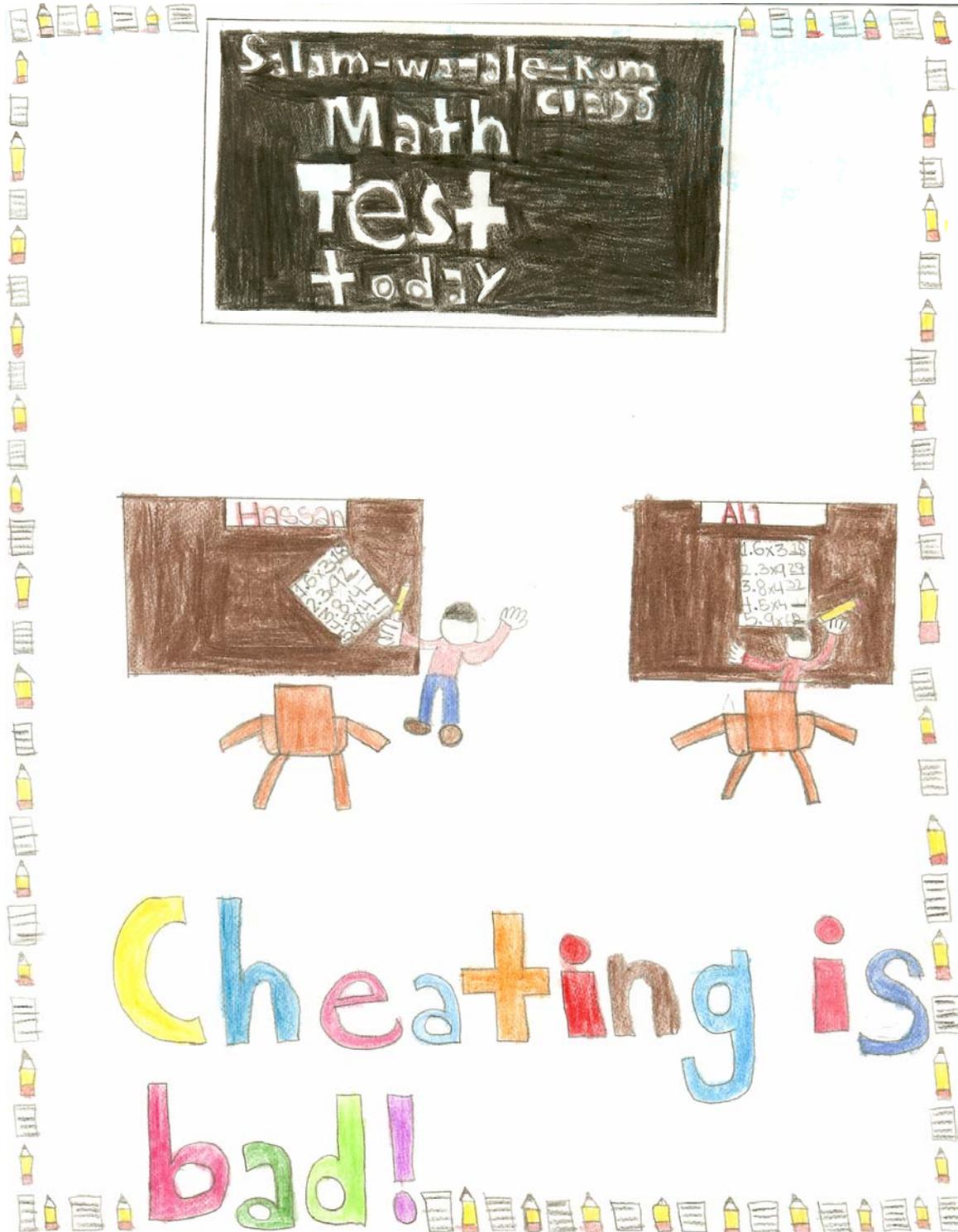


Madrasat Ahlul'Bait Islamic School

Grade 6 Akhlaq



Cover Design by: Zainab Aslam

Shia-Muslim Association of Bay Area

First Edition (Revision 2.0)
First Printing April, 2006

Compilers and Co-Authors:

Urooj Kazmi, Chair, Syllabus Committee,
Madrasat Ahlul'Bait, Shia-Muslim Association of Bay Area

Editors:

Urooj Kazmi, Chair Syllabus Committee,
Madrasat Ahlul'Bait, Shia-Muslim Association of Bay Area

Copyright Free & Non-Profit Notice:

Madrasat Ahlul'Bait curriculum material can be freely copied, duplicated, reproduced, quoted, distributed, printed, used in derivative works and saved on any media and platform for non-profit and educational purposes only. A fee no higher than the cost of copying may be charged for the material.

Note from Madrasat Ahlul'Bait:

The Publishers and the Authors have made every effort to present the Quranic verses, prophetic and masomeen traditions, their explanations and the material from the sources referenced in an accurate, complete and clear manner. We ask for forgiveness from Allah (SWT) and the readers if any mistakes have been overlooked during the review process.

Contact Information:

Any correspondence related to this publication and all notations of errors or omissions should be addressed to Syllabus Committee, Madrasat Ahlul'Bait, Shia-Muslim Association of Bay Area at saba@saba-igc.org.

Published by:

Madrasat Ahlul'Bait
Shia-Muslim Association of Bay Area
4415 Fortran Court, San Jose, CA 95134, USA
www.saba-igc.org
saba@saba-igc.org

LIMIT OF LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY: THE PUBLISHER AND THE AUTHORS MAKE NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES WITH RESPECT TO THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS WORK AND SPECIFICALLY DISCLAIM ALL WARRANTIES, INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION WARRANTIES OF FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. NO WARRANTY MAY BE CREATED OR EXTENDED BY SALES OR PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS. THE ADVICE AND STRATEGIES CONTAINED HEREIN MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR EVERY SITUATION. NEITHER THE PUBLISHER NOT THE AUTHORS SHALL BE LIABLE FOR DAMAGES ARISING HEREFROM. THE FACT THAT AN ORGANIZATION, BOOK OR WEBSITE IS REFERRED TO IN THIS WORK AS A CITATION AND/OR A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FURTHER INFORMATION DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE AUTHORS OR THE PUBLISHER ENDORSES THE INFORMATION THE ORGANIZATION OR WEBSITE MAY PROVIDE OR RECOMMENDATIONS IT MAY MAKE. FURTHER, READERS SHOULD BE AWARE THAT BOOKS AND INTERNET WEBSITES LISTED IN THIS WORK MAY HAVE CHANGED OR DISAPPEARED BETWEEN WHEN THIS WORK WAS WRITTEN AND WHEN IT IS READ. SHIA ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA IS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH ANY ORGANIZATION, PRODUCT OR VENDOR MENTIONED IN THIS BOOK.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
Foreword	5
Preface	5
Chapter 1: Merits of Good Akhlaq Extravagance	6
1.1 Merits of Good Akhlaq	6
1.2 Extravagance	7
1.3 Worksheet: Akhlaq and Arrogance	9
Chapter 2: Generosity (Sakhawat).....	10
2.1 Miserliness / To Be Stingy	11
2.2 Worksheet: Generosity	12
Chapter 3: Greed (Tama').....	13
3.1 Worksheet: Greed.....	14
Chapter 4: Pride.....	15
4.1 What is Pride?	15
4.2 Further consequences of arrogance:.....	16
4.3 What is the cure to prevent us from being proud?.....	16
4.4 Worksheet: Pride.....	18
Chapter 5: Complaining When In Distress.....	19
5.1 Nagging.....	19
5.2 Worksheet: Complaining.....	21
Chapter 6: Cheating.....	22
6.1 Embezzlement	23
6.2 Worksheet : Cheating.....	24
Chapter 7: To Gain Knowledge.....	25
7.1 Worksheet: 4.9: To Gain Knowledge.....	27
Chapter 8: To Form Good/Bad Opinion About People (Husndhan/Su'udhan).....	28
8.1 Worksheet: To Form Opinions About Others	30
Chapter 9: Respect For Parents	32
9.1 Worksheet: Respect for Parents	35
Chapter 10: One of Imam Zainul Abideen's dua' for his parents.	36
10.1 Worksheet: Du'a for Parents	39
Chapter 11: Friendship in Islam	41
11.1 What is friendship?.....	41
11.2 Is friendship necessary?.....	41
11.3 Whom should we befriend?.....	42
11.4 What are some qualities we should look for in a friend?.....	42
11.5 Whom should we never befriend?.....	43
11.6 Worksheet: Friendship in Islam.....	44
Chapter 12: Islamic Brotherhood and Unity.....	46
12.1 Worksheet: Islamic Brotherhood & Unity.....	47
Chapter 13: The Nafs	49
13.1 Three Facets of Nafs:	49
13.2 Worksheet: The Nafs.....	51
Chapter 14: Sins and their Effects - Part I.....	52
14.1 Obedience to Allah:.....	52
14.2 Disobedience of Allah:.....	52
14.3 Worksheet: Sins and their Effects - Part I	54
Chapter 15: Sins and their Effects - Part II.....	57
15.1 Worksheet: Sins and their Effects - Part II.....	60
Chapter 16: Sins and their Effects - Part III	62
16.1 Effects of Sins:	62
16.2 Some Common Sins:.....	63

16.3	Worksheet: Sins and their Effects - Part III.....	64
Chapter 17:	Taqwa (Self-restraint and Piety).....	65
17.1	Definition of Taqwa	65
17.2	Verses:.....	65
17.3	Narrations.....	66
17.4	Consequences of Taqwa	66
17.5	Worksheet: Taqwa (Self-restraint and Piety)	68
Chapter 18:	Repentance	69
18.1	Worksheet: Repentance.....	72
Chapter 19:	Halaal and Haraam Food and Drinks.....	73
19.1	Worksheet: Halaal and Haraam Foods and Drinks.....	79
Chapter 20:	Halaal and Haraam Food and Drinks (Part II).....	82
20.1	Islam’s position on alcohol.....	82
20.2	Guidelines to eating at restaurants.....	83
20.3	Eating Manners (acts that are encouraged when taking a meal):.....	84
20.4	Worksheet: Halaal and Haraam Food and Drinks (Part II).....	85
Chapter 21:	How The Stranger Became Prevalent.....	87
21.1	Worksheet: How the Stranger Became Prevalent.....	89
	Acknowledgements	90

Foreword

The material presented in this document is a result of an effort made by the personnel of the school of Ahlul'Bait of the Shia-Muslim Association of Bay Area Islamic Center at San Jose, California in cooperation with several schools of Ahlul'Bait at London-Stanmore, London-Hujjat, Vancouver, Minnesota and Toronto.

We, at San Jose, looked at material from London-Stanmore, London-Hujjat, Vancouver, Minnesota, Toronto and Irvine's Islamic institutions, as well as that available at various web-sites to compile age appropriate textbooks for use by our students. We thank the institutions that were kind enough to provide us with the electronic files of their curriculum. We used some of what they had and added to it what we felt was appropriate. We included more worksheets and pictures where deemed necessary. We also added some new topics that, we felt are important to the students.

We had two important goals in mind while working on this document. First, introduce the students to the important Islamic concepts and beliefs that are crucial for him/her to know. Second, expose the students to as many Quranic verses and sayings from Prophet Muhammad (p) and his Ahlul'Bait (a) as possible.

We thank Hujjatul Islam Maulana Nabi Raza Abidi for his spiritual guidance. We hope future efforts will continue taking place until reaching our goal of having a strong, rich and unified curriculum for the schools of Ahlul'Bait for all ages.

**Syllabus Committee
Madrasat Ahlul'Bait**

Preface

In sixth grade akhlaq the student is introduced to additional facets of good behavior encouraged by Islamic teachings. These behaviors consist of day to day actions that not only please Allah, but mold our character so that we can become exemplary human beings.

Chapter 1: Merits of Good Akhlaq Extravagance

1.1 Merits of Good Akhlaq

In Islam there is a lot of emphasis placed on moral conduct i.e. akhlaq.

Why? Well because when Allah created the human being, He created it in two parts. One part was like an empty car shell, used to hold something, known as the BODY. The other part was like the engine, known as the SOUL/SELF.

Just as our body needs looking after to remain healthy, so does our soul/self. The way to look after this soul is to listen, to think, to respect, to help. When we help someone, we feel happy, but it is not the body that feels happy. It is not the arms, or the legs, or the head that feels happy, it is something else. That something else is our NAFS. The **Akhlaq of Islam is food for the soul**, and if we feed it regularly, it will remain healthy.

This brings another question. Other religions also preach respect, so why don't we follow them?

