

Islamic Teachings Book 2

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Short lessons for children on different aspects of Islam, including belief in God, the Prophet and the Imams, as well as prayers, morals, and good behavior.

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O' Gracious Lord

We pray to Thee, O' Gracious Lord

Of heavens and of earth

The source of virtue and of love

Of dignity and worth.

You are the One who nourishes

All things both big and small

The Omnipotent, Loving, Kind

And Mighty Lord of all.

O Bountiful! We pray to Thee

For health and happiness

Be pleased to grant us faith and love

Good fortune and success.

Be kind enough to make us tread

The path of righteousness

And let our deeds reflect the same

By words what we profess.

Questions

1. Name four things Allah does for His creatures.
2. Name four things you pray to Allah for.

Importance of Education

The first and foremost condition for the vitality of a nation is acquisition of knowledge. In view of this Islam has encouraged the people very much to acquire knowledge and science. As a matter of fact it has made it obligatory for them. The Holy Prophet says:

“It is obligatory for every Muslim, man and woman to acquire knowledge”.

It is narrated that one day the Holy Prophet came into the Masjid and saw some people gathered there. They were divided into two groups. Whereas one of the two groups was busy offering prayers, the other was engaged in religious discussions. The Holy Prophet was very pleased to see those people and said:

“Both these groups are doing something good but I prefer the group which is busy discussing”. Saying this, he himself joined that group.

Islam attaches so much importance to the acquisition of knowledge that it has declared the path of knowledge and wisdom to be the path leading to Paradise.

The Holy Prophet took a keen interest in promoting education among the Muslims and availed of every possible opportunity to achieve this object. At times it so happened that as a result of wars with the enemies of Islam, some literate people were also captured as prisoners of war. The usual custom in those days was that prisoners of war were released only on the payment of ransom. However, the Holy Prophet always treated these literate prisoners well and agreed to set them free provided they taught at least ten Muslims how to read and write.

Amir al-Mu'minin (the Commander of the Faithful), Imam Ali (a) has emphasized the importance of education in these words: “The most valuable treasure is knowledge and wisdom and the worst misfortune is ignorance”.

Knowledge is power.

Questions

1. Why did the Holy Prophet join the group which was busy in religious discussions?
2. In what form did the Holy Prophet receive ransom from the literate prisoners of war?
3. What has Imam Ali (a) said in praise of knowledge?

Faith in Allah

One day, the Holy Prophet of Islam and a few of his companions were going out somewhere. On the way they saw an old woman working at a spinning-wheel and heard her praising Allah for His bounties. The Holy Prophet went up to her, wished her and enquired about her health.

Then he said to her, “Your faith in the Almighty is commendable. Would you tell me what made you to believe in Allah?”

On hearing this, the woman stopped working at the spinning-wheel, thought for a while and then replied:

“O' Prophet of Allah! You see this spinning-wheel. As long as I don't move it, it can't spin. When it so happens with such an ordinary thing, how can it be possible that the mechanism of such a vast universe should work so punctually without a driving force. There must be a Great Being to run it – One who should be controlling every atom. That Great Being can be Allah only, who is the Creator and the Master of everything!”

The Holy Prophet was very pleased with the old woman's reply. Addressing his companions he said,

“Just see how this old lady has come to know about Allah in such a fine and simple way. Your faith in the Almighty Allah should also be firm like hers”.

A Muslim believes in the Oneness of Allah.

Questions

1. What did the Holy Prophet enquire from the old woman?
2. What reply did the old woman give to the Holy Prophet?

3. What did the Holy Prophet say to his companions?

Childhood of Prophet Muhammad (S)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s) was the son of Abdullah and Amina. His father, Abdullah, passed away a few days before his birth. He was born in the city of Mecca in Arabia. His forefathers were the chiefs of the tribe of Quraysh.

It was customary among the noble families of Quraysh that they entrusted their new-borns to country-women so that they might be brought up in the open and healthy environments. According to this custom, therefore, the mother of the Holy Prophet gave him into the care of Halima Sa'dia, a lady belonging to the tribe of Banu Sa'd.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s) spent the first five years of his life with Halima and then she returned him to his mother, Amina. His mother brought him up with great love and devotion. When he was about six years old, she took him to Madina for a few days. On her return journey, however, she breathed her last on the way. After this his grandfather Abd al-Muttalib took him into his care.

Abd al-Muttalib loved his orphaned grandchild very much and was very kind to him. However, he too, expired after two years.

Now the Holy Prophet began to live with his uncle Abu Talib. Fatima, daughter of Asad, who was the wife of Abu Talib loved Muhammad (a) as if he were her own son. Abu Talib, too, was very good to him. When he undertook a journey for the purpose of trade, he took his young nephew along with him.

As Muhammad (a) acquired, under the guidance of his uncle, fair knowledge and experience of business, and was well spoken of by persons who happened to come in touch with him, some traders engaged him as their representative to conduct important business affairs on their behalf. Muhammad (a) so successfully executed these trusts that people were perfectly satisfied with his honesty. The people, therefore, respected him very much and used to call him Sadiq (the truthful) and Amin (the trustworthy).

From his early childhood he never took part in idolatrous rituals and never told a lie. He had excellent habits and an unimpeachable character.

Honesty and truthfulness command respect and honour.

Questions

1. How old was the Holy Prophet when his father died?
2. How did Abu Talib and his wife treat the Prophet?
3. Why did people call the Holy Prophet Sadiq and Amin?

Prophetic Mission of Prophet Muhammad (S)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s) spent the major portion of his life in his native town, Mecca. He always treated the people kindly and affectionately and never harmed anyone.

When he was about forty years old, he proclaimed himself, under Allah's command, to be the Prophet and Messenger of Allah. He advised the people to refrain from idol-worship and other evil deeds, and to worship only Allah, the Creator and Lord of the heavens and the earth. He also warned them of the Day of Judgement, when every one will have to account for his good and bad deeds in this world, and will be recompensed for them.

In those days, Arab tribes quarrelled with one another over very ordinary matters and waged wars for long, long years. The Holy Prophet advised them to avoid disputes and feuds and to live like brothers.

The Holy Prophet of Islam also explained to the people that Almighty Allah does not give any importance to caste, colour or wealth of human beings. On the other hand, He likes those who have sincere faith in Him and who possess knowledge and piety.

He also said that Allah grants a higher rank to those who endeavour to follow the right path and serve humanity to the best of their ability.

The religion revealed through the Holy Prophet is called 'ISLAM'. The word 'Islam' means submission to the Will of Allah. His first wife lady Khadija and his first successor, Imam Ali (a) were the first and foremost to believe in his Prophethood and to accept Islam,

The teachings of Prophet Muhammad (a) are the fountain-head for human welfare.

