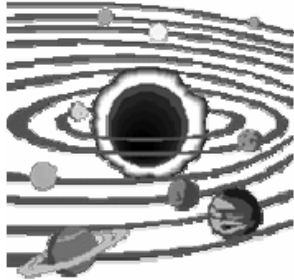


Akhlaq (Ethics)

CLASS 11 – LESSON 1:

THE EXISTENCE OF ALLAH

The basis of Islam lies in the uncompromising belief that Allah, the one true God, exists.



There is no scientific proof beyond doubt that Allah exists. However, the design and existence of our Universe and everything within it, leads us to appreciate that it is harder to disprove His existence than to prove it.

'When I see the glories of the cosmos I cannot help but believe that there is a Divine Hand behind it all.' **Albert Einstein**



Albert Einstein

So, what do we know?

- There is a **pattern** of creation throughout the Universe; eg. gravitational forces of the planets and the Sun, gravitational forces of the moon and the Earth, etc
- There is **uniformity** in the laws of creation (Physics, Mathematics, etc.); eg. electrostatic forces (atoms are like little solar systems), forces of motion (electricity going through a wire is like water flowing in a pipe),
- The universe appears to be **fine-tuned** for our existence. All the constants in the heavens and earth have been subjected to make sure that life and humanity came to be. This is a fact given the current state of evidence. If certain physical properties were minutely different, even by about 1 in 10^{60} , we would not be here. This is like hitting a 1^2 inch target on the other side of the observable universe.
- It is unanimously agreed by the Christian and Muslim scientists of this world that these constants have been set with a purpose in mind, and with intelligence.



'This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent Being.... This Being governs all things . . . as Lord of all.' **Isaac Newton**



Charles Darwin

'Another source of conviction in the existence of God ... follows from the ... impossibility of conceiving this immense and wonderful universe... as the result of blind chance or necessity.' **Charles Darwin**

Scientists today accept the Big Bang theory of the creation of the Universe as being the most reliable, with the most evidence to back it up.

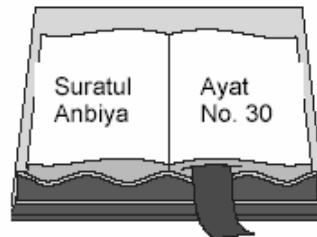
This theory states that the Universe's expansion began with an explosive event, called the **big bang**. It is believed that time also began at this instant.



However, the standard Big Bang theory does not explain what **caused** the big bang. Thus, scientists face a problem. Without Allah, the Big Bang is an impossibility.

'Do not the unbelievers see that the skies and the earth were one unit (joined together), then we split them apart...'

Qur'an (21:30)



In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth... and the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters... and God said, Let there be light: and there was light... and God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.' **Genesis (1:1-4)**



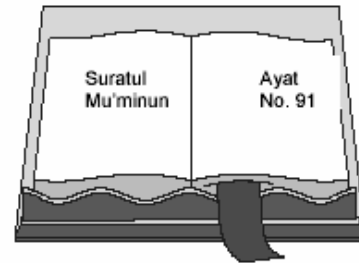
Science also accept Darwin's Theory of Evolution which states that life evolved by adapting to it's surroundings. Islam supports this to a great extent, but we differ when it comes to the creation of mankind.

The Qur'an says that Adam was worthy of worship when Allah gave him a **ruh**. This distinguishes mankind from any other creature, and we don't believe that man just evolved from apes.

Scientists go one step further, and logically deduce from the evidence that the Universe was **intelligently** set by one source, ie. one God. The "oneness" of this source is observed by:

- the uniformity in the workings of the laws of nature all through the universe,
- the common origin of everything in the universe, and
- the blueprint (or design) of life all across the species.

'There has never been any other god besides Allah. Otherwise, each god would have declared independence with their creations, and they would have competed with each other for dominance. Allah be glorified; far above their claims.' **Qur'an (23:91)**



Faced with such scientific evidence, justice demands that we acknowledge the Creator.

'For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities (his eternal power and divine nature) have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.' **Romans (23:91)**

Fiqh (Jurisprudence)

CLASS 11 - LESSON 1

VOLUNTARY AND OBLIGATORY TAXES IN ISLAM

Islam wants to prevent the excessive accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few people so the society may not fall into two classes: one over wealthy, while the other is starving.

