

ISLAMIC BELIEFS

An Easy Guide to the Basics of Islamic Faith (Aqeedah)

Compiled and Presented by

Islamic Life and Education

Online Islamic Academy • Lahore, Pakistan

Preface

Islamic Beliefs is an easy textbook about the main beliefs of Islam. These beliefs are called ʿ**Aqeedah**. The lessons are taken from trusted Islamic books and arranged for students who learn in a class or at home.

The book has **four parts**:

- **Part One:** Why ʿAqeedah (belief) is important, and where it fits in Islam.
- **Part Two:** The basics of faith: Allah, the Prophets, the Angels, the Jinn, the Holy Books, the Awliya (friends of Allah), the Companions, and the meaning of Imaan (faith).
- **Part Three:** Life after this world: death, the grave, the signs of the Last Day, and the Day of Judgment.
- **Part Four:** How to protect our faith from Kufr (disbelief), Shirk (giving partners to Allah), Bidʿah (new things added to religion), and major sins.

Each chapter has **simple explanations, examples, summaries, key terms, and helpful pictures**.

Our goal is to give students a **strong and clear base in Islamic beliefs**. We also encourage you to keep learning from the Quran and Hadith with the help of qualified teachers.

—Islamic Life and Education—

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PART ONE

UNDERSTANDING ISLAM

CHAPTER 1

Introduction of Islam

The Meaning and Definition of Islam

The word Islam is related to the Arabic word Salaam, which means peace and safety. Islam teaches us to live peacefully with ourselves and others.

Islam means obeying Allah with love, faith, and trust. When we obey Allah, He guides us to do good things, protects us from harmful things, and gives us hope for a better life after death (Hereafter).

A Muslim obeys Allah not only because of fear but also because of love, respect, and trust in Him. We believe that Allah's commands are always good for us.

Think about your parents. You love and respect them, so you listen to them and follow their advice. In the same way, we love and respect Allah and follow His commands.

Islam teaches us to:

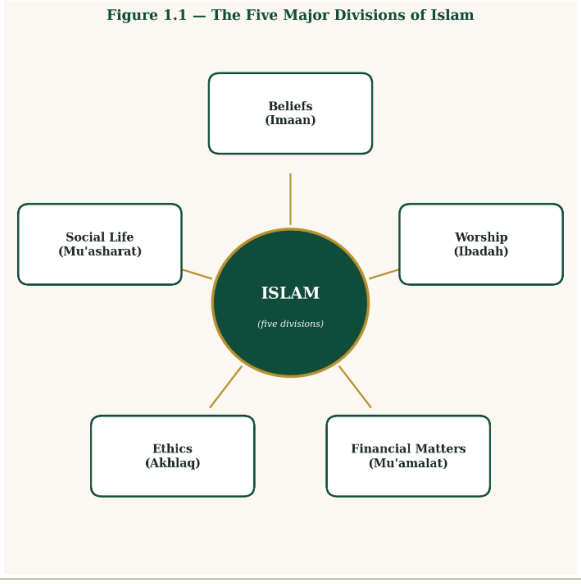
- Love and obey Allah.
- Do good things and avoid bad things.
- Be kind, honest, and helpful.
- Respect our parents and other people.
- Live peacefully with everyone.
- Prepare for a good life in the Hereafter.

> ***Remember*** *A true Muslim always says,* ***"I hear and I obey."*** *This means we are ready to accept Allah's commands with honesty and trust, and we are ready to act on them straight away.*

The Five Major Divisions of Islam

Islam's teachings cover every part of our life. To make them easier to study, we can divide Islam into five main parts.

Figure 1.1 — The Five Major Divisions of Islam



1. Beliefs (Faith — Imaan)

Belief (Iman) means having faith in something and accepting it as true. As Muslims, we believe in everything Allah and His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) have taught us. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was truthful and trustworthy, and he always conveyed Allah's message. We believe in Allah, His angels, His holy books, His prophets, destiny, and the Day of Judgment.

These are the **Six Beliefs (Articles of Faith)**, which form the foundation of a Muslim's faith.