All the religions which were sent down by Allah were brought with their own codes of conduct. Each religion expanded and added, until with the advent of Islam, all the rules had been perfected. The other religions have been altered by man in one way or another, and only Islam remains as pure as the night it was revealed. This means that by following the Akhlaq of Islam you are feeding your nafs with the best food.

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said:

"I have been sent to complete the nobility of character."

In completing the nobility of character we have to exercise self-control. So if you engage in Haraam, you are lowering the standard of your NAFS, while if you refrain from Haraam, you are strengthening your the faith of your nafs.

The problem with the world today is that the body is being looked after very well, but the soul is being totally neglected. This leads to the disease of the soul, which we often do not realize, causes intensive and long term damage.

In this grade we will talk about various aspects of akhlaq. The first one will be Asraaf known as extravagance in English. It may sound like extravagance has nothing to do with akhlaq, but

those that are extravagant are morally obligated to explain their behaviour, since whatever they are wasting could be used by someone else in need. Extravagance also leads to show off and arrogance.

1.2 Extravagance

Extravagance means to use too much of something when it is not necessary. It means WASTAGE.

The Arabic word for this is pronounced as *ASRAAF*.

Allah explains to us in the Holy Qur'an, Surah 5, ayat 90:

"O you who believe! Make not unlawful the good things which God has made lawful for you, But commit not excess for God does not love those given to excess."

In Islam, we place great importance on stopping wastage.

Most children will remember that when they leave food on their plates, then they are told not to commit Asraaf. However, Asraaf does not apply only to food, although that is an important area.

Islam teaches us to have respect for all things that Allah has blessed us with, and what is more worthy of respect than the sustenance (food) that HE has provided?

This means that we should respect food, by not abusing it. We should not play with food, even for fun. We should never abuse it in any way, and should NEVER throw it away unless it is spoiled. If we throw food away without reason, then we are throwing away a gift from Allah. This shows how ungrateful we are.

When taking food in our plates we should put only as much as we think we will be able to finish. If we are still hungry after finishing, we can take some more. But many times you see people who are hungry, put a heap of food on their plates, eat half of it, and throw the rest away!!

We should be aware that there are many people in the world who do not have enough to eat, and don't even know where their next meal will come from. What right have we to take food for granted so as to be able to throw it away, as if it were garbage?

This extravagance is very often seen in day to day life. Even buying food to eat outside, when you know there is food waiting at home is a form of Asraaf, unless you make sure the food you

have at home is stored properly and used later and not just thrown out.

Islam explains to us that to waste is not allowed. However let us make it clear that it is alright to buy expensive items if we possess the wealth. It is only that Allah has given us whatever wealth we possess and we should use it smartly.

The Holy Qur'an itself says in Surah 7 ayat 31.

"O children of Adam! wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: but waste not by excess, for God does not love the wasters."

It is not wrong to buy valuable things if WE ARE GOING TO USE THEM. However, to spend money unnecessarily on something of no use, is not allowed. If we have extra money we can invest it for our children, or help less fortunate people, or even use the money for good causes such as building schools and hospitals.

Why are there people who spend extravagantly on purpose and commit asraaf?

Reasons for Asraaf include,

- 1) for the sake of showing off to others.
- 2) buying something just because your friend or neighbour has it.
- 3) having no value for wealth, buying for the sake of buying.

All these reasons are abominable and show the person has lack of responsibility with his/her wealth. On the day of Judgement, Allah will ask "How did you spend the wealth I provided you?" The people who have committed Asraaf will have no excuse, and will earn the displeasure of Allah.

If we think of Allah whenever we spend the money He has given us, and think whether He would approve of our purchase, than we will never commit Asraaf.

1.3 Worksheet: Akhlaq and Arrogance

1. Allah created man in body and soul/self. The soul is often referred to as _____ in Islam.
2. The _____ preached in Islam is food for the soul.
3. Prophet Muhammad (s) has said he has been sent “to complete the _____ of _____.”
4. Akhlaq in Islam refers to one’s manners and moral _____.
5. _____ refers to extravagance or wastage.
6. Give three examples of Asraaf that are most common in our society.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
7. Give two specific examples (preferably something different than above) of how *you* can stop doing Asraaf.
 - a.
 - b.

Chapter 2: Generosity (Sakhawat)

The literal meaning of generosity (called Sakhawat in Arabic) is willingness to give something that you have to another.

According to the teaching of our Imams, generosity is not only giving your extra to other people but giving away something that you need yourself to somebody who also needs it.

In Qur'an (Surah 92 Ayat 5-7) Allah says,

".....As for him who GIVES AWAY and guards himself against evil and believes in the best, We will smoothen for him the path unto bliss."

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said,

"A generous person is a friend of Allah, and a miser is an enemy of Allah."

To be generous you **do not** have to have money. You can be generous by spending your **time** helping people.

Children and young people often think that to donate something you should be an adult. This is not true. If a child donates something, it means more to Allah than if an adult donated the same thing. This is because the child is not earning and does not have much, and so is giving away something which is more precious to him/her, than it is to the adult.

The best example of generosity can be seen in the life of the Ahlul Bayt (AS). One such instance is the event that is glorified in the Quran itself, in Surah Hal Ata (aka Surah Dahr or Surah Insaan) where Imam Ali (AS), Hazrat Fatima (AS), Imam Hasan (AS), Imam Hussain (AS) and their follower Hazrat Fidha (AS) gave the only food they had for Iftar (after a whole day of fasting) for three consecutive days to the needy, the orphan, and the slave (prisoner of war). When these people thanked the Ahlul Bayt for their generosity, the Ahlul Bayt (as mentioned in Quran) said "we don't expect any reward or thanks from you, we have done it for the pleasure of Allah alone."

A sixth grader can be generous in different ways:

- By giving their pocket money to a needy person or cause
- By helping a blind person cross the road
- By helping a fellow student by tutoring them in a subject they need help in
- By volunteering for tasks they can do at Islamic Centers.

2.1 Miserliness / To Be Stingy

The Arabic word for miserliness is Bukhl. A simple meaning for miserliness is to be stingy. This means giving very little of what you have to someone who needs it.

Example: Imagine you were eating, and you had plenty of food. If a poor man came to the door and asked for something to eat, and you gave him a few spoons of rice, or half a slice of bread, then that is being miserly.

If your mother asks you to help her for five minutes, and you set your stop-watch so that you help her for exactly five minutes and then go away, then that is also being stingy.

There should **never** be any miserliness in the home. If your brother/sister wants to use something of yours, you should give it freely, and not count how much of it was used or how long it was used for.

Allah tells us in the Holy Qur'an:

"Make not your hand (tied like a miser's) to your neck, Nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach, so that you become blameworthy and destitute (have nothing left)."

So you should always be generous, but not so generous that you have nothing left!

The opposite of being stingy is being charitable. We have already talked about generosity, to be generous is to be charitable.

Allah explains to us about charity in the Holy Qur'an, Surah 2 ayat 261:

"The parable of those who spend their property in the way of Allah is as the parable of a grain growing seven ears with a hundred grain in every ear; and Allah multiplies for whom He pleases; and Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing."

2.2 Worksheet: *Generosity*

1. What is the literal meaning of generosity?
2. What does Allah says about greed in the Quran?
3. In school or at home give an example where you were generous. Remember you can be generous both with your time or your money.
4. What did Prophet Muhammad (s) say about greed?

What is the meaning of miserliness?

Chapter 3: Greed (Tama')

The literal meaning of greed (called Tama' or Hirs in Arabic) is desiring anything beyond your need.

Eg: If I need one piece of bread and I desire for more than one for myself then I am acting greedy.

To be greedy means to always want more and more without ever stopping. There are many areas in which you can have greed. You can be greedy with food, clothes, power, or money.

You should always try to be satisfied with what Allah has given you. When you have a certain amount of something, ask yourself whether you NEED more, or are you being greedy. One of the best ways to stop greed, is to share what you have with others who need it. Greed, on most occasions, is bad because it means that you are not satisfied with what you have.

However, according to Islamic teachings greed is not inherently bad. Greed is a natural desire that when misused becomes bad. Only greed for worldly and material things is restricted in Islam, because it would indicate that the goal of the person is this world and they have no connection for the life hereafter.

Eg; A person who is greedy to eat more than required; a person who's greedy for more clothes than s/he needs and spends extravagantly due to his greed, should be condemned.

Islam emphasizes the spiritual and higher goals of achieving divine pleasure. So, if a person is greedy about getting more reward for the hereafter (Thawab) and pleasing Allah by their action, then such greed is not only good but is appreciated in Islam.

Eg. A person can be greedy about earning more money to spend in the way of Allah like helping a needy person or making a mosque.

Another occasion where being greedy is good is when you are greedy for knowledge, since seeking knowledge is greatly encouraged in Islam.

The Holy Prophet (S) has said

"Two greedy persons are never satisfied; those greedy for acquiring knowledge and those greedy for accumulating wealth."

3.1 Worksheet: Greed

What does greed mean?

What is meant by greed in achieving Divine pleasure?

What is one of the best ways to stop oneself from the evil of greed?

What did the Holy Prophet (S) say about greed?

Write an example where you think you behaved as if you were a greedy person?

Chapter 4: Pride

4.1 What is Pride?

In Islam, pride is considered to be very bad. In the Qur'an, Allah tells us not to be arrogant:

Do not turn your face away from people in arrogance and do not walk with pride on the earth. Truly, Allah does not love any self-centered boaster. Be moderate and keep your voice low. Truly, the most hateful of the voices is the braying of the donkey. (Qur'an 31 : 18 - 19)

Arrogance is when we think of ourselves very highly. We feel that we are superior just because we may be good in one or more areas. We may be proud of our wealth, our health, our strength, our friends, our talents, our work, our accomplishments, our color, our race . . . and the list goes on. We can even be proud of good things such as our knowledge, our good deeds, and our prayers. But even being proud of these things is not good. Here is an example of a person who was proud of his knowledge:

- *Hasnain was a 13 year old boy who always got A's in all his courses. He felt he was the best in his class. He could tell you how many people had landed on the moon, who were the first five presidents of the United States of America, how many countries there were in Europe, and how fast the fastest plane could go. He was good in Madrassah too. He could tell you all the animals mentioned in the Qur'an, all the known prophets whose name began with a "D", and the exact locations where each Imam died. Heck, he knew so much, he could even tell you how tall the average giraffe was. What bothered his friends was not that he knew so much, it was that he showed off too much. He would go around boasting to everyone about how much he knew. His friends soon started hating him. But he didn't care. He saw them as inferiors anyway. He soon started avoiding them himself because he knew he was better than them. "Of course I'm better," he said, "who else knows how to count backwards from one million."*

The example above shows many bad effects of pride/arrogance:

1. Pride makes a person think that everyone else is lower than him and that he is better than everyone else. When this happens, if anyone gives him advice, he does not listen to them

because he thinks that they don't know as much as he does. Also, if anyone needs his help, he may not help that person, because he may think that he is too superior to give help to an inferior person.

2. Pride prevents a person from correcting any of his mistakes. He thinks that he is too good to make mistakes. He also thinks that others are too inferior to give him any advice. So, in the end, he will continue making mistakes.
3. Pride can make a person forget about Allah. A proud person will forget that Allah was the One who gave him everything in the first place. A person who is proud of himself attributes all his success to his own self and not to Allah.

4.2 Further consequences of arrogance:

1. People will start hating us if we are arrogant. In Nahjul Balagha, Imam Ali (a) says, "Don't be proud, otherwise the number of people who hate you will increase." This is of course true, as no one likes a person who boasts a lot.
2. Allah will stop sending his blessings on us if we are proud. In the Qur'an, Allah says: "I shall turn away from My signs those who act with pride on the earth . . ." (7 : 146).
3. We will not be able to enter paradise. Prophet Muhammad (s) says: "One who has even a particle of pride in his heart, shall not enter paradise".

4.3 What is the cure to prevent us from being proud?

Fortunately, there are cures to solve this problem, but it is up to us to make sure that we follow them. As long as we take the first step, Allah will help us the rest of the way.

1. The first thing we should do is realize that many things that we are proud of will not last forever. Our wealth will be given away after we die. Our property can be destroyed in a flood or a storm. Our precious things can get stolen any day. All these things are temporary things and once we realize that, we will understand that we can't really be proud of ourselves just because we have them.
2. The second thing to do is to realize that we ourselves are very insignificant. One bite from a little mosquito, and we feel pain. We have to realize that our health and strength will get worse as we get older and one day we too, will cease to exist.
3. Another thing we can do is think about others. We should realize that everything we have is from Allah, and so we have a duty to share it with others. One way we can do this, is by giving money to the poor. However we should be careful not to be proud of this action either.