Questions

1. What was the condition of the Arabs when the Holy Prophet proclaimed his Prophethood?

2. Whom does Allah love more – the rich or the poor?

3. Who were the first to accept Islam?

Social Etiquette

When Prophet Muhammad (a) declared himself to be the Messenger of Allah, the people of Arabia were leading a very miserable life. They were rough and ignorant people who were not conversant with the decorum of a civilized society. So much so that they did not care even to seek permission before entering another's house and did not wish each other when they met. They considered themselves to be enemies of each other and spoke in a very harsh tone. The Holy Prophet gradually taught them the rules of social behaviour and the principles of civilization and culture.

During the last fourteen centuries, man has made great progress in different walks of life. Education has become very common and modern means of transport have made the world much narrower. However, the universal and eternal Islamic principles of civilization continue to guide humanity. We mention below some of them which are well-known as well as very important for our social life.

If we intend entering somebody's house or room and the door is shut, we should knock at the door gently with a view to seeking permission to enter.

If we happen to meet some acquaintances in a gathering or in a street, we should wish them by saying "Salamun Alaikum".

While walking in a street, we should be careful not to bump into anyone. In case we form part of a crowd, we should walk behind one another so that we do not block the way of others.

It is necessary for us not to disturb others. When others are sleeping, we should remain quiet and should not disturb their sleep by making noise.

Most of us are well aware of these rules and principles but are usually negligent in observing them. However, to lead a pleasant social life, it is incumbent upon us to understand these principles properly and to act upon them to the best of our ability.

Islam teaches us the best social etiquette.

Questions

1. What was the condition of the Arabs 14 centuries ago?

2. If we visit another person, what should we do before entering his house?
3. Which are the best social manners?

Prophet – The Model of Goodness

The behaviour and personality of Prophet Muhammad (a) are the best examples to follow in life. A companion of his, who spent full ten years with him, has said:

“Throughout my stay with him I never heard an indecent word from his lips and never found him rude to anyone. He spoke very politely. He was kind to everyone”.

Although Muhammad (a) was the Prophet of Allah and had been appointed by Allah to guide the people, yet he was not ashamed of doing his work with his own hands. He assisted the members of his family in household work and performed the jobs of other deserving persons with great pleasure. He mended his clothes and shoes. He also took part in the construction of Masjid al-Nabi in Madina along with his companions.

His dress was always clean, though simple. He was very mindful of cleanliness. He washed his hands and mouth before and after taking his meals.

He was so kind and generous that he never refused a reasonable request of any person. He often distributed edibles among others and went without meals himself. He always helped the needy and the poor and went to the houses of the sick to enquire after their health. As and when he met anyone he said “Salamun Alaikum”. He always spoke with a smiling face.

The Holy Prophet was a model of all the virtues and qualities of a believer described in the Holy Qur'an. None can describe him better than Allah who has said, he possessed the most noble character.

The personality of our Prophet is an excellent model to follow.

Questions

1. How did the Holy Prophet treat others?
2. Who mended the dress and shoes of the Holy Prophet?
3. What kind of dress did the Holy Prophet wear?

Successors of Prophet Muhammad (S)

The successors of Prophet Muhammad (s), who guided the people after him, are called Imams. We have Twelve Imams and their names are as follows:

1. Imam Ali al-Murtadha
2. Imam Hasan al-Mujtaba
3. Imam Husayn al-Shaheed
4. Imam Ali al-Sajjad
5. Imam Muhammad al-Baqir
6. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq
7. Imam Musa al-Kadhim
8. Imam Ali al-Ridha
9. Imam Muhammad al-Taqi
10. Imam Ali al-Naqi
11. Imam Hasan al-Askari
12. Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi

(May peace and benediction be upon them all).

Our Holy Imams acquitted themselves well of their responsibility as successors of the Holy Prophet of Islam. They did their best to guide the people and suffered great hardships to achieve this purpose. The role performed by Imam Husayn (a) in fighting the hypocrites and in toppling over the machine of tyranny, by Imam al-Baqir (a) and Imam al-Sadiq (a) in spreading Islamic knowledge and other sciences, and by Imam al-Ridha (a) in defending Islamic tenets and in providing intellectual guidance against the invasion of foreign ideas at the time of the spread of Islam over vast territories of the world, are undeniable. The same is true of the role performed by other Imams in their respective circumstances.

The pure lives and instructive sayings of our Holy Imams are beacon lights for the guidance of entire mankind. They always worked for the happiness and prosperity of the people. The sacred teachings of Islam can be learnt only from this Household (Ahl al-Bayt) which was selected by Allah for the revelation

and prophethood.

The lives of our Imams are beacon lights for the guidance of mankind.

Questions

1. What are the successors of the Prophet of Islam called? How many are they in number?
2. How did the Holy Imams discharge their responsibilities?
3. What are the beacon lights for the guidance of mankind?

Imam Ali (A)

Imam Ali (a), the first Imam, was the son of Abu Talib and the cousin and son-in-law of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (a). He was born on Friday, the 13th Rajab in the Holy Ka'aba. From his very childhood, he was brought up in the house of the Holy Prophet who imparted the best education to him. Even after he grew up, he spent most of his time with the Holy Prophet. He was the first among men to accept Islam and offer prayers in the company of the Holy Prophet. He had complete mastery of the verses of the Holy Qur'an and Islamic Laws. After the Holy Prophet of Islam, he was the greatest scholar of Islamic learning.

He was unmatched in his piety, learning, kindness, justice, contentment, toil, forbearance, self-sacrifice and bravery and enjoyed the highest position among the Muslims.

Before saying or doing anything, he gave serious thought to all its aspects. As such, whatever he said was correct and whatever he did was according to Islamic teachings and justice.

He spent the whole of his life fighting against injustice and always upheld truth and justice.

He was polite and modest and treated everyone like a brother and a friend. He was never unfair to anybody and did not displease anyone.

He used simple, but clean clothes. His diet was also very simple. He usually ate barley bread. He was so just and contented that he once said,

“If you give me the whole world, to snatch away just one grain from the month of an ant, I will never do so”.

Under Allah's command, the Holy Prophet nominated Imam Ali (a) as his successor and the leader of the

Muslims. He lived for about thirty years after the Holy Prophet. On the 19th of Ramadan 40 A.H., while offering his prayers in the Masjid al-Kufa, he was struck with a poisoned sword by a Kharejite, Abd al Rahman son of Muljim. He breathed his last on the 21st of Ramadan. His sacred tomb is in the city of Najaf al-Ashraf, in Iraq.