- **Belief in Allah** — He is One. He is our Creator, and only He deserves to be worshipped.
- **Belief in Angels** — They are Allah's obedient servants. They carry out His orders.
- **Belief in Prophets** — They are messengers sent by Allah to guide people to the truth.
- **Belief in Divine Books** — These are holy books sent down by Allah, such as the Quran, the Torah, and the Gospel.
- **Belief in the Day of Judgment** — On this day, every person will answer for what he or she did.
- **Belief in Qadar (Destiny)** — Everything happens because Allah knows it and plans it perfectly.

Faith is complete when two things come together: believing with the heart and saying it with the tongue.

2. Worship (Ibadah)

Worship (Ibadah)
Worship means loving Allah, obeying Him, and showing our devotion through our words, actions, and intentions. Worship is not limited to physical actions; what we sincerely believe and intend in our hearts is also important.
There are two main types of worship:

- **Required (Fard):** These are duties that every Muslim must perform, such as offering Salah, fasting in Ramadan, paying Zakat, and performing Hajj when it is required.
- **Extra (Nafl):** These are voluntary acts of worship that we do to earn more reward and come closer to Allah, such as extra prayers, voluntary fasting, and giving Sadaqah.

When we pray, we show our love, respect, and obedience to Allah. When we help others sincerely for Allah's sake, that good deed also becomes an act of worship, and Allah rewards us for it.

3. Financial Matters (Mu'amalat)

Financial matters are about how we earn, spend, and manage money in daily life, following Islamic teachings.

- **Trade and Business** — Halal trade means earning money in an honest and fair way. We must stay away from interest (riba), cheating, and gambling.
- **Loans and Debts** — Qard Hasan is a kind loan given without interest to help someone in need. A person who borrows money must pay it back honestly and on time.
- **Inheritance (Meeraas)** — When a person dies, his or her property is shared among the family by the rules of the Shariah. A will (Wasiyyah) gives clear instructions about how to share part of a person's wealth.

The lesson is simple: earn money in the halal way, spend it wisely, do not waste it, and help others whenever you can.

4. Ethics (Akhlaq)

Ethics means our good manners, character, and behaviour. It is how we treat other people in everyday life.

Good Ethics (Akhlaq Mahmudah)

- **Honesty (Sidq)** — always telling the truth.
- **Patience (Sabr)** — staying calm and steady in hard times.
- **Humility (Tawazu')** — being humble, not proud or rude.
- **Respecting Parents (Birr al-Walidayn)** — loving, obeying, and taking care of your parents.
- **Keeping Promises (Wafa' al-'Ahd)** — always doing what you promised to do.
- **Helping Others (Ihsan)** — being kind, generous, and helpful to everyone.
- **Good Behaviour with Neighbours (Husn al-Jiwar)** — treating your neighbours with respect, care, and kindness.

Bad Ethics (Akhlaq Mazmumah)

- **Lying (Kizb)** — saying things that are not true.
- **Arrogance (Kibr)** — thinking you are better than other people.
- **Jealousy (Hasad)** — feeling upset about the blessings of others and wishing they would lose them.
- **Backbiting (Gheebah)** — saying bad things about someone when he or she is not there.

Good ethics build love, trust, and peace in a community. Bad ethics destroy relationships and cause hatred.

5. Social Life (Mu'asharat)

The fifth division is social life. It is about how a Muslim treats family, neighbours, and the wider community, with the respect and care that each relationship deserves. Together with ethics, it shapes how we behave with other people, just as belief and worship shape our relationship with Allah.

> ***Did You Know?*** *The words Islam, Salaam (peace), and Muslim (one who submits) all come from the same three-letter Arabic root: S-L-M. This is why peace and obeying Allah are so closely connected in Islam.*

Chapter Summary

- Islam comes from the Arabic word for peace (Salaam). It means listening to Allah and obeying Him out of love and trust, not only out of fear.
- Islam's teachings have five major parts: Beliefs, Worship, Financial Matters, Ethics, and Social Life.
- Belief (Imaan) stands on six things: Allah, the angels, the prophets, the holy books, the Day of Judgment, and Qadar. Faith is complete when we believe with the heart and say it with the tongue.

- Worship, money matters, ethics, and social life turn belief into action in daily life: through worship, honest earning, good character, and caring relationships.
- This book focuses on the first part, belief. The parts that follow explain it fully.