4. The most important thing we can do is remember Allah. We should try following everything He wants us to. That way, we will realize that He is the greatest of all, and we are his creatures. We should be humble in everything we do as Allah says in the Qur'an:

“The servants of Allah are those who walk with humility on the earth, and when the ignorant address them, they say: ‘Peace’ ”.

Takabbur enters our hearts very secretly, it tries to hide from us, and takes our thoughts over quietly, that is why Prophet Muhammad (S) has told us :

"Pride enters the heart like a black ant crawling over a black rock at night."

The first thing that you should do when you achieve something good is to thank Allah. Just by saying 'Alhamdulillah', you will stop your nafs from praising yourself. By thanking Allah, we are including Him in all aspect of our lives, and sharing our joy and happiness with Him, and recognising that it is through His bounty that we have achieved success.

When Allah created Prophet Adam, he told all the creatures to bow down before Adam. Iblis refused, saying that I am BETTER than him. This was the first takabbur, the first pride, and it was because of this that Iblis is called Shaytan, one who is removed from Allah's Pleasure.

We all achieve something good in our lives. It doesn't mean that we should not be happy. We should be happy, we should feel glad, we should laugh and enjoy, but we should try to be as humble and modest as possible. We should also remember that it was Allah who helped us, and so we should thank Him.

Let us conclude with a saying from Prophet Isa (a): "Just as a plant grows in soft ground, not where it is rocky and hard, so also wisdom grows in a heart which is humble and soft, not in the heart which is hard and proud. Don't you see that the man who keeps his head high bashes it against the roof, while one who holds his head low has the roof as his friend and shelter?"

Chapter 5: Complaining When In Distress

"That man best deserves a kindness who, when he is put off, bears it patiently; when he is refused, excuses it; and when he receives it, Is THANKFUL."(hadith)

Complaining is the opposite of sabr. It is a bad habit, and is one which takes away mercy from Allah.

To complain when misfortune falls upon u, shows that we have little faith in Allah. This is because Allah is testing us to see whether we have patience and forbearance.

If we try to overcome the problem, and say **Alhamdulillah it was not worse**, then we will pass the test.

If we don't do anything about it and just complain to Allah, and say "Why me!" and "It's not fair!" then we have failed the test, because Allah tells us in Surah 94, ayat 6:

"Verily, with every difficulty there is relief."

This means that no matter what difficulties we have in this world, if we have patience and try our best to remove them, Allah will help us, and we will have relief.

Therefore, if we have patience, then the problem will sort itself out with the grace of Allah.

Many people have a habit of complaining. This is called whining. These are the people who when it is winter, complain that it is too cold, and when it becomes summer, they complain that it is too hot. They will always find some reason to complain or criticise.

The important thing to learn from this lesson is that if you are in a problem, you should put in the effort to get out of that problem. If you are sincere, then Allah will help you. It may take a long time, but in the long run, you will be successful if your heart and intentions are in the correct place.

5.1 Nagging

What is nagging? Nagging means to find fault in a person or scold, or complain without end.

It is a dreadful habit, and can lead to people being fed up with you and leaving you alone.

If you nag someone, then it means that you keep on reminding them of some complaint you have, every few minutes. People do not like that. If you have something to say, then say it once. People will listen and remember what you said. If you keep on pestering them and reminding them over and over then they will become irritated.

If you are in difficulty don't complain to others, don't ask them to help you, ask Allah for His help.

When Prophet Yusuf (A) was thrown in the well by his brothers, his father was struck with grief. He did not sit there and moan. He took his grief and his complaint directly to the only One who could help him, Allah.

(12:84) "And he turned away from them, and said: "How great is my grief for Joseph!" And his eyes became white with sorrow, and he fell into silent melancholy."

(12:85) "They said: "By God! (never) will you cease to remember Joseph until you reach the last extremity of illness, or until you die!"

(12:86) "He said: "I ONLY COMPLAIN of my distraction and anguish TO GOD and I know from God that which you know not..."

Complaining and nagging can make the people around you miserable. But it will also not get *you* anywhere. If you are constantly complaining you are taking away your own chance to be happy, since you are always thinking of your misfortunes. Therefore your complaining can only create an unhappy and glum atmosphere.

5.2 Worksheet: Complaining

1. What is the difference between complaining and nagging?
2. What is the opposite of complaining?
3. What should one do when faced with a problem, i.e. how should we deal with it?
4. Who should we ask for help when we need it?
5. Who did Prophet Yusuf (s) turn to in his troubles?

Extra Credit

Describe a time when you were complaining so much that you got on somebody's nerves. If you can't think of one then describe how someone could get on your nerves by constant complaining.

Chapter 6: Cheating

To cheat means to gain something by trickery.

Cheating is **HARAAM**.

There are many different ways of cheating, a few examples are:

- a) To hide the defect of a thing one sells to another person.
- b) To copy someone during an exam.
- c) To borrow money off a person and then never pay it back.
- d) To collect money for a charity, and then spend it on yourself.

In English there is a saying that some people believe in:

"The end justifies the means"

This means that no matter what you do, it doesn't matter as long as the end result is good.

In Islam this is **NOT** the case. If you have to cheat to do something good, it is better not to do the good deed.

Example:

I want to donate some money to the mosque. Now, if I go around telling people that I am in hardship, and that I need money, and I donate the money which I am given to the mosque, will I get thawaab?

The answer is NO. Instead of getting thawaab, I will get gunah (sins) for cheating the people.

One thing about cheating is that no matter how many people you cheat, or how well you can cheat, you can **NEVER** cheat yourself or Allah. If you are cheating someone, your conscience (the positive aspect of the nafs) will realise immediately.

Some people say that it is OK to cheat people, as long as they are not Muslims.

That is absolutely incorrect. All people have rights, and to cheat them out of their rights is forbidden, it does not matter who they are or what they believe in.

THE REASON WHY CHEATING IS **HARAAM** IS BECAUSE :

- 1) YOU ARE GAINING SOMETHING AT SOMEONE ELSE'S EXPENSE.
- 2) YOU ARE GAINING SOMETHING WITHOUT WORKING FOR IT.

Islam is very strict on justice. If you are to get something good, it must be through your own deeds, and not through someone else's.

6.1 Embezzlement

This means to cheat someone by committing some type of fraud, or to divert money by deceit for one's own use.

This is a very common thing among large organisations, especially in the world today where very few people are guided with moral values. Even in such cases where the person committing the crime is aware of his actions, and his conscience is warning him of the act, he will silence himself, stub out his conscience by saying that it is allowed during business, because business is played by a different set of rules!

Embezzlement is haraam for many reasons, amongst which the unfair gain at someone else's loss is of primary importance.

We must always remember, no matter what action we do, Allah is a witness, watching over us. We should not commit any unlawful act for a variety of reasons, some include Taqwa (to be ashamed of gaining Allah's displeasure), and fear of the day of Judgement (Allah is not cruel, HE will, if HE wishes, forgive those sins committed accidentally, or repented for, but due to His justice, how can we expect forgiveness for those sins we do on purpose against others?).

Chapter 7: To Gain Knowledge

For any community to survive and go forward in this world, the people of that community have to have knowledge.

**To gain knowledge is not only to learn like a parrot,
but to understand and act upon what you have learnt.
Then to teach it to others,
so they may benefit from it as well.**

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said that every Muslim man and woman must gain knowledge.

Once when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) entered the Mosque there were two groups of people sitting there. One of the groups was busy praying while the other group were discussing religious topics.



The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was very pleased and said that both the groups were doing something good but he preferred the group that was busy discussing. Saying that, he went and joined that group.



The above incident does not mean that prayer is not important, as the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was pleased with both groups. The group that were praying, were doing Sunnat prayers not Wajib.

The knowledge that we have to gain should be religious and academic. It is possible to do both, as Allah has made us He knows what we are capable of.

If your knowledge in religion increases you will become closer to Allah because you will understand a lot more of what you are doing and why.

We are told that if two people are offering the same prayer, one with understanding and the other without; then the one with understanding will get more Thawaab.

On the day of Qiyamat if you are questioned about something wrong that you had done in your life, you will not be able to say you did not know! You have no excuse. There are so many books you can read, and so many people you can ask.

7.1 Worksheet: 4.9: To Gain Knowledge

Write on the paper below why it is important to gain knowledge.



A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, designed for writing. The box has a decorative scroll-like effect at the top-left and bottom-left corners, with a small shaded area indicating the scroll's depth.

Chapter 8: To Form Good/Bad Opinion About People (Husndhan/Su'udhan)

People are of two types, those who always think bad of others, and those who try and think the best about others.

Husndhan means to have a good opinion about other people. Not to assume the worst about them, not to suspect their actions. If you see a Muslim talking with a girl who is Na-Mahram, and you then assume that he has loose morals and is probably dating, then you have already dented his reputation in your eyes. If you tell others your opinion, you have committed Fitnah and Fasaad. You should give the benefit of the doubt. Even if such suspicions turn out to be true, who are you to spread other peoples' faults, when Allah has covered your's.

If a person assumes the worst of people's actions, then this is Su'udhan, and is a very bad habit. It leads to Fitnah and Fasaad (slander) and other terrible deeds.

If for example, a person stands up and gives a few thousand dollars to a charity, one can think in two ways.

Either one can think that this person has pride is just showing off all his money, or one can think that this person is sincere, and is setting an example for others to follow. Who are we to assume the first opinion? Allah is the only judge as He sees everything and is aware of everything. We have no right to judge other people whether they are Muslims or not.

Qur'an (49:12) explains to us that we should avoid suspicion of others and can be a sin if it results in the spreading of rumors.

Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin

Allah will show His Anger at those who accuse others falsely. In the time of Prophet Salih (A), he was accused falsely, and he asked Allah for help. The verses below explain what happened.

23:39: (The prophet) said: "O my Lord! help me: for that they accuse me of falsehood."

23:40: (God) said: "In but a little while, they are sure to be sorry!"

23:41: Then the Blast overtook them with justice, and We made them as rubbish of dead leaves (floating on the stream of Time)! So away with the people who do wrong!

In conclusion, always give someone else the benefit of the doubt. Even if you know for sure that they have done something wrong, do not tell others. If Allah can keep our secrets, we should also try and keep the secrets of others. If you really want to do something, try and approach the person and persuade them that they are doing wrong. If you think that will fail, then talk to someone whom you think will be able to help. This is the concept of *Amr bil Ma'aruf* and *Nahy anil Munkar* (direct towards good, and persuade against evil).

Imam Zainul 'Abideen (a.s.) said:

You should think more of a person younger than you as he has had less time to do bad deeds.



You should think more of a person older than you as he has had more time to do good deeds.



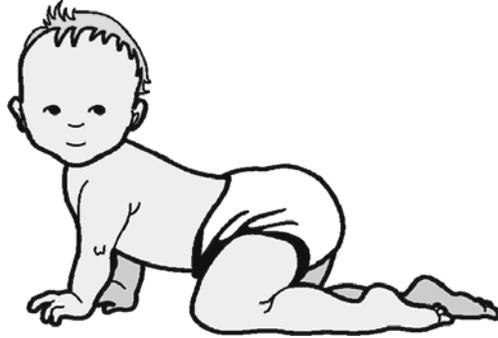
You should think more of a person the same age as you because you do not know what he has done but you know exactly what good and bad you have done.



8.1 Worksheet: To Form Opinions About Others

Write the saying of Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (a.s.): You should think more of someone:

1. Younger than you because:



2. Older than you because:



3. Same age as you because:



4. If you feel your friend is doing something wrong should you assume that his sin is confirmed and go and tell other people? How can you really help this friend?

5. What is wrong about jumping to conclusions about people's behaviour?

Chapter 9: Respect For Parents

Our parents have brought us up. They have lived for us. They gave us love and attention; they taught us the difference between right and wrong; they gave us food. If there was ever a time when there was only enough food for one person, they would give it to the child. Our mothers carried us for 9 months, day and night before we were born.

This is one of the reasons why Islam has said that

"Heaven lies under the feet of your mother"

So if you displease your mother, you will never enter heaven, i.e. the way to heaven is through the pleasure of your parents. This again is repeated when Allah says to one of the Prophets:

"I swear by My Honour that anyone who does not obey his parents, even if he comes with the deeds of the Prophets in front of Me, I will never accept him."

Allah says in Qur'an Surah An-Nisa, Ayat 4:36

"Worship Allah and do not join any partners with Him; and do good to your parents."

He additionally tells us in Surah Bani Isra-il, Ayat 17:23.

"Your lord has commanded that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to your parents. Whether one of them or both of them become old in your life, do not say a word of contempt (not even "UF") to them or repel them, but address them in terms of honour. And out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility and say: "My Lord! Bestow upon them your mercy even as they cherished me in childhood.""