Love for Imam Ali (a) is an article of faith.

Questions

1. Who brought up Imam Ali (a) right from his childhood?
2. What are the qualities for which Imam Ali (a) is well known?
3. What was Imam Ali (a) doing when he was attacked?

Imam Hasan (A)

Imam Hasan (a) was the eldest son of Imam Ali (a). He was born on 15th Ramadan, 3 A.H. in Madina. The first phase of seven years of the second Imam's infancy was blessed with the gracious patronage of the Holy Prophet, who gifted him with all his great qualities and adorned him with divine knowledge to such an extent that he was outstanding in his knowledge, tolerance, intelligence, bounty and valour. After Imam Ali (a) he became the second Imam of the Muslim Ummah. He showed kindness even to his enemies.

During the time of Imam Hasan (a) and his father Imam Ali (a) there was a man who was desirous of becoming the leader of all the Muslims. To achieve this end, he used to abuse Imam Ali (a) and his family. The name of the man was Mu'awiyah.

One day, a follower of Mu'awiyah came to Madina and approached Imam Hasan (a). As he was opposed to the Imam, he did not even wish him and began using foul language. The followers of Imam Hasan (a) wanted to punish the man for his misbehaviour but the Imam asked them to leave him alone. Then he turned to the man, and said: "Salamun Alaikum" and enquired about his health. He spoke to him very nicely and invited him to his house.

When the man observed the Imam's noble behaviour, he was very much ashamed. He also realized that whatever Mu'awiyah said against Imam Ali (a) and Imam Hasan (a) was not true. Therefore, before leaving Madina, he went to Imam Hasan (a) and begged his pardon. Thereafter, whenever he heard anyone saying anything against Imam Hasan (a) or other members of the Holy Prophet's family, he would say that it was not true. He would tell people how good, kind and generous Imam Hasan (a) was.

Imam Hasan (a) was very modest and forbearing.

Questions

1. Why was Mo'awiyah against Imam Ali (a) and his family?
2. Why did Mu'awiyah's follower use foul language against the Imam?
3. How did Imam Hasan (a) treat Mu'awiyah's follower? What was the effect of this treatment?

Imam Husayn (A)

Imam Husayn (a), the third Imam, was born on 3rd Sha'ban 4 A.H. in Madina. On his birth, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (a) prophesied that the faith of Islam would be rescued by his second grandson, Husayn (a). Like his father and brother, he was very learned, kind, brave and self-sacrificing.

In his days Yazid, the son of Mu'awiyah ascended the throne. He was an unjust and irreligious person. He was known for his devilish character and brutish conduct. As soon as he came to power, he began to violate the rules and laws of Islam. In addition to this, he also claimed to be a caliph and a successor to the Holy Prophet of Islam. To get this position confirmed, he decided to compel Imam Husayn (a) to take an oath of allegiance to him.

Due to an impudent person like Yazid becoming the caliph, there arose a danger for the people again to adopt un-Islamic beliefs and customs.

The responsibility for protecting Islam and human rights thus fell on the shoulders of Imam Husayn (a).

The people of Kufa had not recognized Yazid as a caliph. They invited Imam Husayn (a) to come to Kufa and guide them. He, therefore, left for Kufa accompanied by a few young men, ladies and children and some sincere friends. While on his way, he had to face Yazid's armed forces. In order to save the faith preached by his Holy grandfather, Imam Husayn (a) decided to face these satanic forces in the field. He and his companions fought valiantly and most of them were martyred. This happened at Karbala – a desert area in Iraq – on the tenth of Muharram 61 A.H.

The tenth of Muharram is called the day of Ashura'. On this day, Muslims all over the world commemorate the unmatched struggle of Imam Husayn (a) and his companions against tyranny. They mourn these martyrs who laid down their lives for the safety of Islam.

The sacrifices rendered by Imam Husayn (a) for the safety of Islam is unparalleled in the history of the

world. He said:

“In my view it is a blessing to lay down one's life in the path of Allah and nothing except humiliation can be gained by extending one's hand of co-operation towards the tyrants”.

We should be prepared to make the greatest sacrifices for the safety of Islam.

Questions

1. Who was Yazid and what sort of person was he?
2. Why did Imam Husayn (a) proceed to Kufa?
3. How did Imam Husayn (a) meet Yazid's challenge?

Imam Zayn Al-Abidin (A)

The fourth Imam Ali (a) was born in Madina on 15th Jumadi I, 37 A.H. He was very pious and was usually busy praying to Allah. For this reason, people called him Zayn al-Abidin (Ornament of the worshippers) and al-Sajjad (One who prostrates).

He was the only son of Imam Husayn (a) who survived after the tragedy of Karbala. Thereafter, he devoted himself to Allah's worship and guidance of the people.

Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a) was very mindful of the welfare of the sick, the needy and the poor. He usually left home late at night with some food and money. Without being observed by the general public he reached the houses of the needy and delivered these things to them. After having done this, he returned home.

It was the keen desire of Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a) that people should become learned. He, therefore, encouraged all the Muslims, especially the children, to acquire knowledge.

One day he saw a group of children studying together, This pleased him very much. After saying Salam in reply to their greetings, he said:

“O dear children! Study well You are children today but will grow up after some time. Take care that the knowledge you acquire should be beneficial for humanity”.

The invaluable collection of the Imam's edited supplications is known as “Sahifa al-Kamila.” The collection is an invaluable treasury of wonderfully effective supplications to Allah in an inimitably beautiful

language. Through these supplications, the Imam gave all the necessary guidance to the faithful during his seclusion.

Only that knowledge is worth acquiring which is beneficial for humanity.

Questions

1. Why is our fourth Imam called Zayn al-Abidin?
2. How did Imam al-Sajjad (a) usually help the people?
3. What advice did Imam al-Sajjad (a) give to the children whom he saw studying together?

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (A)

Our fifth Imam is Muhammad al-Baqir (a). He was the son of Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a). He was born in Madina in the year 57 A.H.

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a) was the man of many qualities of greatness, reverence and piety. He was the greatest scholar of his time. His life was the best model of good manners and piety. He used to work on his farm. He put in hard labour so as to earn enough to support his family, and to help the poor and the needy.

It was his greatest desire that people should acquire knowledge. For this purpose, he had set up a study circle where he taught people the Islamic Law. Imam al-Baqir (a) disclosed the secrets of knowledge and wisdom and unfolded the principles of spiritual and religious guidance. Later his students and disciples became great scholars themselves, and performed an important role in the propagation of knowledge and guidance of the people.