Key Terms: Salaam · Imaan · Ibadah · Mu'amalat · Akhlaq · Mu'asharat

Review Questions

1. What does the word Islam mean? What does this tell us about the purpose of Allah's commands?
2. Does a Muslim obey Allah mainly out of fear? Explain your answer using the example from this chapter.
3. Name the five major divisions of Islam described in this chapter.
4. List the six beliefs that make up Imaan.
5. Which two things together make our faith complete?

PART TWO

THE FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH (AQEEDAH)

CHAPTER 2

Belief in Allah Ta'ala

The Foundation of Faith

Belief in Allah

The foundation of Islam is the belief that **Allah is One**. He has no partner, no equal, and He does not need anyone or anything. This belief is called **Tawheed**.

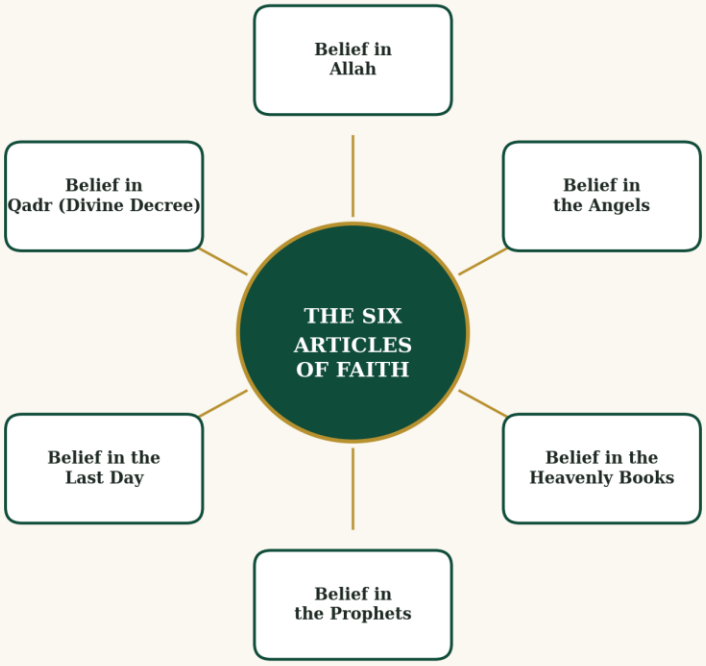
We believe that Allah is the Creator and that everything exists and happens by His will and permission. We first believe in Allah, and then we believe in everything He has told us through His prophets, including the angels, holy books, prophets, the Day of Judgment, and Qadar.

This chapter explains what we believe about Allah, including His Oneness and His perfect names and qualities.

The Six Articles of Faith

Islam teaches six main beliefs:

Figure 2.1 — The Six Articles of Faith (Arkaan al-Imaan)



The Existence and Oneness of Allah

The Oneness of Allah (Tawheed)

Islam teaches us that the universe is a sign of its Creator. There was a time when nothing in the universe existed. Allah, by His power and will, brought everything into existence. Nothing created itself, and everything that exists continues to exist by Allah's will and power.

Allah is **One (Ahad)**. He has no partner, no equal, and nothing is like Him. Allah says in the Qur'an:

"There is nothing like Him."
(Surah Ash-Shura 42:11)

Allah was not born, and He does not have children. He has no wife or partner. This is the meaning of **Tawheed**: believing that Allah is One in His Being, His perfect qualities, and His right to be worshipped.

To believe that anyone shares Allah's qualities, power, or right to be worshipped, or to worship anyone besides Him, is called **Shirk**. Shirk is a very serious sin.

Allah has always existed and will always exist. He has no beginning and no end. Unlike His creation, Allah does not depend on anyone or anything. Everything in the universe has a beginning and depends on Allah for its existence and continuation.

The Attributes of Allah

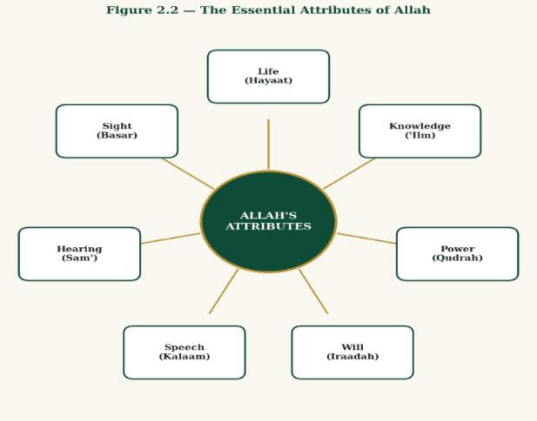
We believe that Allah has perfect qualities. All of them have always been with Him, and they will never change or fade.