There is also a prayer for parents in the Holy Qur'an, Sura Bani Israil, verse 24:

رَبِّ اَرْحَمُهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْنِي صَغِيرًا

Rabbirham huma kamaa rabbayani sagheera.

My Lord, look have mercy on them (our parents), as they looked after me when I was little.

Why have parents been mentioned in so many places in the Qur'an? It is because they play a very important role in the upbringing of the children. The Holy Prophet (S) has said:

"The parents are responsible with regard to the children in the same manner in which the children are responsible with regard to their parents."

Allah blesses those who assist their children in doing good things which they do themselves. Islam considers the training during our childhood to be very important because the soul of a child is ready to accept every impression.

Imam Ali (A) has said:

"Things taught to children become engraved on their minds like engravings on stone."

It is said in Tafseer that one should pray to Allah that He may grant heaven to their parents, and if one's parents are committing any act with which would displease Allah, then we should pray that Allah guides them and helps them to reform. Indeed, the first thing that Allah caused to be written on "Lauhe Mahfuz" was that *"I am Allah, and there is no god except Me. I am pleased with the man with whom his parents are pleased, and displeased with him whose parents are not pleased."*

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said:

"Anyone who hurts his parents hurts me, and anyone who hurts me hurts Allah, and whoever hurts Allah is cursed in Tawrat, Injeel, Zabur and Qur'an."

The Prophet (S) also once said to Imam Ali (A) that *"sitting in the company of parents for an hour is preferable to going for Jihad."* He further added, *"O Ali! If only a word is uttered with a view to pleasing the parents, Allah can be pleased."*

That is why it is said:

*"Looking at the face of your parents with respect is like looking at the **Ka'ba**, the reward is the same."*

A man once went to the Prophet (S) and asked him if there was any act worthy of Allah's mercy. The Prophet (S) asked him whether his parents were still alive, to which he replied yes. The

Prophet (S) replied that the best deed worthy of Allah's grace was to be kind to parents since this was preferred over all acts.

There are many ways to respect your parents, some of them are:

- ☺ Talk to them gently.
- ☹ Do not raise your voice above theirs.
- ☺ Fulfil their needs.
- ☺ Thank them and pray for them.
- ☹ Do not sit when they are standing.
- ☹ Do not walk in front of them unless told to do so.
- ☹ Do not speak when they are speaking.
- ☹ Never correct them in front of others.
- ☹ Do not displease them or make them angry.
- ☹ Never insult, argue or shout at them.
- ☹ Do not hurt them, even if they are not Muslims.

When you wake up in the morning the first thing you should do is say "Salamun Alaykum" to your parents.

If your parents ask you to do something, you should try to put your fatigue or feelings aside and do what they are asking. Don't hesitate to please them.

Some people are not fortunate enough to have parents that are living. They can still perform acts of respect and kindness for their parents and gain thawaab by praying **salaat-e- waaledain**. People who remember their parents by this salaat and also by other acts of charity and worship reap the benefit of reciprocal dua from the marhumeen. May Allah grant us the tawfeeq to be among those who respect their parents as long as they live and actively remember them after they have passed away.

9.1 Worksheet: Respect for Parents

1. Write down one hadith that shows how important it is to respect your parents. Who is this hadith from?
2. Write down one ayat from the Qur'an that describes the importance of parents. Tell which surah this ayat is in.
3. Write down three ways you can show respect to your parents.
4. Give 2 specific examples of how *you* try to show respect for *your* parents.
5. In your own words describe why you think parents have to be given so much respect. Do you think our generation is practising this respect towards our parents?

Chapter 10: One of Imam Zainul Abideen's dua' for his parents.

O Lord, bless Muhammad, Your servant and Your Apostle and the holy people of his house.

Distinguish them particularly with the best of Your Favour, Mercy, Blessings and Peace.

Distinguish, O Lord, my parents with excellence before You and grace from You, O Most Merciful!

O Lord, bless Muhammad and his descendants.

Acquaint me by inspiration with the knowledge of what is due towards them from me.

Collect for me the complete knowledge of all this.

Cause me to act according to what You did reveal to me by inspiration.

Give me grace to penetrate into such of this knowledge as You did teach me until I omit to perform nothing You has taught me. Do not let me limbs grow heavy (so as to prevent them) from the discharge of what You did reveal unto me.

O Lord, bless Muhammad and his descendants as You have exalted us with him.

Favour Muhammad and his descendants as You have given us claims upon Your creation because of him.

Make me fear my parents as I would fear a severe ruler and love them with the tenderness of an indulgent mother.

Let my obedience to my parents and beneficence to them be sweeter to my eyes than sleep is to the drowsy, cooler to my heart than drinking water is to the thirsty, until I give preference to their wishes over mine and priority to the satisfaction of their needs over mind.

Let me over value their kindness to me, even in small things and under value my kindness to them, even in great things.

O Lord, let me lower my voice for them.

Let my speech be agreeable to them.

Soften my conduct towards them.

Let my heart be kind to them.

Make me tender and lenient unto them both.

O Lord, reward them for bringing me up.

Recompense them for loving me.

Guard them as they guarded me in my infancy.

O Lord, whatever pain they may have received from me, whatever displeasure may have been caused to them by me or whatever duty owed to them that was left unperformed by me, let that be a pardon of their sins, an exaltation of their rank and an addition to their good deeds.

O You who does change evil deeds into multiplied good deeds!

O Lord, that speech in which they were unjust to me, or that action in which they were extravagant against me, or such of my claims as they failed to satisfy, or such debts as they failed to discharge, verily, I forgive it to them, and favour them therewith.

I turn towards You with a view to removing the penalty thereof from them.

For verily I do not accuse them falsely of having done something to my hurt, nor do I deem them negligent in doing good to me, nor do I despise the care they took of me, O Lord!

Because their claim upon me is so great, their benevolence to me so magnificent and I am so highly obliged to them, that I cannot fairly meet it, nor repay them as they deserve.

O my God, how can I repay them for their tedious employment in bringing me up.

For their hard labour in guarding me.

For their self-denial to lavish comfort upon me!

Alas! Alas! (I cannot).

Their claim can never be satisfied by me, nor can I perceive what is due from me to them nor can I fully discharge the duty of serving them!

Therefore, bless Muhammad and his descendants. Help me, O best of all those whose assistance is solicited. Give me grace, O Greatest of Guides, towards whom people turn.

Do not let me be of those who wronged their fathers and mothers on the day wherein "every soul shall be paid what it has merited and they shall not be treated with injustice."

O Lord, bless Muhammad and his descendants.

Distinguish my parents, in particular, with the best distinctions which You have conferred upon the fathers and mothers of Your true believing servants, O Most Merciful.

O Lord, do not let me forget to remember them after my ritual prayers, at every time of my night and at every hour of my day.

O God, bless Muhammad and his descendants.

*Forgive me for the sake of my prayers for them.
Grant a sure pardon to them because of their goodness to me.
Be perfectly satisfied with them through my intercession for them.
Bring them by Your Mercy into places of safety.*

O God, if Your Pardon for them has preceded (my prayers), then make them intercessors for me.

If Your Pardon for me has preceded (Your forgiving them), then make me an intercessor for them so that we may be gathered together by Your Mercy in the place of Your Grace, the place of Your Pardon and Mercy.

For verily You are the one Whose Munificence is Great, Whose Kindness is Eternal. You are the most Merciful.

10.1 Worksheet: Du'a for Parents

1. What does the Dua' start with?

2. Mention any 6 specific acts towards parents that Imam Zainul Abideen (a) is praying for.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.

3. Write down three ways Imam (a) has referred to Allah in his dua'.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

Extra Credit

Ask a parent to sign the box for each day you recite this dua'.

Day	Signature
Sunday	
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	

Chapter 11: Friendship in Islam

Abbas had his own group of friends, but he was especially happy to be friends with Khalil, since Khalil was one of the popular guys in school. But ever since Abbas started spending more time with Khalil, he also began to see the other side of Khalil. Khalil was a master at lying. All the excuses he gave his teachers — for being absent or for handing in his homework late or for sleeping in class— were all outright lies. The teachers bought the excuses, but Abbas knew that less than half of them were true. One thing that Abbas knew for sure was that Khalil would never lie to him. I mean they were friends, right? How can a friend lie to a friend? It's impossible . . . at least that's what Abbas thought. God, did he hope he was right!

11.1 What is friendship?

Friendship is a relationship we have with another person in a way which affects our life. A friend has a great effect on our thoughts and actions. In this way a friend differs from an acquaintance, for an acquaintance is someone we know but are not so close to. Acquaintances don't affect our life, but friends do.

Friends affect us so much that a person can be known by the friends he or she keeps. The Holy Prophet (s) has said: *“The conduct of everyone will be according to the belief and principles of his friend”*. We are known by the company we keep. Our choice of friends reveals a lot about ourselves, for we will naturally choose a person whose characteristics are similar to ours.

11.2 Is friendship necessary?

Because we live in a society where there are other people, we need the company of others in the form of friends or we will feel depressed and lonely. Friends are a source of comfort and joy to us and Islam encourages us to make good friends. But friends are not only kept for company. Friends are also there to help us in time of need. All of us require the help of others at one time or another. Money can buy a lot but it cannot buy the services which a friend would give out of affection. Thus a true friend is a very valuable prize.

A friend is so important that even the Almighty Creator calls one of His prophets as His friend. **“And God did take Ibrahim for a friend” (An-Nisa, 4:125)**. This is why the title of the Prophet Ibrahim is *“Khalilullah”* which means “friend of Allah”.

11.3 Whom should we befriend?

The point which has been stressed by Islam is that friendship is most valuable when it is in the way of God. When we make friends with a *Mu'min* (believer) because of the fact that he or she is a believer, this friendship is *ibada* (act of worship) and carries a great deal of reward. Imam Ali (a) says: *“Procure friends for yourselves from amongst your own faith because they are a great prize in this world and the hereafter.”*

The advantages of a *Mu'min* friend are obvious. Not only will this friend help to strengthen and increase your faith, but he or she will also prevent you from going astray. And the Qur'an says, **“And believers, men and women, are protecting friends one of another.” (At-Tawbah, 9:71)**.

On the other hand, a bad friend, who has no faith may cause you regret on the Day of Judgement. For Allah says in the Qur'an: **“. . . it will be a very hard day for the disbeliever. On that day, the unjust shall bite his hands saying: ‘I wish that I had not taken so and so as my friend.’ (25:27-28)**. The point is that friends do have a lot of influence over us and we should make sure that we have good ones.

11.4 What are some qualities we should look for in a friend?

It is important that we choose our friends carefully, for their characteristics are going to affect us. Some of the qualities we should look for when choosing a friend are:

- a) **Knowledge:** When you are friends with a knowledgeable person, whether it be knowledge of this world or of religion, you are bound to gain from that friendship and increase in your own knowledge.
- b) **Wisdom:** Islam encourages us to make friends with wise understanding people. These people will help us and advise us in the right way. Most of the time the wise talk out of experience and this experience will surely benefit us a lot. Allah likes wisdom so much that

He calls our Holy Prophet '**the Teacher of Wisdom**' (Jumu'ah, 62:2); and He has included in the Holy Qur'an the advice of Luqman the Wise to his son (see Luqman, 21:13-19).

- c) **Reliability:** Always befriend someone who is reliable and someone you know you can trust. Boys and girls who are careful about their religious and worldly duties are worth to be taken as friends.
- d) **Good Behavior:** Those who have good moral behavior should be taken as friends. This includes respect for adults, love and affection for those who are younger, obedience to parents, obedience to leaders, sincerity in actions, and dislike of evil.

11.5 Whom should we never befriend?

- a) A Liar — sometimes this person's lies will be used against ourselves.
- b) A Hypocrite — this person never practices what he preaches. He may actually be planning something different than what is apparent. And sometimes it will be used against us as well.
- c) A Mean — this person will not spend any money and will stop us from generosity too.
- d) A Fool — this person will try to benefit us but will end up harming us on account of his foolishness. This is why we read in a *hadith* that "*an intelligent enemy is better than a foolish friend*".

Here is an example of a friend not worth having:

Two travelers were on the road when a robber suddenly appeared. One man ran for a tree and climbed up and hid in the branches. The other was not as fast so he threw himself on the ground pretending to be dead. The robber came to the man on the floor; whispered something in his ear and went away. When the robber had gone the man in the tree climbed down and asked his friend what the robber had whispered in his ear. His friend told him that the robber had told him to find a better friend who would not leave him at the first sign of danger.