The collection and arrangement of Islamic Jurisprudence commenced during the time of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a). He also commented upon and explained the contents of the Qur'an, the Hadith of the Holy Prophet and other branches of knowledge. After him his son Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a) and other Imams continued this task.

It is beyond the power of a man to recount the deep impression of knowledge and guidance left by the Imam on the hearts of the faithful. His sayings about devotion and abstinence, knowledge and wisdom, and religious exercise and submission to Allah are great in number.

The greatest good is to impart knowledge to others.

Questions

1. How did Imam al-Baqir (a) earn livelihood for his family?
2. What steps did the Imam take to promote knowledge?
3. When did the collection and arrangement of Islamic Jurisprudence commence?

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (A)

The name of our sixth Imam is Ja'far (a) and he is generally remembered by the title of al-Sadiq. He was the son of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a). He was born in 83 A.H.

Imam al-Sadiq (a) was the greatest and most renowned sage of his time. He had established a school in which thousands of students received instruction in Islamic Law and other branches of learning.

Imam al-Sadiq (a) treated all human beings like his children. He generously helped the needy and the poor. It is said that once the Abbasid Caliph, Mansur, decided to kill Imam al-Sadiq (a). For this purpose he hired one hundred illiterate and uncouth persons. The plan was that he would summon the Imam and when a specified signal was given, they should cut him to pieces with their swords. However, when the Imam came all those persons showed him respect, although the necessary signal had been given to them. The hypocritical caliph also received the Imam cordially. When the Imam had left for his house, Mansur enquired from those persons as to why they had not killed him. They replied, "By Allah! We did not know that you wanted us to kill this holy person. He is as kind to us as a father and helps us day and night. How could we kill him?" Mansur had no alternative but to keep quiet.

Like other leaders of the faith, Imam al-Sadiq (a) also liked to do his work with his own hands. One day, when he was working on his farm, one of his disciples came up. He said to the Imam, "Please allow me to work for you" The Imam replied:

"Everyone must work for his own livelihood instead of depending on others".

Love and sincerity can turn the worst persons into the best friends.

Questions

1. What services did the Imam render to Islamic learning?
2. Why did the persons hired by Mansur not kill the Imam?

3. Why did Imam al-Sadiq (a) not allow his disciple to work for him on the farm?

Faith and Hardwork

One day Imam Ali (a) was carrying a heavy bag filled with date seeds to the farms near the city of Madina. Some one asked him, “What is inside this heavy bag?” Imam Ali (a) replied, “If Allah wishes, a few date palm trees.”

As Imam Ali (a) had complete faith in Allah and never shirked hard work, he was hoping that plants would grow from the date seeds and become trees. And that was exactly what happened. Some time after sowing the date seeds, plants sprouted out of the earth.

Islam orders us to work hard having full confidence in Allah's blessing. We should rest assured that if our faith is perfect, Allah will not let our efforts go in vain and will grant us success. On the other hand, we should also remember that we shall not succeed if we shirk hard work, and waste our time

It is not necessary that one's efforts should be rewarded immediately. The law of nature is that at times man has to face failures as well. However, people who are steadfast in their faith and sincerely believe in their object, are not discouraged by the temporary set-backs. On the other hand, they continue to work hard to achieve their goal.

Remember! In the long run, every difficult task becomes easy and profitable for them who have impregnable faith in Allah.

Greatness lies in hard work.

Questions

1. What was Imam Ali (a) carrying to the farms and why?
2. What is the secret of success of a Muslim?
3. What does Islam order us?
4. When does a difficult task become easy and profitable?

Help Yourself

During the time of Imam Ali (a) there were some people who never worked and lived a very miserable and unhappy life. One day Imam Ali (a) asked them: “Where from do you find money to support yourselves and your families?”

They replied: “We have no means of livelihood but we depend on Allah.”

Imam Ali (a) asked: “How can you live by merely depending on Allah?” They replied, “If we lay hands on some money we spend it, and if we do not get it, we wait for it”.

This reply surprised Imam Ali (a) very much. He said to them, “You are gravely mistaken. Faith in Allah and dependence on Him does not mean that one should not work and then hope that Allah will provide him with his living. One who depends on others and is a burden on the society is devoid of the blessings of Allah. On the other hand, faith in Allah means that one should work as hard as he can, and simultaneously hope and pray for Allah's blessings.

The Holy Qur'an says: “If you decide to do something, have firm faith in Allah”.

Allah hates an idle person.

Questions

1. What was the condition of those people who professed faith in Allah but did not work?
2. What is the true meaning of faith in Allah?

Respect for Others

The prayer time was drawing near. The Holy Prophet was sitting in the Masjid in Madina with some of his followers and was speaking to them. By and by, other people also began entering the Masjid to pray with him, and also to benefit from his valuable sayings.

One of the entrants was a rich man wearing a very costly garment. He came and sat just in front of the Holy Prophet. In the meantime, another man also came in and sat by the side of the rich man. The garments and appearance of the new-comer betrayed his weak financial position. The rich man disliked his sitting by his side in an unconcerned manner and pulled his clothes away from him.

This action on the part of the rich man was strongly disapproved by the Holy Prophet – the greatest benefactor of humanity, the torch-bearer of equality, fraternity and justice. He addressed him in these words:

“I have noticed that you have pulled away your clothes from this man, what is the reason for this? Is it because you were afraid that some of your wealth might go to him, or that his poverty might penetrate into you?”

The rich man was noble-minded by nature. He at once realized his mistake and said:

“O' Prophet of Allah! I admit that I have made a great error. To atone for this, I am prepared to give half of my wealth to this brother of mine”.

The Holy Prophet then asked the other person, “What do you say about it?” To this he replied:

“O' Prophet of Allah! I accept the apology of my brother and forgive him. His wealth is not, however, acceptable to me, because I am content with the living earned by hard-work. I do not want to become rich without doing any work.

To err is human, to forgive divine.

Questions

1. Why did the rich man pull away his clothes?
2. Did the Prophet approve of the action of the rich man?
3. Why did the poor decline to share the wealth of the rich?

Need of Friends

There is no one in the world who does not need friends. The more friends we have the more successful our lives will be. A learned man has said, “One who thinks that he does not need friends is like the simpleton who tells the sun that he does not care whether it rises or sets”.

It should also be remembered that it is necessary to be careful in the selection of friends. Making more friends does not mean that we should have firm relations with anyone and everyone. If we befriend unmannerly and lazy people, their bad habits will gradually affect us and we shall become lazy and worthless like them. This will make us lose our esteem in the eyes of others.