The Holy Qur'an gives the reason for taxing wealth by saying,

"...so that it (the wealth) may not circulate among those who are rich among you." (al-Hashr, 59:7)

To bring about this equality in the economic condition of the people, Islam has introduced various methods. An important method is the transferring of the excess wealth from the fortunate sector of the society to its less fortunate members.

This is done on two different levels: on an individual level and on a collective level.

1. *Individual Level*

Islam encourages Muslims to be mindful of the plight of others by prescribing charity. In Arabic, this is known as Sadaqah and Infaq. There are many verses in the Holy Qur'an which command the Muslims to help others voluntarily. There are more verses dealing with voluntary charity than the obligatory dues. Every one is morally obliged to help others according to his or her own means and resources.

There are several levels described in the Holy Qur'an:

First level of charity:

They ask you (O Muhammad) as to what they should spend (in way of charity).
Say, "Whatever can be spared (from your wealth after your own expenses)."
(al Baqarah, 2:219)

Second level of charity:

(The pious are those who)...spend (in charity) from whatever We have given to them.
(al Baqarah 2:3)

Third level of charity:

(The pious people are those) who spend (in charity) when rich or poor...
(Ali Imran 3:134)

In all these levels, one must remember to follow the path of moderation, and the Holy Qur'an says,

Let not your hand be shackled to your neck (out of greed), nor outspread it completely open -- otherwise you will sit down blamed and destitute (poor).
(Bani Israil, 17:29)

2. *On a Collective Level*

The economic equality is guaranteed through the obligatory (Wajib) taxes on the excess wealth of every Muslim. These are taxes like Khums, Zakaat, Fitrah, etc.

In short, Islam aims at eliminating the "need" (Hajat), and elevating the need.

CLASS 11 - LESSON 1

The Writing and Collection of the Holy Qur'ān

From the time of the first revelation, the Muslims began to write down the verses of the Holy Qur'ān. They wrote the verses on animal-skins or parchment or other objects. This is why, in many places the Holy Qur'ān refers to itself as al-Kitāb (the written thing, the book)

In addition, the Prophet (S) appointed special scribes to record the verses. Some of these scribes were °Alī bin Abī Ṭālib (A), Ubayy bin Ka°b, and later, Zaid bin Thābit. The Prophet (S) would immediately inform these companions of the revelation of any new verses. He used to worry that some of the verses might be forgotten, until Allāh assured him:

لَا تُحَرِّكُ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ ﴿١٦﴾

Do not move your tongue with it (the Qur'an) to hasten it.

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ ﴿١٧﴾

Verily, its collection and its recitation is Our responsibility.

(al-Qiyāmah, 75:16,17)

At the time of dictation to the scribes, the Prophet (S) would also inform them of the placement of that āyah or āyāt in the sūrahs. It is for this reason that we find Madani āyāt in Makki sūrahs and vice versa.

Unlike the Bible, the Holy Qur'ān was already in book-form by the time the Prophet (S) passed away. A proof of this fact is his famous Hadithof Thaḡalayn:

"I am leaving behind among you two weighty (precious) things; the Book of Allāh, and my Ahlul Bayt..."

Authenticity and Completeness of the Holy Qur'ān

The Shi°ah are often accused that they believe in a different Qur'ān, one that contains 40 Parās (instead of 30)! This is, of course, a lie and anyone can visit our mosques anywhere in the world to see for themselves the copies of the Holy Qur'ān that we recite from.

We believe that the Holy Qur'ān that we have in our hands is no more or less than that which was revealed to the Prophet (S). This is for several reasons.

1. Allāh Himself has undertaken the responsibility for preserving it as seen in the verse above. Furthermore, He says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِالذِّكْرِ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّهُ لَكِتَابٌ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤١﴾

Verily, those who disbelieve in the Qur'ān when it comes to them (should know) that it is a Book of exalted power.

لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ ﴿٤٢﴾

No falsehood can come at it from before it or from behind it. It is a revelation from the All-Wise, the Praiseworthy. (Hā Mīm, 41:41,42)

2. There are many traditions from the Prophet (S) and our Imāms (A) describing the rewards (thawāb) of reciting individual sūrahs of the Holy Qur'ān. So if the complete Qur'ān did not exist at the time of the Prophet (S), then he or his successors could not have described the thawāb of every sūrah separately.

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Tarikh (History)

CLASS 11 - LESSON 1

PROPHET MUSA (A) - PART 1

During the reign of Prophet Yusuf (A), he invited his father Prophet Ya'qub (A) and his family to come to live in Egypt. The family settled there and in time grew to a large number and they were called the Bani Israa'il.