(Source: Youth Discussion Handout by Sheikh H. Kassamali and Stanmore Madressa of London)

11.6 Worksheet: Friendship in Islam

Circle either "T" for True or "F" for False.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Acquaintances greatly affect our life. | T | F |
| 2. A person can be known by the friends he or she keeps. | T | F |
| 3. " <i>Khalilullah</i> " means "Light of Allah". | T | F |
| 4. Friendship with a <i>Mu'min</i> is a form of <i>Ibada</i> to Allah. | T | F |
| 5. We should befriend a knowledgeable person so that we can learn from his or her knowledge. | T | F |

Choose best answer:

- How are acquaintances different from friends?
 - Acquaintances are people we care about, whereas friends are people we know.
 - Acquaintances don't really affect our lives, whereas friends do.
 - Acquaintances are people we hate, whereas friends are people we care about.
- What will the disbelievers say to one another on the Day of Judgement?
 - "I wish I could go back and change all the bad things I had done."
 - "I wish that I had not taken so and so as my friend."
 - "I wish I had friends who could guide me on the straight path."
- Why should we not befriend a fool?
 - They will think they are helping us, but in the process they may hurt us.
 - They do not know anything, and will not be able to teach us anything.
 - They will always lie to us and stop us from being generous.

Answer the following questions.

- Give three reasons why friendship is necessary?

—

—

—

—

—

2. Why should we befriend a Mu'min rather than a disbeliever?

—

—

—

—

3. What are two qualities that we should look for in a friend?

—

—

—

4. What are the four types of people that we learnt whom we should not befriend?

—

—

—

—

—

Chapter 12: Islamic Brotherhood and Unity

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an, Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 10:

“The believers are surely brothers; so make peace among your brothers...”
(49:10)

The above ayat tells us that all Muslims are brothers to each others and that they should all care for each other.

The Holy Prophet (S) has said that a Muslim is he from whose hands and tongue other Muslims remain safe. This hadith tells us that if a Muslim hurts another Muslim in any way, physically with his hands, or emotionally with his tongue, by what he says, then that Muslim is not a Muslim.

The idea of brotherhood was introduced by the Holy Prophet (S) after the Hijrah, when the Meccans had to leave their homes and belongings to move to Medina. The Holy Prophet (S) made one Meccan a brother to one Medinite, so that they may help each other.

Islam considers the Holy Prophet (S) as the father of all the Muslims, connected and joined with each other through Islam.

The whole of the Muslim community is like one big family and what one person does in that family affects the rest of the people in the family.

Once there was a group of people in a boat who were arguing that there was no need for brotherhood (unity) and that each one could do as they pleased without it being the concern of anyone else. The person who was arguing that there was a need for brotherhood went to one corner of the boat and started making a hole in the bottom of the boat. The rest of the people who were had been insisting that there was no need for brotherhood asked the man if he had gone mad, because if he continued they would all drown. The man replied that they should not worry about what he was doing as they themselves had said that every person could do what he liked without worrying about anyone else. The people then realized what he was trying to say, to live happily with each other you had to care about others and have a form of unity through some sort of brotherhood.

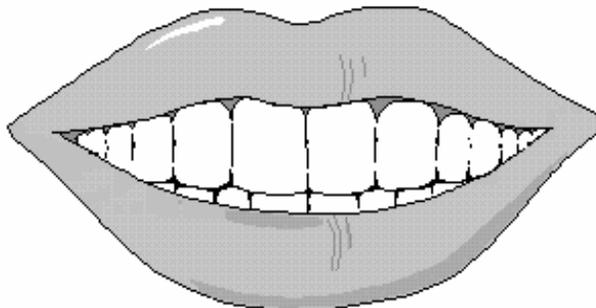
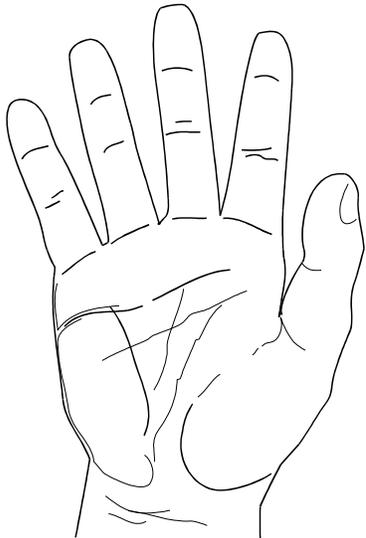
Remember each and every Muslim has a right over you as a brother, and we are all united together through Islam.

12.1 Worksheet: Islamic Brotherhood & Unity

Draw on the boat what the man did to prove that in every community there is a need for brotherhood and unity.



Use the pictures below to complete the hadith of the Holy Prophet (S) below:



A Muslim is he from whose _____

Answer the questions:

1. How can a Muslim hurt a fellow Muslim with his tongue?
2. When did Prophet Muhammad (s) introduce the concept of brotherhood?
3. The concept of brotherhood in Islam shows that members of the Muslim community should treat each other like one whole big family. Give specific examples of how you should treat another fellow Muslim (say about 3 examples)

Chapter 13: The Nafs

When Allah created the human being, He created it in two parts. One part was like an empty car shell, used to hold something, this is known as the BODY. The other part was like the engine, this is known as the SOUL.

Our body is such that it needs looking after. We have to feed it and keep it warm, otherwise we will become ill, and suffer.

The soul, known as the NAFS, also needs looking after; otherwise it will also become ill. The way to look after this soul is to listen, to think, to respect, to help. When we help someone, we feel happy, but it is not the body that feels happy. It is not the arms, the legs, or the head that feels happy, it is something else. That something else is our NAFS. The **Akhlaq of Islam is food for the soul**, and if we feed it regularly, it will remain healthy.

The greatest doctors of the nafs, who have given us rules and examples to follow, are the Fourteen Masomeen.

Now we shall examine this nafs and see what it is like. Allah tells us in Qur'an, that we are not capable of understanding the nafs and its creation. However we have been told of the different types of nafs.

13.1 Three Facets of Nafs:

In general, there are three main facets of the nafs, called

- a. **NAFS-E-AMMARA** : This is the nafs in its worst form, where it leads towards evil. When a person reaches this stage, he is lower than the animals in the eyes of Allah. At this stage, he is selfish, he looks at Haraam, and he does not care about anyone else. These are the symptoms of this illness, the same way a cough and runny nose is the symptom of a cold.
- b. **NAFS-E-LAWAAMA** : This is the stage where we are not evil, but we still do wrong. It is this nafs that is known as the conscience, because when we do something bad, this nafs tells us that we should not have done it, and that we should repent.
- c. **NAFS-E-MUTMAINNA** : This is the stage which is the goal of this life, to reach the stage of TOTAL CONTENTMENT with Allah. To commit no sin knowingly and to take pleasure in doing good acts. It is this soul, which was called on the day of Ashura, when Imam Hussein (A) put, down his sword and heard the voice saying "Oh soul that is content! Come back to your Lord, well pleased (yourself) and well pleasing to Him."

Imam Ali (A) has said that:

*"The **nafs** is like a wild horse, and you are riding upon him, if you move your attention for one second, he will throw you off."*

"The restraining the soul (or self) from its appetite is the greatest holy war."

Here, he is referring to the Nafs-e-Ammara.

13.2 Worksheet: The Nafs

Look up the following words and write sentences with any 3 of them such that you can explain how they relate to the Nafs.

- Contentment:
- Conscience:
- Character:
- Nobility:
- Symptom:
- Refrain:

Make up sentences using three of the above words: underline your chosen word.

1.

2.

3.

Chapter 14: Sins and their Effects - Part I

14.1 Obedience to Allah:

Allah has sent down rules for human beings to follow. From the previous lesson, we have realized that rules are necessary and that rules are best made by Allah, the Creator. Thus we have to follow the rules that Allah makes for us. This is known as obedience to Allah, and is a form of worship.

Worship of Allah is not only done because we are afraid that He may punish us if we disobey Him. It is also not done because we would like to have the rewards He has promised us if we obey Him. We obey Allah because we have found Him worthy of worship. He is Great and Powerful, He has given us existence, and He has blessed us with many things. So we worship and obey Him after learning about all His qualities.

Imam 'Ali (a) once said, "The worshippers of Allah are of three types: 1) Those who worship out of fear of the fire, and that is the worship of the slaves; 2) Those who worship for reward, and that is the worship of the traders (i.e. they want to trade their good deeds for Heaven); 3) Those who worship because they have found Allah to be worthy of worship, and this is the worship of the free people (not tied by fear or greed)." We should try to be from the third group of worshippers, since that is the noblest form of worship.

WORSHIP OF SLAVES:
Those who worship Allah because they fear Allah's punishment.

WORSHIP OF TRADERS:
Those who worship Allah because they want Allah's reward.

WORSHIP OF FREE PEOPLE:
Those who worship Allah because they love Allah.
-BEST FORM OF WORSHIP -

14.2 Disobedience of Allah:

After accepting the rules of Allah, it is our duty to follow them. Every time we disobey a rule of Allah (that is, when we do something He has told us not to do, or when we don't do something He wants us to do), we are committing a sin. Sins do not harm Allah. It does not

matter to Him whether we follow His rules or not. Sins harm **us**, and by disobeying Allah we are hurting ourselves. In the Qur'an, Allah tell us:

“Whoever does good it is for his ownself, and whoever does evil, it is against the self.”
(Surah Ha Mim, Chapter 41, verse 46).

The rules that Allah has sent are for the benefit of mankind and by not following them, we will be in a loss. Even in this world, we know that rules are often set down for the benefit of everybody. A good parent sets rules for their children, so that their children are brought up in a proper way. School officials lay rules to make sure things run smoothly. These rules must be obeyed. If they aren't obeyed, then chaos occurs. Thus when children break rules at home or in the school, some disciplinary actions are taken. Constant disobedience shows that the children do not respect the parent or the school authorities. The young girl who loves and respects her mother would follow her rules at home, especially since she knows her mother wishes only good for her.

In a similar manner, when we love Allah and realize His greatness, we follow His rules. Love of Allah demands that we try our best to obey Him, and though unfortunately we may occasionally happen to sin, for we are not Maasum (sinless), it should not be a constant occurrence.

Source: Grade Six Laws Notes from Al-Muntazir Madrassah.

14.3 Worksheet: Sins and their Effects - Part I

True or False: Circle either “T” for True or “F” for False.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Obedience is a form of worship of Allah. | T | F |
| 2. The best form of worship, is worshipping Allah for fear of Fire. | T | F |
| 3. Sins occur when we disobey a rule of Allah. | T | F |
| 4. Sins harm Allah, and that is why He has told us not to commit sins. | T | F |
| 5. The rules sent by Allah are for the benefit of Allah. | T | F |

Multiple Choice: Circle the correct letter.

- The worship of the Traders is the worship of those who worship for reward from Heaven. Why is their form of worship called the worship of the “Traders”?
 - Because they like trading.
 - Because they are trading their good deeds for Heaven.
 - Because they were born into a trading family.
- The worship of the Free People is the worship of those who worship because they love Allah. Why is this form of worship called the worship of the “Free People”?
 - Because they are free in making decisions and are not controlled by fear of Hell or greed for Heaven.
 - Because they get things done for free.
 - Because they will get into Heaven for free.
- What does Maasum mean?
 - Worship of traders.
 - Greedy people.
 - Those who don't sin.

Short Answer Questions: Answer the following questions.

1. What are the three forms of worship that Imam 'Ali (a) has told us about?

2. Give an example of a rule in this world that is set down for the benefit of everybody.

Group Work: Complete the following exercise in class.

1. Though most of us have faith in Allah and believe in the Hereafter, many of us still commit sins. Why is that? Write down two reasons of why we sin and then write down how we could overcome them.

Chapter 15: Sins and their Effects - Part II

Story #1: Whenever the teacher was in the class, Raza was the nicest student ever. But as soon as the teacher had left the room, Raza would start to bother the other students. When it came to doing individual work, Raza would always copy the homework from another student. He would also make fun of the other students, and sometimes even push them around. Unfortunately, the teacher used to spend a lot of time outside of class. As a result, the poor students in Raza's class suffered a lot as well.

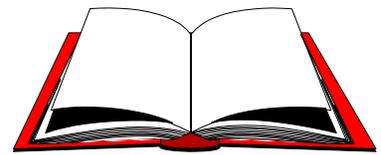
Story #2: Maryam had failed the grade six English test that she had taken on Thursday. It was her own fault — instead of studying for it, she decided to play with her friends. This got her worried because she knew it would show up on her report card. If this happened, she wouldn't be able to show her report card to anyone. So Maryam decided to go to her teacher to see if she could do a make-up test. At first the teacher disagreed because it wouldn't be fair on the other students. Finally the teacher made Maryam a deal. He told Maryam that if she got an 'A' in the next four tests, then he wouldn't count the test in which Maryam failed. Maryam knew it would be hard, but she agreed. Maryam ended up doing really well in the next four tests, and as a result, her report card was really good. Maryam knew that she would never again make the mistake that she did.