There is a well-known proverb: “A man is known by the company he keeps”. We should, therefore, befriend those people who are good mannered, pious and hard-working. Islam says that two companions should act as preachers for each other and each one of them should point out the shortcomings of the other. So by associating with such people we shall overcome our weaknesses and advance on the path of progress.

It should also not be forgotten that making friends is not sufficient; but it is also necessary to retain their friendship. This would be possible only when we behave with them properly and sincerely. Imam Ali (a) has said:

“A man who has no friends is very poor. And poorer than he, is he who cannot retain the friendship and loses his friends”.

A man is known by the company he keeps.

Questions

1. What type of people should we make friends?
2. How should we treat our friends and why?
3. What Imam Ali has said about friends?

Service to Humanity

It is one of the basic commandments of Islam that we should help and serve others. This is what we have been ordered by Allah and His Prophet to do, and this is what we have been taught by our Imams. It is our duty to help a person who is in difficulty, whether he be a Muslim or a non-Muslim.

One day, a friend of Imam al-Sadiq (a) came from some other place to see him in Madina, where the Imam was then staying. In the course of conversation, he said to the Imam, “O' Holy Imam! Some nomads are staying in our town. They come around every now and then and seek help. Unfortunately, they are not Muslims. Should we help them?”

The Imam replied, “It is our duty to help every needy person. It makes no difference whether he is a Muslim or a non-Muslim

Islam considers those rich persons to be virtuous who meet all financial obligations consisting of zakat and rights of the relatives, beggars and the needy.

As and when Imam Ali (a) appointed anyone to the governorship of a province, he used to give the man a number of instructions. One of those instructions was this:

“Always give people their rights, whether they be Muslims or unbelievers. If they are Muslims, they are your brethren in-faith and even if they are not Muslims, they are your fellow beings”.

It is our duty to help every needy person.

Questions

1. Is it the duty of Muslims to help the needy even if they are non-Muslims?
2. What instructions did Imam Ali (a) give to the governors regarding human rights?

Humility

One day, Imam Musa al-Kazim (a) chanced to pass by the tent of a dark skinned nomad. He went up to him and said, 'Salamun Alaikum'. Then he enquired about his health and welfare, and conversed with him for some time. When the Holy Imam took his leave and bade him good-bye, he added, “If there is anything I can do for you, I am quite willing to do it”.

When the disciples of the Imam saw him treating that man in such a friendly manner, they said, “O' Holy Imam! You went up to that humble and ordinary man and conversed with him; and while departing also you told him very warmly that if there was anything you could do for him, you would be quite willing to do it. Is it appropriate for a person like yourself to go and meet such an ordinary man and converse with him in such a cordial manner?”

The Holy Imam replied, “You forget that he, too, is a servant of Allah and Allah has created all men equal to one another. Furthermore, since he is also a Muslim, he is our brother-in-faith. Besides this, you should also remember that the circumstances of any person don't remain the same for ever. It is possible that we may be obliged to seek assistance of the same person tomorrow, who stands in need of our help today. If we withhold our help from him now, it will be embarrassing for us to face him at the time of our own need”.

Imam Ali (a) quotes from the Holy Prophet (s) saying:

“A Muslim should not leave his brother-in-faith alone to face hardships and should consider that thing for him which he considers to be good for himself and should not desire that thing for him which he does not desire for himself”.

A Muslim should protect the honour of his brother-in-faith.

Questions

1. What did Imam al-Kadhim (a) tell the nomad?
2. What did the Imam's disciples object to his associating with the nomad?
3. What did Imam al-Kadhim reply to his disciples?
4. What does Imam Ali quote from the Holy Prophet?

The Secret of Successful Life

The secret of human success lies in keeping things properly. People who keep their belongings in proper order are always successful in life. On the other hand, those who lack this quality can never achieve success.

Punctuality and regularity in all our activities are very important factors of success. We should do everything at its proper time. We should chalk out a programme for our work, games, outings, rest and sleep, and adhere to it strictly. We should also offer our prayers regularly and at the proper time. By doing so, we shall be able to perform every task in time and shall not face any embarrassment. We should never postpone today's work until tomorrow. Doing so is the cause of all troubles.

Time is something very precious. It is a well-known saying that, "Time and tide wait for no man". We should, therefore, appreciate the value of our own time and should not waste the time of others. If we make an appointment with another person, we should make it a point to reach the place agreed upon at the appointed time or a minute or so earlier. Similarly, if we undertake to do some task for somebody, we should do it properly and on time.

It is necessary to do every job neatly and in a proper manner. When you return from school, you should not throw your uniform into one corner and your books into another. The best way is to request your mother to fix a place for your books and other things and to keep them in a proper way.

An orderly life is the key to success.

Questions

1. What should one do to lead a successful life?

2. Why should we appreciate the value of time?
3. Which are the important factors of a successful life?

Sympathy for Animals

Man is Allah's noblest creature. A glance at the universe shows that he is the central figure in it and Almighty Allah has created him to make gradual progress. It also appears that all other things are subordinate to him and have been created to assist him in achieving this object. The animals form an important part of such useful things.

Man utilizes animals for various purposes. He uses some of them for the purpose of cultivation and others as means of transport. Some animals provide him with meat as well as milk, which is a very wholesome human diet. He also uses their hides and skins to manufacture various articles. There are also many other jobs for the completion of which man needs the services of animals.

As we derive so many benefits from animals, it is also our duty to protect and nourish them. The commands of Islam in this behalf are very important and clear. The Holy Prophet of Islam has said: "It is the duty of those who use animals for transport purposes to provide them with enough fodder and water and to take proper care of them. They should not load them beyond their capacity and should not harm them".

As explained above, it is our duty to treat the animals sympathetically and kindly. We should take particular care to feed the domestic animals properly and accommodate them at a comfortable place. We should not be cruel to them. It should also be remembered that the Holy Imams, too, took special care about the comfort of the animals. Good treatment meted out by us to animals is also likely to be reflected in our treatment of human beings.

Islam has ordered us to treat the animals kindly.

Questions

1. What benefits do we derive from animals?
2. What instructions did the Prophet give about the animals?
3. What opinion will you form about a person who does not treat animals kindly?

Ritual Prayers

Allah loves us and has bestowed many bounties upon us. It is, therefore, necessary that we should be grateful to Him for all His bounties and blessings and should thank Him from the core of our hearts. The best way of showing our gratitude to Him is by offering prayers (Salat).

Muslims are required to pray to Allah five times a day, viz. dawn, midday, afternoon, dusk and night. These five prayers are obligatory.

The time for the dawn prayer is from dawn until before sunrise. The time for the mid-day and afternoon prayers commences with the declining of the sun and lasts until sunset. As regards the dusk and night prayers, their time is after sunset until mid-night.