The Essential Attributes

- **Life (Hayaat)** — Allah is always alive.
- **Knowledge ('Ilm)** — nothing is hidden from Allah's knowledge, however small it is.
- **Power (Qudrah)** — Allah has power over everything.
- **Will (Iraadah)** — Allah does whatever He wants. Nothing can force Him or stop Him.
- **Speech (Kalaam)** — Allah speaks, but His speech is nothing like ours.

  Hearing (Sam') and Sight (Basar) — Allah hears and sees everything, without any of the limits that our ears and eyes have.

Figure 2.2 — The Essential Attributes of Allah



We believe that Allah has perfect qualities. He is **Merciful, Forgiving, Just, Patient, and Generous**. He is the One who provides us with everything we need, gives us life, and grants us honour and blessings.

Because Allah is our Creator and Provider, **He alone deserves to be worshipped**. He appreciates our sincere worship and rewards us for it. When we call upon Him with a sincere heart, Allah hears our **Du'aa (supplication)** and responds to it in the way that is best for us.

> ***Did You Know?*** *Allah has ninety-nine names (Al-Asma al-Husna). Each name points to a different perfect quality, such as Ar-Rahman (the Most Merciful) and Al-'Alim (the All-Knowing).*

A Note on Certain Quranic Expressions

Some verses in the Quran and some hadith use phrases such as "the Hand of Allah." If we take these words in the ordinary way, they could sound as if Allah has a body like His creation. But nothing is like Allah, and He is completely free from the qualities of created things. So we must understand these phrases carefully. Two ways of understanding them are accepted:

- **First way:** We fully trust that the true meaning is correct, and we do not try to explain it any further.
- **Second way:** We accept a reasonable meaning that fits with Allah's greatness. For example, we can understand "Hand" as a way of talking about Allah's power.

This is a delicate topic. So explaining it is usually left to trained scholars and not to the general public.

Divine Decree (Taqdir) and Human Responsibility

Islam teaches that Allah has always known everything that will happen, both good and bad. He brings everything into being according to that knowledge. This is called taqdir, and it is often translated as "destiny" or "divine decree." Even the bad things that happen in the world carry a wisdom, although we do not always understand it.

At the same time, Allah has given human beings understanding and the power to choose between good and bad. But a person cannot create anything completely on his or her own. Every choice happens only because Allah allows it. Allah is pleased with good deeds and unhappy with bad ones. He never asks anyone to do more than he or she can handle. This balance is central to Islamic belief. On one side is Allah's full knowledge and power. On the other side is our real responsibility.

Chapter Summary

- Allah is One and eternal. He has no partner and no equal, and nothing is like Him.
- He has perfect qualities: life, knowledge, power, will, speech, hearing, and sight, among others.
- Only Allah deserves worship, and He has no faults at all.
- Everything happens by Allah's knowledge and plan (taqdir). Yet we are still responsible for the choices we are able to make.

Key Terms: Tawheed · Shirk · Taqdir · Du'aa

Review Questions

1. In your own words, explain what Tawheed means.
2. List the seven essential qualities of Allah described in this chapter.
3. Why should we be careful when we explain phrases like “the Hand of Allah”?
4. How is taqdir different from saying that human beings have no responsibility for what they do?

CHAPTER 3

Belief in the Prophets

The Purpose of Prophethood

Throughout history, Allah has sent messengers to guide people onto the right path. These messengers are called prophets (anbiya) and messengers (rusul). Their main job was to teach people the truth about Allah, to show them how to worship Him correctly, and to teach them good manners and good behaviour with others.

Islam teaches that every prophet was free from sin. This is called 'ismah. None of the prophets lied or disobeyed Allah while passing on His message.

People needed to trust the prophets fully. So Allah supported each prophet with special miracles (mu'jizaat). A miracle is an amazing act that ordinary people cannot do. It was a proof that the prophet was telling the truth. For example:

- Musa (alayhis salaam) split the sea.
- Isa (alayhis salaam) healed the sick by Allah's permission.
- Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) was taken on the night journey of the Mi'raj, which is described later in this chapter.