Story #3: Hussein was actually a very good friend to Yusuf. Hussein would always help Yusuf whenever Yusuf needed it. If Yusuf forgot his lunch, Hussein would share his. If Yusuf was sick, Hussein would always visit him. One day, Yusuf was walking in school when he found a wallet lying on the ground. When he opened it up, he realized it was his friend, Hussein's wallet. But there was \$20.00 in the wallet. Yusuf wanted to keep the money really badly because he wanted a new baseball bat. But then he began thinking about his friend, who had always helped him when he needed it. Because of the love he felt for his friend, the next day, Yusuf gave Hussein the wallet he had found — including the \$20.00 that was in it.

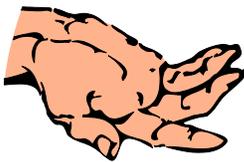
We all commit sins. But we can control ourselves by remembering that . . .

1. **Allah is watching us all the time.** In the first story, Raza used to commit sins when his teacher wasn't watching him. But no one can escape being seen by Allah. If we really thought about being watched by Allah as we sin, we would not even dare to commit that sin. We would feel ashamed of breaking His rules in front of Him. When we break a rule at home or in school, we try to never do it right in front of our parents or the principal. But unlike the parent or teacher, Allah is always watching us. How can we commit sins knowing this? Next time you are about to commit a sin remember that the Holy Qur'an says, "Allah is watchful over all things". (Surah al-Ahzab, chapter 33, verse 52).

2. **Everything is being recorded.** In the second story, Maryam wished she had done better on her test because she knew it was being recorded. We should remember that there are two angels sitting on our right



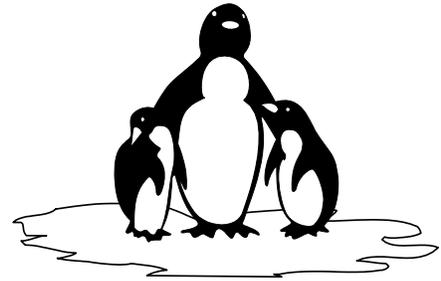
and left shoulder recording our actions, too. Every word that we speak, and every action that we carry out is recorded. This is our record of deeds that will be given to us on the Day of Judgment. Before we sin, we must ask ourselves if we want that recorded. It will look really bad in our books and it will not be erased unless we ask for forgiveness. In school, we study hard and try to do well in order to get a good report card. When we do poorly in a test, we are afraid that it may show on our report, and we would be ashamed to show it to others. A good report is a source of pride and joy. In the same way, on the Day of Judgment, people with good record books will be proud of their reports.



The Holy Qur'an says, "**Then for him who is given his book in his right hand, he will say, 'Here, read my book. I am sure that I will be given my account'**" (Surah al-Haqqah, chapter 69, verse 19-20). Imam 'Ali, in Dua' e Kumayl, says, "My God, forgive in this night and in this hour, my every offense I have committed, every sin I have performed, every ugly thing I have hidden, and every foolishness I have done, which You have appointed the Noble Writers to record". Let us therefore not be amongst those who would be given the

record in their left hands and would say regretfully, ***“I wish my book had never been given to me” (Surah Al-Haqqah, chapter 69, verse 25).***

3. **Allah loves us so much.** In the third story, Yusuf did not steal Hussein’s money because he knew that Hussein actually cared for him. In the same way, we should realize that Allah cares for us a lot as well. Once, the Holy Prophet (s) was walking with his companions when they saw a mother bird gently feeding its young ones. The bird had taken great efforts to collect worms and was placing them in the beaks of her babies with great affections and care. The companions remarked on how much a mother’s love was for her young ones. At that time, the Prophet said, “Shall I tell you of a love which is seventy times greater than that of a mother? It is the love of Allah for His creatures!” Even though humans sin and disobey Allah, He still loves them and gives them many chances to turn to the right path. If we understood that He loves us so much, and loved Him in return, we would not even think of sinning.”



Source: Grade Six Laws Notes from Al-Muntazir Madrassah.

15.1 Worksheet: Sins and their Effects - Part II

True or False: Circle either “T” for True or “F” for False.

1. We shouldn't sin because our teachers are always watching us. T F
2. We shouldn't sin because Allah loves us so much. T F
3. Allah is watchful over all things. T F
4. The people who get their book of deeds in their left hand on the Day of Judgment would tell others to read the book. T F
5. If everyone is committing a small sin (such as being disrespectful to a speaker in the Masjid by chatting while he is talking) then it is all right to do the same. T F
6. We should always be willing to do things that please our friends. T F

Multiple Choice: Circle the correct letter.

1. What will happen on the Day of Judgment to the people who get their book of deeds in their right hand?
 - a) They will wish they got it in their left hands.
 - b) They will wish they never got it.
 - c) They will be happy and will tell others to read their book.

2. After the companions of the Prophet (s) saw the great love the mother bird had for her baby birds, what did the Holy Prophet (s) say to them.
 - a) He told them that Allah loves us seventy times more.
 - b) He told them to reward the mother bird.
 - c) He told them that the mother bird loves her baby birds seventy times more than they love their children.

Short Answer Questions: Answer the following questions.

1. Name three reasons why we shouldn't sin.

2. Jawad's friends are known as the 'cool' guys in school. They are good in studies and sports. However they are very rude and use many swear words when conversing with their friends. Jawad uses the same language when he is around them and sometimes around his Muslim friends too, but he is very careful not to do so around his adults. Is he doing the right thing? What could he do to keep his friends, without compromising his values.

Chapter 16: Sins and their Effects - Part III

16.1 Effects of Sins:

Sins are harmful not only because they mean we are disobeying Allah's rules, but also because they affect us in many ways. We do not realize that sins have many after-effects that continue to harm us long after the sin itself has been committed. Some of the effects of sins are:

1. **Erasing of good deeds.** When a person does many good deeds but also commits many sins, the good deeds are wiped out because of the sins. If we want our good deeds to be accepted, we must stay away from sins. According to the Holy Prophet (s), when a person does a good deed, he gets a reward for it. Sometimes the reward is there in Janna waiting for him. But when he commits a sin, it is as if he sends a fire to destroy all his rewards in Heaven. Many of our good deeds may be erased without our realizing it, just because we did not stay away from sins.
2. **Hardening of the heart.** When a person always commits sins and does not ask for forgiveness, his heart slowly hardens and he may reach a stage where he does not feel any shame at disobeying Allah. The sixth Imam says, "Everyone is born with a pure heart. When he commits a sin, a black spot is formed on his heart. If he seeks forgiveness, the spot is erased. But if he does not seek forgiveness, and continues to sin, the black spot becomes bigger and bigger, finally covering the whole heart".
3. **Displeasure of Allah.** A sin is very serious. It is disobedience, not to the parent or the principal, but to the Creator Himself. If we continue to disobey Him, we will have great shame when we return to Him when we die. We will not benefit in any way if we return to Him when He is displeased with us.

16.2 Some Common Sins:

Let us turn now to some of the many sins that we commit everyday. Some of them are:

1. **Lying.** Lying is a major sin. But it is only cowards — those who have no faith — who will try to cheat others by lying. Courageous people will never lie. Imam 'Ali (a) says, *“Speak the truth, because Allah is with the Truthful. Keep away from falsehood because it destroys the faith. A truthful person is on the path of success and salvation while a liar is on the brink of disgrace and disaster.”*
2. **Backbiting.** To talk about others behind their backs has become very common in society. Most people cannot prevent themselves from backbiting when they sit with others. But backbiting too is a major sin and Allah forbids it because it ruins good relationships among our brothers and sisters. Allah says in the Qur'an, ***“Do not spy nor let some of you backbite others. Does one of you like to eat the dead flesh of your brother?”*** (Surah Al-Hujurat, chapter 49, verse 12).
3. **Disobedience to Parents.** Parents do a lot for their children. They bring them up from the time the child is born, and look after the child until he or she becomes strong and independent. All this is done with great love and affection. Most parents wish only good for their children. So when parents treat their children with such care, it is not right for children to be disobedient to their parents. Allah says in the Qur'an, ***“Your Lord has ordered that you should worship only Him, and be good to your parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, do not say “ah” to them, nor speak badly to them. Speak to them in a nice manner”*** (Chapter Bani Isra'il, chapter 17, verse 23).

We know the bad effects that sins have on us. Now we need to always remember them. We should never forget that Allah is always watching us, that He cares for us and wants the best for us. If we keep thinking about Allah throughout the day, surely we will commit less and less sins. So from now on, let us try to keep away from sins, especially the three sins we learnt today.

Source: Grade Six Laws Notes from Al-Muntazir Madrassah.

16.3 Worksheet: Sins and their Effects - Part III

True or False: Circle either “T” for True or “F” for False.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Sins have many bad effects that continue to harm us even after the sin has been committed. | T | F |
| 2. One of the effects of sinning is that our heart is hardened. | T | F |
| 3. Lying is a minor sin. | T | F |

Multiple Choice: Circle the correct letter.

1. What does erasing of good deeds mean?
 - a) It means that a black spot is formed in our heart.
 - b) It means that our good deeds will be wiped out because of our sins.
 - c) It means that our bad deeds will increase.

2. What does Allah compare backbiting with?
 - a) He compares it to a very bad sin.
 - b) He compares it to disobeying our parents.
 - c) He compares it to eating the dead flesh of our brother.

Chapter 17: Taqwa (Self-restraint and Piety)

Abstinence, self-restraint and piety (Taqwa) are among those most important virtues about which we see many verses and narrations.

17.1 Definition of Taqwa

Taqwa is that pure state of the human heart that controls man's deeds and connects man with Allah

Taqwa means to protect the heart from whatever drags us toward a sin. It means to save ourselves from what our religion has called sin or deviation or unclean and to never indulge in it.

This safeguarding or protection is possible in two ways:

1. By keeping oneself at a safe distance from the environment of sin (just like the effort to stay healthy and hence away from the atmosphere of illness and germs)
2. By installing in our heart such power whereby we get spiritual and moral protection. So if we happen to be in an environment that supplies means for sinning and disobedience this power protects our soul from that 'disease', as if we have vaccinated ourselves.

Here we discuss that second kind of Piety, which is also understood from various verses of the Holy Qur'an:

17.2 Verses:

- 1. And make provision, for surely the provision is the guarding of oneself, and be careful of your duty to Me, O men of understanding.***
- 2. Yea, whoever fulfils his promise and guards against evil -then surely Allah loves those who guard against evil.***
- 3. O you who believe! be careful of your duty to Allah with the care which is due to Him, and do not die unless you are Muslims.***

Some of the great commentators, while explaining this ayat have said: that the demand of Taqwa is the highest and loftiest grade of piety that includes refraining from all kinds of sin and disobedience and deviation from truth.

17.3 Narrations

Imam Sadiq (a) says: *Piety is that you obey Allah constantly and never disobey and never indulge in a sin, always remember Him and never forget Him and be thankful to Him for His bounties and never remain ungrateful to Him.*

Amirul Mu'mineen (a) has said: *Piety is the top of morals.*

It is mentioned in the will of the Holy Prophet (s) for Ali (a): *O Ali! The one who does not have three things has nothing: 1- Piety that prevents him from sinning, 2-Good behavior that results in nice relations with people and 3- Tolerance that removes the ignorance or the ignorant.*

We learn from the above and similar other narrations that Taqwa and abstinence are not just refraining from sin and disobedience but they are far beyond. They are the quality of the soul that prevents a person from doing wrong even when he has the chance to do so.

It is recorded that Imam Sadiq (a) has said: *Make taqwa your habit and protect your religion with abstinence.*

Similarly he has also said: *It is essential that you, without speaking, invite others to Islam through fear of God, and abstinence and endeavor and truthfulness in talk and trustworthiness and good behavior with neighbors and with everybody; that is, your attitude, O Shias, must be such that your opponents may incline toward your creed and be adoration for us and do not make us feel ashamed...*

Amirul Mu'mineen (a) says: *O servants of God! Fear of Allah takes the pious away from doing the prohibited and makes their hearts a place of precaution in such a way that they remain awake in nights talking with their Lord Creator and they fast during hot days.*

Amirul Mu'mineen (a) has also said: *Thanks for every bounty, is a refrain from what Allah has prohibited.* This means that if you stop yourself from what Allah has prohibited then that is a way to thank Allah for all He has given you.