Every prayer consists of a few units, each of which is called a Rak'at. In every Rak'at there is one Ruku and two Sajdah. Ruku' means bowing while Sajdah means prostration.

Every prayer has some compulsory Rak'ats. The dawn prayer has two, the dusk prayer has three and the remaining three prayers have four Rak'at each.

In the first verse of Surah al-Mu'minun of the Holy Qur'an, Almighty Allah mentions all the attributes of the believers and gives them good news of prosperity and success. He says:

“Blessed are the believers, who are humble in their prayers”.

As is evident from the verse reproduced above that the greatest quality of the believers is that they show meekness before Allah while offering their prayers. They pay full attention to Him and do not display carelessness. They know that, while offering prayers, they stand before the Omniscient Allah.

The greatest human quality is to express humility before Allah.

Questions

1. What is the greatest quality of man?
2. Why should we not let our thoughts go astray while offering prayers?
3. How many prayers are obligatory for a Muslim during day and night?

Allah – The Praise–Worthy

As we know, it is necessary to recite two surahs from the Holy Qur'an during prayers. The name of the first such surah, is 'al-Hamd' or 'al-Fateha' and it reads as follows:

Bismilla hir Rahmanir Rahim

Al hamdu lil lahi Rabbil Alamin. Ar Rahmanir Rahim.

Maliki yawmid Din. Iyyaka na'budu wa iyyaka nasta'in.

Ihdinas Siratal mustaqim. Siratal ladhina an'amta 'alaihim

Ghairil maghdhubi 'alaihim waladh Dhaalim.

The following is the meaning of the above surah:

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. The Beneficent, the Merciful. Master of the Day of Judgement. You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help. Guide us on the right path – the path of those whom You have favoured; not (the path) of those who earned Your wrath; nor of those gone astray.

After reciting this surah in our prayers, we must also recite another surah. The other surah usually recited by people is surah 'al-Tawheed' which is also called surah 'al-Ikhlās'.

Surah 'al-Hamd' tells us that all blessings are granted by Allah who has created everything. We must praise (thank) Him. The reward and punishment of the people is in His hands. We worship only Allah and ask only Him to guide us to the right path.

Surah 'al-Hamd' being an essential part of prayers, we should try to learn it by heart.

Surah 'al-Hamd' is an essential part of prayers.

Questions

1. Which surah must be recited in prayers? Is recitation of one surah sufficient?
2. What does surah 'al-Hamd' tell us?
3. In which part of the Holy Qur'an does surah 'al-Hamd' find its place?

Allah – The Unique

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s) advised the people of Mecca to stop worshipping idols and instead worship One Allah. One day someone asked him, “Explain to us Allah you worship”.

Then Allah revealed the following Surah 'al-Tawhid' to the Holy Prophet so that he could recite it to the people:

Bismilla hir Rahmanir Rahim

Qul huwal lahu Ahad

Allahus Samado

Lam yalid walam yulad

Walam Yakul lahu kufuwan Ahad.

The following is the meaning of the above surah:

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Say: Allah is One.

He needs nothing.

Neither has He given birth to anyone;

Nor is He born of anyone.

And He has no equal.

'Tawheed' means that Allah is One, Alone, and there is none like Him.

During our prayers we must recite two surahs from the Holy Qur'an, one of which is Surah 'al-Hamd' and the other is Surah 'al-Tawheed'. We should therefore, learn these surahs by heart.

Belief in the Oneness of Allah is the basis of Islam.

Questions

1. What was the occasion of the revelation of Surah 'al-Tawheed'?
2. What is the meaning of 'Tawheed'?

3. Which surahs of the Holy Qur'an do we usually recite in prayers?

Fasting

Fasting is one of the most important duties in Islam. All the Prophets sent by Allah before Muhammad (s), the Holy Prophet of Islam, commanded their followers to fast and also taught them how to fast.

Ramadan is the month of glory. It is a month of fasting and intensive prayer, a month of sacrifice and divine worship. Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'an was revealed as a guide to mankind.

In this month the Muslims wake up, every night, a couple of hours earlier than the Adhan (Prayer Call for dawn prayers) and begin preparations for commencing the fast. They eat and drink something while it is still dark and then begin praying to Allah. The fast begins immediately before dawn.

During the fast one is not permitted to eat or drink anything. If one does so, the fast becomes null and void. It is also nulled by many other actions, for example, diving in water, smoking etc.

Fast terminates with the setting of the sun and with the call to dusk prayers. Thereafter people who have been fasting during the daytime are at liberty to eat and drink.

The real purpose of fasting is not achieved only by remaining hungry and thirsty. The philosophy lying behind fasting demands that one should try to refrain from evil deeds and sins; should be loving and kind to others and should not indulge in back-biting or do harm to anyone.

Moreover, fasting is good precautionary measure against the incidence of a number of diseases.

It is worth-noting that fasting, besides its emotional and moral effects, produces remarkable social effects also.

From the social point of view, for example, it induces people to show practical sympathy to the deprived and the starving.

Fasting is useful for our morals and health.

Questions

1. Is Islam the first religion to command fasting?
2. What is the special characteristic of 'Ramadan'?

3. What is the philosophy lying behind fasting?

The Holy Qur'an

Almighty Allah endowed the Prophets with knowledge and wisdom, and sent them to guide the people. However, these chosen servants of Allah also performed some super-natural feats to satisfy the stubborn ones. These feats are called 'miracles'.

Our Holy Prophet Muhammad (s) also performed many miracles. However, his ever-lasting miracle is the heavenly Book brought by him viz. QUR'AN.

Qur'an is the book in which no alteration has taken place so far, nor will it ever take place in future. It is not possible for anyone to compose anything which may equal even one verse of this unique book.

The Holy Qur'an is the last message of Allah for mankind, and its teachings are the only source of human prosperity and guidance. It is a masterpiece of knowledge, methods of education and secrets of creation.

In some parts of the Holy Qur'an man has been asked to think deeply to understand the realities of the vast universe, and thus realize the Greatness of Allah, to the extent possible. In other parts, a mention has been made of the Day of Judgement, and man has been reminded that he will have to account for his good and evil deeds. In the last parts of the Holy Qur'an, man has been ordered to follow Divine rules and regulations in the matter of justice, peace and social welfare.

Some true stories about the former Prophets and nations have also been related in the Holy Qur'an. The stories of the conversion of the rod of Musa (a) into a python and coming to life of the dead and the recovery of the born blind through Isa (a) are undeniable. The Holy Qur'an is the guide which directs humanity in all its affairs and at every stage of its development, it ensures the success of man in this world as well as the Hereafter.

