankind to understand Allah as one with no partner in His Lordship, Attributes and Nature. He is one; He has been and will ever be one.

He is the creator, provider and sustainer and worth of worship. All other deities are false in Islam.

Verse 2: 'Allah, the Eternal and Absolute'

In this verse, Allah is considered Eternal in a sense that He is to stay after every creation has perished yet before Him nothing existed. This means that Allah is Everlasting without beginning or end.

Allah is also absolute because He is complete and does not need to depend on any of His creation but all creation depend on Him for their sustenance.

Verse 3: 'He does not produce nor was He produced'

This means that Allah does not produce and He was not produced. So attributing children to Him is like imposing human attributes to Him.

The verse talks of Allah as having not been produced. So He has neither a father nor a mother as He did not succeed anyone and He will not be succeeded.

Verse 4: 'And there is none like unto Him'

The verse means that Allah does not look like any of His creatures nor there is any creature that looks like Him. He remains one without comparison and beyond human imagination.

This verse negates the Christian belief of trinity which maintains that there exist 3 persons in one God head. Surely, one who adheres in the 3 God-Head is a disbeliever.

RELEVANCE OF SURAT IKHLAS TO THE MUSLIMS

1. It encourages Muslims to read the Qur'an because from the prophet's report, the recitation of Surat Ikhlas is equivalent to a third of the Qur'an.
2. The increase in the recitation of Surat Ikhlas is a means of attaining the love of Allah as reported by Aisha about the man who led Muslims in prayer and consequently read Surat Ikhlas.
3. Whoever reads Surat Ikhlas ten times a day, Allah will build for him a house in paradise.
4. It is the only chapter of the Qur'an that deals with monotheism in the strict sense of the word by describing the best qualities of Allah like eternity.
5. It signifies that Allah desires ease for the believers. Instead of reading the whole Qur'an, a Muslim can only read Surat Ikhlas three times and gets rewards of a person who reads the whole Qur'an.
6. It is reported from Lady Aisha that the prophet PBUH used to recite Surat Ikhlas, Faraq and Nans at least three times before going to bed. So recitation and deliberation over Surat Ikhlas creates deep attachment of the worshipper to Allah.
7. It is the only chapter in its complete form that differentiates between Islam and Christianity by emphasizing Tawheed against all other forms of beliefs like trinity, Judaism, Zoroastrianism and many others.
8. It is a lesson that Allah is the source of sustenance and that all mankind should turn to Him whenever there is need.
9. It encourages Muslims to observe prayer (Duwa) because the prophet PBUH said that whoever recites it when entering his house, Allah eradicates poverty from his house and neighbourhood.
10. It is reported that the prophet PBUH said that constant recitation of Surat Ikhlas increases angels at the time of death who console the believer faced with death.
11. It refutes the Christian belief that man was created in the image of Allah. This is evidenced from the last verse of the chapter which suggests that the image of Allah is beyond human imagination.

THE CONCEPT OF MONOTHEISM IN SURAT IKHLAS

QN: *What does Surat Ikhlas teach about Tawheed (Monotheism)?*

1. Monotheism is the belief in the Unity of Allah i.e He is one and pure without any associate.
2. From verse 1 of Surat Ikhlas, Muslims are required to keep proclaiming that Allah is one. No one can share His Lordship or essence with Him. This is the primary principle of Tawheed.
3. The concept of Tawheed suggests that Allah is the Supreme Being and the source of all creation. He is the only one to whom all worship, praise and glorification are due. This is all what Surat Ikhlas is about.
4. According to the concept of Tawheed, Allah is Eternal i.e everlasting with no beginning or end. This is what verse 2 of Surat Ikhlas suggests.
5. Allah is regarded as absolute under the concept of Tawheed i.e He is complete and does not depend on His creation but all His creation depend on Him for heir sustenance. This excellent principle of Tawheed is described in verse 2 of Surat Ikhlas.
6. Verse 3 of Surat Ikhlas states that Allah does not produce. This is in agreement with Tawheed which requires a Muslim not to conceive Allah as having a son or a daughter because this would mean imposing human qualities to Him.
7. It further suggests that has Allah no parents as He succeeded no one and therefore will not be succeeded by anyone. It is the same teaching that Tawheed puts across.

8. According to the concept of Tawheed, Allah is not comparable to any creature. Verse 4 of Surat Ikhlas holds that attribute that Allah is not like any of His creature and He is beyond human imagination.
9. The expression ‘Allah the one’ is in total agreement with the concept of Tawheed which negates the Christian concept of trinity.
10. The concept of Tawheed refutes the Christian belief of sonship which pre-supposes that Allah has a son. This is what Surat Ikhlas stresses in verse 3.

Revision questions

1. ***Outline the background and circumstances that preceded the revelation of Surat Ikhlas.***
2. ***Examine the meaning of Surat Ikhlas.***