17.4 Consequences of Taqwa

A. Clear-sightedness as a result of piety

O you who believe! If you are careful of your duty to Allah, He will grant you a distinction

A light that will make it possible for you to distinguish truth from untruth

***...and whoever is careful of his duty to Allah, He will make for him an outlet,
And give him sustenance from whence he thinks not...***

***...and whoever is careful of his duty to Allah, He will make easy for him his
affair.***

...and he careful of your duty to Allah, Allah teaches you...

When we try to attain success there are times when we get confused. It becomes easy for man to get rid of the confusion if he recognizes what is truth and what is falsehood, good and bad, friend and foe, useful and harmful, and of fortune and misfortune. Curtains for lust, greed, passion, selfishness and excessive love of any person, position, and status hinder our intelligence and that is what really confuses us. We understand from the Holy Qur'an that only the light of Taqwa can remove this darkness, so that we can easily recognize the real situation and see everything very clearly.

B. Perfection and wisdom as a result of piety

When man, in the light of Taqwa, gets more near to Allah by avoiding sin, he acquires a big booty of awareness and wisdom; he gets closer to perfection, and to the source of knowledge and wisdom. In the course of human history, we find men and women who were pious. In them we see such an extraordinary knowledge and wisdom that it is impossible to acquire through common avenues of education. They were able to recognize a number of calamities that were rooted in the folds of chaotic social conditions. They saw the heinous faces of enemies through thousands of deceptive veils. As a proof of this we give here some narrations:

1. A believer sees with the light of God!
2. Beware of the intelligence of a Faithful.
3. Be cautious of the guess and imagination of the faithful because the Lord Almighty makes their tongues tell only the Truth

17.5 Worksheet: Taqwa (Self-restraint and Piety)

Fill in the blanks

1. Taqwa means to _____ the heart from whatever drags us toward a sin.
2. One way to practice taqwa is by keeping oneself at a safe _____ from the environment of sin.
3. The other way is by installing in our heart such a _____ that prevents us from _____ sins even in an atmosphere of sin.
4. _____ as a result of piety refers to the ability to recognize the truth.
5. Perfection and wisdom as a result of piety refers to the intelligence gained because of being closer to _____.

Food For Thought:

Write down things you think might attract a sixth grader that is considered wrong in Islam? Developing piety to not want to do these things may be a long process for some of us, but what can you at least try to do?

Chapter 18: Repentance

The first step on the path of affinity to God is repentance (istighfar or tawbah). Repentance is a characteristic of the human being that sets it apart from animals. The human being possesses certain high aptitudes and distinctive qualities not found in animals. One of these is the ability to repent or ask Allah's forgiveness. It does not mean only uttering the phrase, "I seek forgiveness from God, the Most High and I repent to Him."

Repentance is far from just verbal. It is a psychological and spiritual state, a revolution of the mind. It is an internal revolution of the human being against the self. The rise of one group of human beings against another group is natural and quite common. But the rise of a person against the self is not so simple and obvious. Why does it happen? The reason is that, in spite of having one body, a human being is intellectually and spiritually a complex being. The human being is a mixture of animal ferocity and emotions, on the one hand, and of angelic qualities on the other. Sometimes the animal takes over as a ferocious beast, giving no choice to the angel within to act.

A sinful person is one who is dominated by the inner beast or devil, which overcomes the angel and its noble qualities. Repentance is the arising of the noble qualities, putting an end to the domination of our mean and wicked side and destroying all its force.

People often think that they are too young to start repenting for they see old people engaged in worship and penitence. But the truth is that the time for repentance is youth. A young branch can be straightened, but when it grows thicker it does not lend itself to a change of shape.

One advice of Imam Ali (a) is, *"Be not one of those who feel repentance to be necessary and yet they postpone it."*

Someone came to Ali (a) claiming strongly his intention to repent. The Imam realized that he was not serious and asked him, *"Do you know what repentance is? It is an act worthy of exalted being; it is a holy state of mind that makes you feel that God has bestowed His grace on you and that you are surrounded by angels. You lose your egoism and feel you are purified."*

In repentance there is no need to go to a clergyman or to another human being. Repent to your God as it is said in the Qur'an,

Say, " Oh my people who have been prodigal against yourselves, do not despair of God's Mercy," surely God forgives sins altogether."

(Qur'an 39:53)

The following sentence has been quoted in a Sacred Tradition,

The groan (of repentance) of sinners is dearer to Me than the glorified glorifications (of Me) so you should sigh and groan in these precious nights. Be your own judge and censor, confess all your sins and be sure that God will forgive you and purify your soul. Then you taste the sweetness of worship and sin and the pleasure obtained from them will seem to you so trifling that you will never feel inclined to commit them any more nor to lie or slander or accuse others.

Here are some interesting points mentioned by Imam Ali (a) on repentance;

The first part of repentance is regretting what has passed. It means looking at the dark deed and being so sorry and ashamed of it that it makes your heart burn.

The second part is a decisive resolution not to repeat the foul deed again. Repentance does not depend on the enormity of sin. Every kind of sin, whether big or small, lends itself to repentance provided the Penitent is serious in his or her intention.

One of the conditions for the acceptance of repentance is to return what belongs to others, whether it is something that is seized or a right that has been trampled on. It must either be returned itself or, at least, the rightful owner must be given satisfaction. God will not forget him and the same applies to a person who has been backbitten. He must be given satisfaction. He must accept the apology.

. The Qur'an in speaking of repentance mentions the following points:

God loves those who repent and He loves those who cleanse themselves.
[2:222]

And he who repents, after his evil doing and makes amends, God is All-compassionate. [5:39]

This means that you must cleanse yourself not only physically but also spiritually. The Prophet was a fine example of both kinds of cleanliness.

The greatest joy of chaste people has always been to admit to God their shortcomings, their faults, their needs and their poverty, saying that they show nothing but negligence, while God grants nothing but favor and grace. The following prayer is quoted from Imam Hussein (a)

“My Master, when I glance at my sins I am overcome by fear but when I glance at Your Grace I am filled with hope.”

At the mention of Imam Hussein, let us look at a real penitent of Kerbala whose repentance was accepted: Hurr ibn Yazid Riahi. He was a brave warrior of Kufa. When Ibn Ziyad sent a thousand men for the first time against Imam Hussein (a), Hurr was the man chosen as their leader. He was therefore a person who had oppressed and mistreated the Prophet's household. It is said that the night before Ashura, Hurr was seen to be trembling like a leaf. The same narrator was surprised and, approaching him, asked him the reason for his tremors and whether he was afraid. Hurr told him,

“No. I have no fear of fighting but I see myself at a cross roads between heaven and hell and I am wondering which route to take.”

His inner noble qualities had started to surface. At last he chose the right route. Slowly, he turned his horse away in such a way that no one knew what he intended to do. When he reached a certain point, he spurred his horse on until he reached the Imam's tent with his shield turned backward as a sign of coming in peace.

On seeing the Imam he asked, "Is my repentance acceptable?" The Imam (a) said, "Yes." Our Imam's chivalry was such that he did not put one word of blame upon him for his past conduct. Hurr begged Imam Hussein (a) to let him go and fight. The Imam said, "You are our guest. Get down off your horse and stay with us awhile." But he felt shy, whispering to himself with shame for his past, for having sinned against the family of the Prophet. That is why he again requested that Imam Hussein let him go and fight the attacking foes lest one of the children look at him and cause him to die of shame. Thus, his repentance was so sincere that this penitent became the first martyr of Kerbala.

(Adapted from *Repentance* by Ayatullah Murtaza Mutahhari, al-islam.org)

18.1 Worksheet: Repentance

Choose the best answer:

1. Repentance or istighfar and tawbah refers to
 - a. The ability to say sorry
 - b. The ability to see your faults and sincerely ask Allah for forgiveness
 - c. The ability to help other people who want to say sorry
 - d. Trying to say sorry in every language you know

2. The conditions for include:
 - a. Realizing you did something wrong
 - b. Asking for forgiveness as soon as you realize your mistake
 - c. Intending to never repeat the mistake again
 - d. All of the above

3. To do istighfar and taw bah one has to be:
 - a. At least of middle school age
 - b. Very old because then you can repent for many things altogether
 - c. Whenever you realize you have done something wrong
 - d. At least twenty one years old

4. What does it mean when the Qur'an speaks of Allah as loving those who "cleanse themselves"?

5. What are the qualities of Allah you should remember when repenting? Think of your own deeds and how many you need to repent for. Write down a sin that you feel people often commit and how it can be repented.

Chapter 19: Halaal and Haraam Food and Drinks

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

“O People, eat from the land what is permitted and good and do not follow in the footsteps of Shaytan, for he is an open enemy to you.” (Al Baqarah, 2: 168)

Since food and drink are essential for the survival of humanity, Allah has given clear guidelines on what can and cannot be consumed. In addition we have also been instructed in manners and behavior of eating so that it becomes a way by which a Muslim remembers the bounties of Allah and by observing the rules of Shar'iah; he also shows his commitment to his religion. Furthermore, Allah has made the habit of eating an important factor in establishing social unity. He has encouraged the sharing of food with each other and stressed the merits of giving food to the poor and needy. This becomes obligatory when certain sins are committed, for which the kaffara or penalty is to feed poor Muslims. Thus we can see that this subject covers a wide and important area of Islamic Shar'iah.

Foods can be primarily divided into two sections:

I. Plants, fruits, vegetables and grains:

All these can be eaten as long as they are not harmful to human beings. This means that they must not contain **poisonous** or **narcotic substances**.

II. Living Creatures:

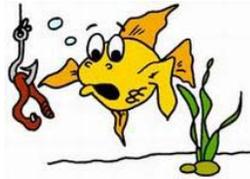
These can be divided into three groups:

- a) Those that live in the sea.
- b) Those that live on the land.
- c) Birds.

a) Sea Creatures

In order for the fish to be Halaal, it must be

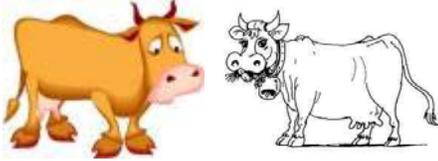
- **Removed alive from the water.**
- **It does not matter who has done the fishing or**
- **What method has been used to catch the fish.**



Halaal	We are allowed to eat any fish as long as it has scales
Haram	All other sea creatures such as whales, sharks, turtles, lobsters and crabs
Exception	Prawns and shrimps, which can be eaten

b) Land Creatures

This term covers all animals that live on the face of the earth. Allah has permitted the eating of some and forbidden others. The first five verses of Suratul Maida (Surah no. 5) give a summary of the commands regarding what is permitted to eat.

Halaal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Domestic animals Camels, cows, goats and sheep: They all possess a hoof or cloven hoof.• Wild animals (not kept in enclosures) mountain sheep, wild cows and asses, gazelles and deer are permitted.• Locusts are permissible 
Makruh (undesirable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Horse, donkey or mule.
Haraam	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Animals that possess Canine teeth (pointed) or fangs. Examples of such animals that are sometimes eaten by man are dogs, rabbits, elephants and monkeys.• There are specific verses in the Holy Qur'an forbidding the eating of a pig.• It is not permitted to eat reptiles such as snakes and tortoises. Insects such as fleas and lice are also forbidden.

c) Birds

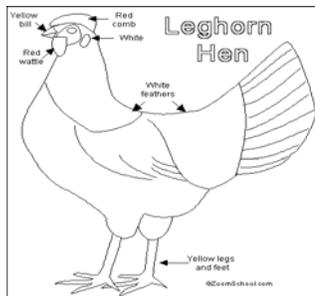
Halaal

- The body is covered with **feathers**.
- Those whose flapping of wings while flying, is more than gliding.

If a particular bird's flight is not known, then before eating one must check for the presence of **one** of the following:

- a **crop** (a bag-like swelling of a bird's food passage. In the crop, food is prepared for digestion)
- a **gizzard** (a second stomach, where the food from the first stomach is ground up)
- or a **spur** – (a fork-like extension on the bird's foot which performs the function of a talon).

Thus chickens, turkeys, pigeons and all small birds are permissible to eat. Even ostriches and peacocks are allowed.



Haram

- Birds of prey (possessing talons – claws).
- Every bird which, when in flight **glides more than flaps its**

	<p style="text-align: center;">wings and has talons cannot be eaten.</p> <p>Birds of prey like eagles, hawks and vultures are Haraam to eat.</p> <p>Crows, rooks and ravens should not be eaten either.</p> <p>Other animals which fly but are not classified as birds such as bats, bees and other flying insects are also Haraam.</p>	
--	--	--

Note that in cases where one is in danger of dying through starvation, anything, including forbidden things, can be consumed to save life. However, this must be done as a last resort and only the absolute minimum must be eaten.

Slaughtering according to Shar'iah.