The Holy Qur'an is the corner stone of Islam.

Questions

1. Why is it said that Qur'an is an unparalleled miracle?
2. What is the nature of the commandments given in Qur'an?
3. What stories are narrated in the Holy Qur'an?

Allah, the Merciful

“Your God is Allah, the One. There is no god but He! The Beneficent the Merciful. “

(Surah al-Baqarah, 2: 163).

Allah, the Creator of the universe, is One and Unique. He has no partner in the creation and administration of the universe.

We see that the mechanism of creation is in motion and in perfect order, and no chaos or disorder is present in it anywhere. Keeping this order and arrangement in view, we can very well realize that there is only One Omnipotent and Omniscient Being who controls this entire mechanism. It is He whom we call God or Allah.

All the Prophets who were sent by Him into this world, taught us that He is One and One only.

We Muslims believe that all human beings are Allah's servants and everything has been created by Him. We worship only that One and Unique Allah.

Truthfulness

“Speak truthfully so that Allah may reform your deeds” (Surah al-Ahzab, 33:70)

Truthfulness is one of the most basic things for the establishment of mutual social relations. Islam has, therefore, attached much importance to truthfulness as a moral value and the Holy Qur'an has mentioned it on various occasions.

People trust a man who speaks rightly and truthfully. They hold him in esteem and accept every word of his to be correct.

On the other hand, if a man tells lies and talks foolishly and extravagantly, he loses credit in the eyes of the people and Almighty Allah is also displeased with him.

If we always talk wisely and are truthful, Allah helps us in doing good and useful things, and in leading a prosperous life. We should always remember that truthfulness is the basis of one's dignity and honour.

Allah – The Kind

“Allah is very kind and generous to His creatures”. (Surah al-Baqarah, 2:217).

Allah, whom we worship, is Just. He is kind to all His creatures and is not cruel to anyone. He gives a good reward to those who do good deeds. On the other hand, those who do bad deeds, have to undergo punishment therefor.

Allah loves His creatures. He helps them and guides them to the right path through His Prophets.

Allah wants that all human beings should do good deeds so that they may lead prosperous and happy lives. He also wants that those who do evil deeds, due to their ignorance, should forsake their unbecoming ways, repent sincerely for their sins and begin doing good deeds.

Allah wants goodness and happiness for everyone and is very kind to everybody.

Effort and Success

“Man will not get anything unless he works hard” (Surah al-Najm, 53:39).

There is no doubt about the fact that man cannot make any progress without effort and hard work. For example, one who studies whole-heartedly becomes a scholar. Similarly, a farmer who ploughs the farm, sows seeds in it and waters them, is soon rewarded with crops. On the other hand, whoever is lazy and indolent and does not do any work, is faced with woes and worries. Indolence and irresponsibility results in poverty and grief, and Islam dislikes these things very much. Islam regards hard work a duty.

The Holy Prophet always insisted upon working hard. He is reported to have said: “One who works is the friend of Allah, and one who does not work is considered by Allah, to be His enemy”.

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a), our sixth Imam, also impressed upon the people the advantages of hard work. He has said:

“Allah does not love those who sleep too much, and do not work”.

Tyranny Is Condemned

“Whoever harms others, will become a loser”. (Surah Taha, 20:111).

In the above verse, the Almighty Allah warns the evil-doers and declares every evil deed to be unlawful. One who harms another person, makes fun of him, talks ill of him behind his back or accuses him falsely is an evil-doer.

Those who infringe upon the rights of others, hurt them or usurp their belongings, are evil people.

If we do not look after our parents, bother them and disobey their orders, we are guilty of doing evil to them. We commit evil deeds if we tease our brothers and sisters or misbehave towards our class-mates.

We should not forget that Almighty Allah does not like the evil-doers.

Mutual Cooperation

“Cooperate with one another in good deeds and abstain from evil”.

(Surah al-Maida, 5:2).

Every human being needs the cooperation of others to lead a pleasant and comfortable life. Man can never acquire happiness by remaining aloof from others. As a matter of fact, cooperation with one another in good deeds guarantees the progress of human society.

Islam also wishes that people should cooperate with one another in accomplishing good tasks, like helping the needy, building schools and hospitals etc.

Islam has insisted upon the Muslims, in very strong terms, to cooperate with one another. It also wishes that, if a person is in difficulty, others should help him. All of us should, therefore, endeavour to get acquainted with the needs and difficulties of one another, and remove them as far as possible.

Worship and Good Behaviour

“Your Lord has commanded you not to worship anybody but Him, and you must be kind to your

parents” (Surah Bani Israel, 17:23).

Allah has created us and given us countless gifts so that we may live a happy and peaceful life. It is, therefore, our duty to thank Him and worship Him.

In the Holy Qur'an obedience to parents has been mentioned at many places along with obedience to Allah and in some cases it has been mentioned as the first recommendation to the children of Adam.

Our parents have done great favours to us. They have borne many hardships to bring us up. It is, therefore, necessary for us to appreciate the good they have done to us. We should obey their lawful orders. We should try, our level best to recompense them for their kindness, so that Almighty Allah may also be pleased with us.

Islam has laid great stress on the good treatment of one's parents. Allah is pleased with those who keep their parents happy, and one invites His wrath by annoying them.

Reward for Goodness

“Is the reward of goodness anything but goodness” (Surah al-Rahman, 55:60).

If you are passing along a mountain and say something aloud, you will hear your own voice again after a moment. It will echo or resound.

You will hear once again exactly the same thing which you have said. For example, if you have said aloud 'good', the echo will be 'good', but if you have uttered 'bad', you will once again hear the word, 'bad'.

Similar is the case with our actions. If a person helps his fellow beings, others will also help and honour him. Allah is also pleased with such a person, and showers many more blessings upon him. However, if a man does evil deeds and harms others, he loses all sympathizers and no one turns up to help him when he is in difficulty.

The Almighty Allah says: “Whoever does good, will see the result of his goodness, and whoever does bad, will also see the result of his wrong-doing”.

Don't Ridicule Others

“One group of people should not make fun of another group of people. May be they (the latter) are better than they (the former)”.

(Surah al-Hujurat, 49:11.)

Some people make fun of others, and humiliate them in the eyes of their fellow-beings. People who speak ill of others, are usually those whose education and upbringing have not been up to the mark, and who have not learnt proper social manners. They are not perhaps, aware that all human beings are equal, and no one has the right to humiliate or hurt another. They also forget that it is quite possible, that those whom they ridicule may in fact be better people than themselves, because of their good qualities.