Remember that 'ismah, freedom from sin, belongs only to the prophets themselves. Their family members and followers do not share it, however close they are to the prophets.

The Number and Identity of the Prophets

Only Allah knows the exact number of prophets He sent. Muslims must believe in all of them, whether we know their names or not. The first prophet was Aadam (alayhis salaam), and the last was Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam). Many other prophets came in between. Some of the well-known ones are:

Prophets Mentioned in the Qur'an

Allah has mentioned the names of **25 prophets** in the Qur'an. Each one was sent to guide people and show them the path of truth.

List of the 25 Prophets:

1. Adam (A.S.) – Adam
2. Idrees (A.S.) – Enoch
3. Nooh (A.S.) – Noah
4. Hood (A.S.) – Hud
5. Saaleh (A.S.) – Saleh
6. Loot (A.S.) – Lot

7. Ibrahim (A.S.) – Abraham
8. Ismail (A.S.) – Ishmael
9. Ishaq (A.S.) – Isaac
10. Yaqoob (A.S.) – Jacob
11. Yusuf (A.S.) – Joseph
12. Shu'ayb (A.S.) – Jethro
13. Ayyoob (A.S.) – Job
14. Zhul-Kifl (A.S.) – Ezekiel (or Dhul-Kifl, identity uncertain but often linked to Ezekiel)
15. Musa (A.S.) – Moses
16. Haroon (A.S.) – Aaron
17. Dawood (A.S.) – David
18. Sulaiman (A.S.) – Solomon
19. Ilyaas (A.S.) – Elijah
20. Al-Yasah (A.S.) – Elisha
21. Yunus (A.S.) – Jonah
22. Zakariyya (A.S.) – Zechariah
23. Yahya (A.S.) – John (the Baptist)
24. Isa (A.S.) – Jesus
25. Muhammad ﷺ

All prophets taught **the same message:** "Worship Allah alone and do good deeds."
We must believe in every prophet Allah sent, known or unknown. So believing in prophethood as a whole is a required part of our faith.

The Rank of the Prophets and the Finality of Prophethood

Every prophet held a very high position. But Islam teaches that Allah gave some prophets a higher rank than others. The highest rank belongs to Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam).

Three Reasons for His Greatness:

1. He is the **last prophet.**
2. He was sent for **all mankind and jinn.**
3. His message will remain **until the Day of Judgment.**

Khatm-e-Nabuwwat (Finality of Prophethood)

- **Khatm-e-Nabuwwat** means that **Prophet Muhammad** ﷺ is the **final prophet.**

- **No new prophet will ever come** after him.
- Prophet Isa (A.S.) will return before the Day of Judgment,
  but he will come **as a follower** of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, **not as a new prophet.**

Three things explain why no more prophets are needed:

1. The **Qur'an is complete** and perfectly preserved.
2. **Islam is the final religion** for all people and all times.
3. Claiming prophethood after Prophet Muhammad ﷺ means **rejecting the Qur'an.**

Because of this, belief in the finality of prophethood is a core part of faith. Denying it takes a person out of Islam.

The Night Journey and Ascension (Al-Mi'raj)

One of the amazing signs given to Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) was a special journey. Islam teaches that Allah took him, in his body and while fully awake, from Makkah to Baitul Maqdis (Jerusalem). Then he went up through the seven heavens, and even further, to wherever Allah willed. After that, Allah returned him to Makkah, all in one night. This journey is called the Mi'raj. It shows the high status of the Prophet and Allah's amazing power over creation.

The journey had two linked parts. They are known separately as the Isra and the Mi'raj.

Part 1: The Isra. Allah took the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) from Masjid al-Haram in Makkah to Masjid al-Aqsa in Jerusalem. He rode a swift heavenly animal called Buraq, and the angel Jibra'eel (alayhis salaam) went with him. In Jerusalem, he led all the earlier prophets in prayer.