All animals and birds that are permissible to eat are nevertheless forbidden to a Muslim unless they have been **correctly slaughtered**. The laws for hunting differ slightly and can be obtained from books of Islamic Laws of various jurists.

The correct method of slaughtering involves the **simultaneous** cutting of the gullet, windpipe, carotid artery and jugular vein of the animal with a sharp knife. The conditions for the slaughtering are as below:

<p>1.</p> 	<p>The one who carries out the slaughtering must be a Muslim.</p>
<p>2.</p> 	<p>If possible, the instrument used to slaughter should be made of iron.</p>
<p>3. Qiblah</p> 	<p>The creature to be slaughtered must be made to face the Holy Kaaba.</p>
<p>4. Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem</p> <p><u>In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the Merciful.</u></p> 	<p>The person performing the slaughter must mention the name of Allah as he slaughters the animal.</p>
<p>5.</p> 	<p>There must be a normal emission of blood from the animal after the slaughter.</p>
<p>6. The animal must show some sign of movement after being slaughtered, especially if there was some doubt whether the animal was alive before being slaughtered.</p>	

19.1 Worksheet: Halaal and Haraam Foods and Drinks

Choose the correct answer

1. Foods can be primarily divided into the following two sections:
 - a. Plants and vegetables
 - b. Fruits and vegetables
 - c. Plants/grains and living creatures
 - d. Desserts and Meat

2. In order for the fish to be Halaal, it must be
 - a. Removed alive from the water
 - b. It does not matter who has done the fishing
 - c. It does not matter what method was used to catch the fish
 - d. All of the above

3. Domestic animals, wild animals (not kept in enclosures) and locusts are _____ while animals with canines are _____.
 - a. Halaal, Haraam
 - b. Haraam, Makruh
 - c. Makruh, Haraam
 - d. Haraam, Halaal

4. The following animals are haraam to eat:
 - a. Donkey or Horse
 - b. Reptiles
 - c. Pig

- d. All of the above.
5. Birds that may be halaal to eat are:
- a. Those whose flapping of wings while flying, is more than gliding.
 - b. Birds of prey that have claws, such as eagles.
 - c. Animals that fly but are not classified as birds.
 - d. All of the above
6. If a particular bird's flight is not known but it has a crop (a bag-like swelling of its food passage) then one can consider it halaal.
- a. True
 - b. False
 - c. Only if it also has a spur
 - d. None of the above
7. A bird can be considered halaal if it has either a fork-like extension on the bird's foot which performs the function of a talon, a crop, **or** a
- a. Gizzard (second stomach)
 - b. Claw
 - c. Beak
 - d. A large tail
8. When in danger of dying through starvation, anything, including forbidden things, can be consumed to save life.
- a. If you make sure you eat only the minimum required amount
 - b. If you make sure to read the kalima over the forbidden food
 - c. If you make sure you are eating this only as a last resort

- d. Both a and c
- e. Both b and c

9. All animals and birds that are permissible to eat are nevertheless forbidden to a Muslim unless they have been:

- a. Washed and cleaned
- b. Raised on farms
- c. Tested for chemical contamination
- d. Correctly slaughtered

10. The person performing the slaughter must

- a. Mention the name of Allah as he slaughters the animal
- b. Be a Muslim
- c. Make the animal face the qiblah
- d. All of the above

Chapter 20: Halaal and Haraam Food and Drinks (Part II)

20.1 Islam's position on alcohol

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

“They ask you about wine and gambling. Say: in both these there is great sin and also (some) profit for men; but their sin is greater than their profit ...”
(Al Baqarah, 2: 219)

“The Shaytan only desires to cause enmity and hatred to spring in your midst by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to keep you off from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer.”
(Al Maida, 5: 90)

Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) says:

“Allah has prohibited liquor on account of the evils resulting from it and because it renders reason and intellect of no effect and destroys ‘Haya’ – modesty and sense of shame.”

The following sayings are by Imam Ja'far as- Sadiq (A) and also repeated by other Imams (A):

“Do not associate with drunkards because as and when calamity befalls upon them, it will also engulf their associations (friends)”

In modern society alcohol is the most dangerous legal drug. Under its influence, man is not only danger to himself, but to those around him also.

While it is accepted universally that excess alcohol is harmful, it is thought that in moderate amounts it can be beneficial. Islam totally forbids the consumption of alcohol in any amount. It also forbids Muslims from any involvement in its production, distribution or sale.

The greatest gift of Allah to humans is their ability to reason. This distinguishes us from all other creatures. Without our ability to reason, we become no different from the animals. It is because alcohol destroys this faculty of reason that it is Haraam.

“One who sits at a dining place at which others drink liquor is cursed (by Allah)”

20.2 Guidelines to eating at restaurants

When eating out it is important to establish

- Who owns the restaurant? If it is owned by a Muslim who apparently is mindful of the religion then no further investigation is necessary and all food served is Halaal.
- If a Muslim who appears to be unmindful of the religious laws owns it, for instance he serves or allows alcohol on the premises, then he must be questioned about the source of his meat, the handlers of the food and its contents. You can eat there only if you are certain that it is Halaal.
- According to Agha Seestani, Christians and Jews can be considered to be Tahir, so his Muqalideen can eat food prepared by them.
- If a restaurant is owned by a non-Muslim or ownership is unknown, then the meat cannot be eaten, unless one becomes convinced that it is Halaal and has been cooked by a Muslim, Christian or Jew.
- As regards vegetable products, the method of preparation has to be checked. For instance, when buying French fries, one has to ask the owner whether the oil used for frying is vegetable oil and whether meat products are fried in the same oil.

- Products that are advertised as suitable for vegetarians or fish based products like cod burgers are Halaal, unless one is sure that the contents include animal products or that they have been handled by people other than Ahle Kitaab i.e. Muslims, Christians and Jews.

20.3 Eating Manners (acts that are encouraged when taking a meal):

1. Washing of the hands before eating.
2. Washing hands and drying with a dry towel after eating.
3. To recite the name of Allah (Bismillah) before eating.
4. The host should begin eating first and end last.
5. To eat with the right hand.
6. To take small bits of food and chew thoroughly.
7. To collect and eat the bits of food scattered on the tablecloth.
8. To take salt before and after the meal.

Acts that are discouraged when taking a meal:

1. To eat when not hungry.
2. To over-eat.
3. To gaze at others while eating.
4. To eat food while it is very hot.
5. To blow on food or drink to cool it.
6. To throw a fruit before one has fully eaten it.
7. To scrape off meat from a bone in such a manner that nothing remains on it.
8. To peel those fruits which are normally eaten with their skin.

20.4 Worksheet: Halaal and Haraam Food and Drinks (Part II)

Answer the following questions:

1. According to Suratul Maida what good acts does alcohol prevent a person from doing?
2. According to Imam Ridha what does alcohol destroy in a person?
3. What is the greatest gift of Allah to humans that is affected by the use of alcohol?
4. Masood and his friend go to a restaurant that advertises halaal food. When he sits down to enjoy the delicious looking steak and fries he notices the cook taking his break. His friend recognizes the cook as an acquaintance from India who is Hindu. Is the food that Masood ordered halaal?

5. Zahra eats at a restaurant that serves halaal food. However the owner is Christian. Should she ask the owner if the meat is halaal?

6. Suppose in the above situation Zahra does ask and the owner who is known to be a very honest man says that it is halaal. Is it all right for her to eat the meat?

Put an **E** next to the act that is encouraged and a **D** next to the act that is discouraged by Islam:

7. To collect and eat the bits of food scattered on the tablecloth. _____
8. To eat when not hungry. _____
9. To throw a fruit before one has fully eaten it. _____
10. To peel those fruits which are normally eaten with their skin. _____

Chapter 21: How The Stranger Became Prevalent

(Author unknown)

A few months before I was born, my dad met a stranger who was new to our small Tennessee town. From the beginning, Dad was fascinated with this enchanting newcomer, and soon invited him to live with our family. The stranger was quickly accepted and was around to welcome me into the world a few months later. As I grew up I never questioned his place in our family. Mom taught me to love the Word of God. Dad taught me to obey it. But the stranger was our storyteller. He could weave the most fascinating tales. Adventures, mysteries and comedies were daily conversations. He could hold our whole family spellbound for hours each evening. He was like a friend to the whole family. He took Dad, Bill and me to our first major league baseball game. He was always encouraging us to see the movies and he even made arrangements to introduce us to several movie stars. The stranger was an incessant talker. Dad didn't seem to mind, but sometimes Mom would quietly get up - while the rest of us were enthralled with one of his stories of faraway places - and go to her room read her Bible and pray. I wonder now if she ever prayed that the stranger would leave. You see, my dad ruled our household with certain moral convictions. But this stranger never felt an obligation to honour them. Profanity, for example, was not allowed in our house - not from us, from our friends, or adults. Our longtime visitor, however, used occasional four-letter words that burned my ears and made Dad squirm. To my knowledge the stranger was never confronted. My dad was a teetotaler who didn't permit alcohol in his home - not even for cooking. But the stranger felt he needed exposure and enlightened us to other ways of life. He offered us beer and other alcoholic beverages often. He made cigarettes look tasty, cigars manly, and pipes distinguished. His comments were sometimes blatant, sometimes suggestive, and generally embarrassing. I know now that my early concepts of the man/woman relationship were influenced by the stranger. As I look back, I believe it was the grace of God that the stranger did not influence us more. Time after time he opposed the values of my parents. Yet he was seldom rebuked and never asked to leave. More than thirty years have passed since the stranger moved in with the young family on Morningside Drive. But if I were to walk into my parents' den today, you would still see him sitting over in a corner, waiting for someone to listen to him talk and watch him draw his pictures. His name? We always called him TV.

If a child watches TV for three hours a day by the age of thirteen that child will have seen 8,000 murders and over 100,000 other acts of violence (American Psychological Association). Do you think that people can watch violence on TV without being affected by it? It seems unlikely, doesn't it? Leading authorities worldwide have confirmed that there is a link between viewing violence on TV and violent behavior. One extreme example was reported in the *Daily Telegraph* on 18th May 1995. *Stop or my mum will shoot*, an action video, was watched by a six-year-old girl who then accidentally shot her grandfather dead with his revolver as she copied a scene from the film. Many opinion polls show that there is massive public concern about the damage being inflicted by TV violence. A Times-Mirror poll in 1993 showed that 80% of Americans believe that television now exerts a negative impact on society. A poll for BBC2 the following year showed that two thirds of the public believed that violence on television is directly linked to anti-social behavior among children. In the same year a poll by the TV Times reported that 59% of parents believed TV violence encouraged criminal behavior. Dr William Belson studied 1565 boys in London and concluded that the link between watching TV and real life violence was as valid as connecting smoking with lung cancer. In fact there are more than one thousand studies linking violence in the media to actual behavior. And that is just the TV. I am sure we could say the same about the Internet and magazines and newspapers.

By Fr Tommy Lane, Ireland

Islam discourages us from committing Asraaf of anything and one of the most valuable assets we have in life is time. If we waste our time by watching too much TV we are actually doing Asraaf. We are additionally learning bad language, behavior, and concepts. So to preserve our Islamic values and prevent evil we need to limit the amount of television we watch *and* control what we are watching. We cannot control what is broadcast but we can control what we watch. In doing so we would also be practicing Jihad un Nafs –the greater Jihad.

21.1 Worksheet: How the Stranger Became Prevalent

Choose the correct answer:

1. Television generally opposes the values of
 - a. One's parents
 - b. One's religion
 - c. One's friends
 - d. Both a) and b)
 - e. Both b) and c)

2. If a child watches TV for three hours a day by the age of thirteen that child will have seen:
 - a. 8,000 murders and 100,000 other acts of violence
 - b. 250 drunk driving accidents and 350 other acts of violence
 - c. 155 burglaries and 69 kidnappings
 - d. None of the above

3. There are more than one thousand studies linking violence in the media to
 - a. Actual behavior
 - b. Actual learning of self defense
 - c. Learning assertive behavior
 - d. None of the above

4. ____% of Americans believe that TV now exerts a negative impact on society.
 - a. 50
 - b. 25
 - c. 40
 - d. 80

5. Write down three negatives of watching TV while having dinner.

Acknowledgements

Shia-Muslim Association of Bay Area would like to thank the authors, editors and reviewers for their contributions to the Madrasat Ahlul-Bait curriculum development project.

We are especially thankful to Dr. Nabi Raza Abidi for leading the curriculum committee and providing the motivation and invaluable guidance for the project.

We would like to express our special gratitude to the MAB teachers and staff for their support and assistance in the development and testing of the curriculum.

SABA is also very thankful to the Islamic organizations and authors whose syllabus and books were used for the inspiration and creation of this curriculum.

Please remember in your prayers, all the people involved in this project.