After several centuries, a man called Fir'aun came to power in Egypt. He was alarmed to see that the Bani Israa'il had become so many that they might pose a threat to the future security of the state. From that time onwards he made life for the Bani Israa'il difficult. Matters became particularly bad for them when a royal astrologer informed Fir'aun that a boy from the Bani Israa'il would soon be born and at whose hands Fir'aun's kingdom would be destroyed. On hearing this, the cruel king ordered that every male child born to the Bani Israa'il should be killed.

However, Allah had decided that Prophet Musa (A) was to be born in such a dangerous environment and He arranged affairs to ensure the safety of His messenger. When Prophet Musa (A) was born, his mother hid him to protect him from the king's soldiers. There was a great danger that the child would be discovered at any moment. At this time, Allah inspired her to put her baby in a water proof box and cast him into the waters of the Nile. She did this, and then sent her daughter to follow the little "boat" and see where it went.

The box floated towards the palace of Fir'aun, where his men fished it out and brought the baby to him. He wanted to kill it immediately, suspecting that it might be a child of the Bani Israa'il, but his wife Aasiya, who was a pious woman, stopped him. They were childless, so she asked him to adopt the child.

Fir'aun agreed to his wife's request and then summoned some women to breastfeed the crying child. However, the baby refused milk from all the women who came to feed him. In the meantime the sister came forward and offered to introduce a woman who she was certain the child would accept. Fir'aun asked for the woman to be summoned, and the girl brought her mother to the palace. The child immediately went to its real mother and thus Allah reunited mother and child in the very palace of Fir'aun.

As the years passed, Prophet Musa (A) grew up strong and healthy. He had the knowledge, wisdom and manners that Allah grants all His Prophets. Prophet Musa (A) resolved to end the oppression of all people under Fir'aun and he began by trying to help his own people, the Bani Israa'il. They realised that Allah had answered their prayers and their saviour would one day free them from the tyranny of Fir'aun.

Once Prophet Musa (A) saw two men fighting. One was from Bani Israa'il, and shouted for help. Prophet Musa (A) came to his rescue and struck the other man a single blow and unwittingly killed him. Later, he learned that his action had been seen by one of Fir'aun's men and he wondered whether to leave the city. A warning from a friend that he was being hunted strengthened his resolve and he left the city secretly. Prophet Musa (A) walked for a long time without a fixed destination and finally reached Madyan. Here, he rested next to a well and saw that the shepherds had gathered to water their sheep. Two maidens were standing away from the crowd of men, waiting

their turn. Prophet Musa (A) went forward to help them draw the water. The maidens then departed, their work finished. However, one of them returned, informing Prophet Musa (A) that her father wished to thank him personally for his help, and wanted to compensate him for his trouble. He went with her to her house and discovered that her father was Prophet Shuaib (A).

Prophet Musa (A) narrated the account of his trouble in Egypt and Prophet Shuaib (A) assured him that he was safe in Madyan. He then offered him a job as a shepherd on the recommendation of his daughter, Safura. He said that he would allow Prophet Musa (A) to marry Safura as long as he worked for him for 8 years. If he wished to work for longer, it would be his decision.

Prophet Musa (A) thus married Safura and worked for her father for 10 years. At the end of this time, he left for Egypt with his wife and a few sheep that he had received as a gift. It was severe winter time and Prophet Musa (A) lost his way in the night. Suddenly he saw a fire in the distance. He asked his wife to remain where she was and headed for the fire, thinking to bring some of it back to give them relief from the bitter cold.

When he reached Mount Sinai he saw that the flames were coming from a green tree but there was no one present. While Prophet Musa (A) looked around in surprise, he suddenly heard a voice saying, "O Musa, I am your Lord! Take off your shoes for you have stepped on to the sacred valley of Tuwa." As Prophet Musa (A) obeyed, he heard the voice ask him to throw his staff onto the ground. At once it changed into a serpent, scaring him. He was then commanded to lift the snake without fear and as he did so, it changed back into a stick.

Next he was commanded to put his hand under his armpit. When he drew it out again, his hand glowed with a dazzling light, brilliant like the sun. The Divine voice said to him, "O Musa! These are the two great Signs of your Lord. Go back to Fir'aun and his people and invite them towards your Lord!"

Prophet Musa (A) requested that his brother, Prophet Haroon (A) accompany him in his mission because he spoke with a fluent voice. This request was granted and thus Prophet Musa (A) came back to Egypt.