Part 2: The Mi'raj itself. The Prophet went up from Jerusalem through the seven heavens. At each level, he met a prophet:

1. **First heaven:** Aadam (alayhis salaam)
2. **Second heaven:** Isa and Yahya (alayhimas salaam) together
3. **Third heaven:** Yusuf (alayhis salaam)
4. **Fourth heaven:** Idris (alayhis salaam)
5. **Fifth heaven:** Harun (alayhis salaam)
6. **Sixth heaven:** Musa (alayhis salaam)
7. **Seventh heaven:** Ibrahim (alayhis salaam)

After this, he passed Sidrat al-Muntaha, the furthest boundary of creation. Not even Jibra'eel (alayhis salaam) could go beyond this point. The Prophet then continued alone to wherever Allah willed.

It was during this journey that Allah gave the five daily prayers to the Muslim ummah (community). At first, the command was fifty prayers a day. On Musa's (alayhis salaam) advice, the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa

sallam) went back to Allah several times to ask for a reduction. In the end, the number was set at five, but the reward of fifty was kept. The Prophet returned to Makkah before morning. When he described the journey the next day, most people found it hard to believe. But Abu Bakr (radiallahu anhu) accepted it immediately, without any doubt. For this, he received the title As-Siddiq (the Truthful).

> ***Did You Know?*** *The Quran names twenty-five prophets. But a well-known hadith tells us that Allah sent many thousands of prophets and messengers throughout history. Only He knows their exact number.*

Chapter Summary

- Allah sent prophets to guide people, and He kept them free from sin.
- Their honesty was proven through miracles (mu'jizaat).
- Muslims must believe in all prophets, known and unknown. Twenty-five are commonly named, from Aadam to Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam).
- Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) is the final prophet. No prophet will come after him.
- The Mi'raj was a real night journey and ascension. It was given to him as a special sign.

Key Terms: Nabi · Rasul · Mu'jizah · Khaatam an-Nabiyyin · Mi'raj

Review Questions

1. What does it mean to say that the prophets were free from sin ('ismah)?
2. Why did Allah give miracles (mu'jizaat) to the prophets?
3. Name at least ten of the twenty-five prophets that are commonly listed in Islamic tradition.
4. What does it mean when we call Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) the “Seal of the Prophets”?
5. Describe the journey of the Mi'raj in a few sentences.

CHAPTER 4

Belief in the Angels and Jinn

The Creation of the Angels

Besides the physical world that we can see, Allah also created beings that stay hidden from us. These are the angels (malaaikah). They are made from light. Angels do a great deal of important work in running the universe. They carry out every task exactly as they are told. Unlike human beings, they cannot disobey. The Quran describes them this way: "They do not disobey Allah in what He commands them, and they do as they are commanded" (Surah At-Tahrim 66:6).

Islam gives special attention to four important angels:

- Jibra'eel (Gabriel) — brings revelation (Allah's message) to the prophets.
- Mika'eel (Michael) — is connected with giving out provision and rain.
- Israfeel — will blow the trumpet that announces the coming of the Last Day.
- Izra'eel — the Angel of Death, who takes the souls of people when they die.

Believing in the angels, as a group of Allah's creation, is one of the six articles of faith. Muslims believe that angels exist and always obey Allah, even though we cannot normally see them.

The Creation of the Jinn

Allah also created another kind of hidden being, called jinn. They are made from fire. Like human beings, jinn have intelligence and free will. Some jinn are good and some are bad. They marry and have children, much like human society. The best-known bad jinn is Iblis, also called Shaytaan (Satan). Islamic sources say that he disobeyed Allah, and he keeps trying to lead people away from the right path.

> ***Did You Know?*** *The word jinn comes from the same root as the Arabic word for "hidden" (janna). The same root is found in Jannah (Paradise, a hidden garden) and janin (an unborn baby, who is hidden).*

Telling Angels and Jinn Apart

Angels and jinn are both hidden from us, but they are very different in nature:

- **Angels** are made from light. They cannot disobey Allah, and they are fully busy with the tasks they are given.
- **Jinn** are made from fire. Like humans, they have free will. So they are responsible for their choices, and they can obey or disobey.

Knowing this difference helps us avoid a common mistake: treating angels and jinn as if they were the same kind of "spirit."

Chapter Summary

- Angels were created from light and always obey Allah. Four are especially important: Jibra'eel, Mika'eel, Israfeel, and Izra'eel.
- Jinn were created from fire and, like human beings, have free will. Some are good and some are bad. The most famous bad one is Iblis (Shaytaan).
- Believing in the hidden creation of angels is a required part of Islamic faith.