It is the duty of every Muslim to respect others. If he observes any defect in the body, dress or house of another, he should not laugh at him or ridicule him.

Divine Help

“The blessing and kindness of Allah is close to those who do good to others”. (Surah al-A'raf, 7:56).

Allah is kind to all His creatures and commands human beings to be kind and good. He desires that all of us should treat one another with love and kindness, and render sympathy and help to those who stand in need of them.

A person is considered to be good if he:

- Helps a needy person.
- Helps a lost person to find his way.
- Treats an orphan with compassion
- Removes a stone lying on the road.
- Helps a blind person to cross a street.
- Feeds animals and birds and keeps them in comfort.

Allah loves those who do good deeds and help others. He gives them a much greater reward, as compared with the assistance rendered by them to others.

Sayings of Prophet Muhammad (S)

Once a man approached the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s) and said, "O Prophet of Allah! Advise me how to lead a good life." The Holy Prophet replied, "Be kind and decent to others".

It is an undeniable fact that there is nothing as good as belief in Allah and His Holy Prophet and good behaviour towards Allah's creatures. It is for this very reason that when the Holy Prophet was once asked as to who is liked most by Allah, he replied, "Allah likes that person most who helps others and from whom the people derive more and more benefit".

He also said that the sign of a good man is that if he does any good to any person, he does not remind him of it.

Islam also teaches us to rely upon one another and not to doubt the bonafides of others without a just cause. The Holy Prophet said, "Those who do not rely upon one another are devoid of faith".

Islam lays great stress on the fulfillment of a promise. A hadith has been quoted from the Holy Prophet to the effect that the faith of those, who do not honour their promises and agreements, and do not take proper care of things entrusted to them, is weak.

The hadith of the Holy Prophet are beacon light for our guidance.

Questions

1. How should we behave with others?
2. What is a sign of a good man?
3. What importance does Islam attach to the fulfillment of a promise?

GLOSSARY

ABSTINENCE	avoiding, refraining
ABUSE	make bad or wrong use of, ill-treat

ACCOMPLISH	perform; succeed in doing
ACQUISITION	aining skill or ability, by one's own effort or behaviour
ACQUAINTANCE	a person whom one knows, information gained through experience
ADMINISTRATION	management of affairs
AFFECTION	love, fondness
ALOOF	apart, away from
ALTERNATIVE	choice between two things
ALTERATION	a change, act of changing
ASCEND	go or come up
ASPECT	look or appearance
ATONE	compensate, make amends for sins or wrong-doing
AVAIL	take advantage
BACKBITING	speak ill of somebody in his absence
BEHAVIOUR	manners (good or bad)
BETRAYED	cheated, disclosed
BRUTISH	cruel, savage
BORNE	undergone pain, hardship
CHAOS	complete absence of order, confusion
CIVILIZATION	system or stage of social development; refining or improving the manners
COMMENTED	remarked upon, expressed opinion, criticized
COMMEMORATE	keep or honour the memory of (a person or event)
COMPEL	force, obtain by pressure
CONTENTMENT	satisfaction, not wanting more
CONVERSANT	well-informed
CONVERSION	changing from one form to another
CONFIDENCE	faith, trust
CORDIALLY	warmly and sincerely
CUSTOM	habitual practice
DECORUM	decency, right and proper behaviour
DEPRIVED	oppressed, unjustly treated
DEVOTE	strongly attach to a person or a cause
DEVOID	without; empty
EDIBLE	eatable
EMBARRASSMENT	mental discomfort; or anxiety
EMPHASIZE	lay particular stress upon
ENDEAVOUR	effort, attempt, try
ENTRANT	one taking part in a contest; one who enters
ENDOW	give a gift
ERR	make mistake, be wrong
EXECUTE	put into effect, do skillfully
EXPIRE	die, come to an end, finish
FEATS	something difficult well done, especially showing skill, strength or daring
FEUD	bitter quarrel between two persons, families or groups over a long period of time
FORBEARANCE	patience; self control
FOUL	wicked, evil, rough
FOUNTAIN	source, origin
FRATERNITY	the state or relationship of a brother
GRACIOUS	kind, merciful

GRANT	give
HUMILIATION	putting to shame, lowering the dignity or self respect
HYPOCRITE	a person falsely making oneself appear to be good or virtuous
INCIDENCE	happening, occurrence
INCUMBENT	duty, necessary obligation
INDUCES	persuades, influences
INDULGE	gratify; cherish
INDEFATIGABLE	untiring
INFRINGE	break, transgress, violate
INIMICAL	unfriendly, harmful
INTENSIVE	deep and thorough; giving force and emphasis
INVASION	attack
IMPART	give, pass on a share of something
IMPEACH	blame; accuse
IMPREGNABLE	that cannot be taken by force
IMPRUDENT	rude; unwise
LITERATE	learned
LIVELIHOOD	means of maintaining life
MASTERPIECE	something made or done with very great skill; the best
MIRACLE	an act which is beyond the human power performed by the Prophets as an evidence of their Prophethood
MISRABLE	very unhappy, poor, wretched
NARRATE	give, cite, tell, recite
NOURISH	feed and cause to grow
OBLIGATORY	necessary, compulsory
OBSERVE	watch carefully
ORNAMENT	that which is added for decoration
PARDON	forgiveness, excuse oneself
PENETRATE	enter or pierce
PERSONALITY	a person of distinction
PROFESS	declare openly, affirm ones faith (in) allegiance (to)
PROMOTE	advance; help onward
PROSPERITY	state of being successful; good fortune
PYTHON	large snake
RANCOUR	(deep and long-lasting feeling of) bitterness
RANSOM	release (captive on payment); large sum of money
REFRAIN	hold oneself back; avoid
RENDER	give in turn or exchange; present offer
RESPECTIVE	in turn, separately and in the order mentioned
RITUAL	way of conducting religious ceremonies
SHIRKED	avoided a duty
SIMULTANEOUSLY	at the same time
SPECIFIED	mentioned clearly
SPROUTED	shooted forth, grew rapidly
SUCCESSOR	a person who takes the place which another has left, deputy
SUBMISSION	obedience
STUBBORN	difficult to deal with, obstinate
SUPPLICATION	humble prayers

SURVIVE	remain alive; continue to exist
TENET	principle, belief, doctrine
TOIL	hard work; work hard
TREAD	step, trample
TYRANNY	cruel or unjust use of power
UNCOUTH	rough, awkward, uncultured
UNIQUE	having no like or equal
UMPARALLELED	having no equal, matchless
VAIN	useless, worthless, fruitless
VALOUR	bravery
VAST	huge, boundless, extensive
VITALITY	vigour, energy
WRATH	great danger

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