Key Terms: Malaaikah · Jinn · Iblis · Shaytaan

Review Questions

1. What were angels made from, and what were jinn made from?
2. Name the four special angels in this chapter and describe one job that each one does.
3. How are jinn different from angels when it comes to choosing between right and wrong?
4. Who is Iblis? By what other name is he known?

CHAPTER 5

Belief in the Auliya (Friends of Allah)

Who Is a Wali?

Islam teaches that some believers reach a very high spiritual level through sincere and steady devotion. A Muslim who does the following becomes a close friend of Allah:

- He or she worships Allah a lot.
- He or she avoids sin.
- He or she does not get too attached to worldly things.
- He or she follows the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) in every way.

Such a person is called a **wali** (plural: **auliya**). A woman of this rank is called a **waliyah**. Allah loves such a person. Sometimes a wali does extraordinary things that other people cannot do. These are called **karamaat**.

The Rank of a Wali Compared to the Prophets

No matter how high a wali's spiritual level becomes, a wali can never be equal to a prophet. Islam is clear about this. Prophethood and sainthood are different in kind, not just in level. Prophethood is a special job that Allah gives to chosen people to guide humanity. Wilaayah (sainthood) comes from a person's own devotion. In principle, any sincere believer can reach it.

There is one more important rule. No matter how beloved to Allah a wali is, he or she must still follow all the rules of the Shariah, as long as he or she is of sound mind. The five daily prayers, fasting, and every other act of worship stay compulsory, without exception. Sinful acts never become allowed for a wali. So a person who acts against the Shariah cannot truly be a friend of Allah. Suppose such a person seems to do something miraculous. Islam explains this as a trick, or as the influence of jinn or Shaytaan. It is not a sign of closeness to Allah. We must not trust or rely on such acts.

Kashf and Ilhaam

Sometimes a wali is shown hidden or future things, either in sleep or while awake. This is called **kashf** (unveiling) or **ilhaam** (inspiration). These experiences are not a source of Islamic law on their own. We accept them only if they agree with the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. If they go against those teachings, we must reject them.

The Danger of Innovation

Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) have already made every matter of religion (Deen) clear through the Quran and the true teachings of the Prophet. So it is not allowed to add something new to

the Deen. This is true even if the intention is good, and even if people say it came from the inspiration of a holy person. Such an addition is called **bid'ah** (innovation), and Islam treats it as a major sin. We look at this topic more closely in Chapter 13.

Chapter Summary

- A wali is a believer who has become close to Allah through devotion and obedience. The extraordinary things a wali does are called karamaat.
- A wali, however high his or her level, is never equal to a prophet, and must still follow the Shariah completely.
- Kashf and ilhaam are accepted only when they agree with the Quran and Sunnah.
- Adding new practices to the Deen (bid'ah) is forbidden, no matter who introduces them.

Key Terms: Wali · Karaamah · Kashf · Ilhaam · Bid'ah

Review Questions

1. What qualities make someone a wali, according to this chapter?
2. Explain why a wali, however high his or her level, can never be equal to a prophet.
3. What must always be true before we can trust an unusual act by a so-called "saint" as a real karaamah?
4. What is the difference between kashf or ilhaam on one side, and bid'ah on the other side?

CHAPTER 6

Belief in the Heavenly Books

Revelation Through the Ages

Islam teaches that Allah sent down a series of holy books to different prophets throughout history. Some were short and some were long. They were delivered through the angel Jibra'eel, so that each prophet could teach the people of his time the matters of Deen. We must believe in all of these books in a general way, just as we believe in all the prophets, even if we do not know the name of every book. Many books were revealed. Four of them are especially well known, and the Quran names them directly.

The Four Major Scriptures

- The Torah (Tawrat) — sent down to Prophet Musa (Moses), alayhis salaam.
- The Psalms (Zabur) — sent down to Prophet Daud (David), alayhis salaam.
- The Gospel (Injil) — sent down to Prophet Isa (Jesus), alayhis salaam.
- The Quran — sent down to Prophet Muhammad, sallallahu alayhi wa sallam.

The Finality and Preservation of the Quran

The Quran is the last of Allah's revealed books. Muslims believe that no new book will be sent down after it, and that its teachings stay valid until the Day of Judgment. Islam teaches that people changed the earlier books over time and altered their original words. But Muslims believe that the Quran has been protected from any change, because Allah Himself promised to protect it. So its text has stayed exactly the same since it was revealed. This belief in the Quran's protection is one of the things that makes it different from the earlier books.

Chapter Summary

- Allah revealed books to different prophets throughout history. Four are especially well known: the Torah, the Zabur, the Injil, and the Quran.
- The Quran is the final revealed book. It will stay valid until the Day of Judgment.
- Muslims believe that the Quran, unlike the earlier books, has been kept safe from change.

Key Terms: Tawrat · Zabur · Injil · Wahi

Review Questions

1. Name the four major books discussed in this chapter and the prophet each one was revealed to.
2. How is the Quran different from the earlier books, according to Islamic belief?
3. Why do Muslims believe that no new book will be revealed after the Quran?

CHAPTER 7

Belief in the Sahabah (Companions)

Who Are the Sahabah?

Muslims who saw the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) in person, believed in him, and died as Muslims are called the **Sahabah** (Companions). Islam gives great respect to this generation. They had the special honour of being with the Prophet and learning directly from him. Muslims are taught to love the Sahabah and to think well of all of them.

History records that some disagreements happened among them. Later generations are taught to see these as honest misunderstandings, not as reasons for criticism. Speaking badly about the Sahabah is strongly discouraged. Both the Quran and the Hadith speak about their high position:

- **Quran:** "Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him" (Surah At-Tawbah 9:100).
- **Hadith:** The Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) is reported to have said, "My companions are like stars; follow any of them and you will be guided" (Musnad Ahmad).

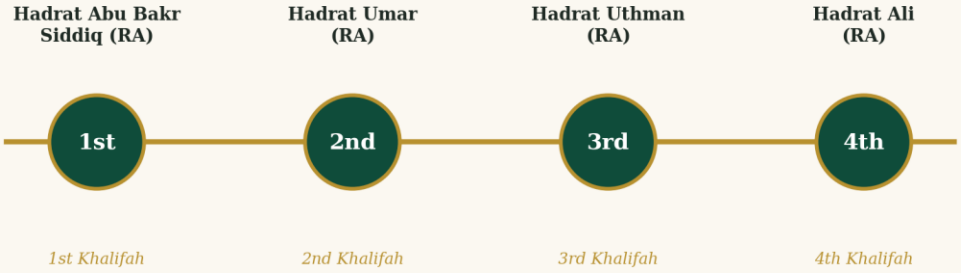
> ***Did You Know?*** *The word Sahabah is used only for people who met the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) in person and died as believers. The next generation learned from the Sahabah but did not meet the Prophet himself. They are called the Tabi'un.*

The Four Rightly-Guided Khulafa

There are many thousands of Companions. Four of them are seen as the most distinguished, because they led the Muslim community after the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) passed away. They are called the **Khulafa Rashidun** (the Rightly-Guided Caliphs). In order, they are:

1. **Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (radiallahu anhu)** — the First Khalifah. He took the Prophet's place in looking after the matters of Deen. He is seen as the best person in the whole Muslim community after the prophets.
2. **Hadrat Umar (radiallahu anhu)** — the Second Khalifah.
3. **Hadrat Uthman (radiallahu anhu)** — the Third Khalifah.
4. **Hadrat Ali (radiallahu anhu)** — the Fourth Khalifah.

Figure 7.1 — The Four Rightly-Guided Khulafa, in Order of Succession



The Sahabah are respected so highly that, according to Islamic teaching, even the greatest wali of a later time cannot reach the spiritual level of the least distinguished Sahabi.

The Family of the Prophet

We also owe respect to the wives and children of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam). Among his children, his daughter Hadrat Fatima (radiallahu anha) holds the highest position. Among his wives, Hadrat Khadijah and Hadrat Aisha (radiallahu anhuma) hold the highest position.

Chapter Summary

- The Sahabah are the Companions who saw the Prophet, believed in him, and died as Muslims. We must love them and speak well of them.
- The four Khulafa Rashidun, in order, are Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali (radiallahu anhum).
- As a group, the Sahabah hold a higher rank than any wali of a later time.
- The Prophet's family is held in the highest respect, especially Hadrat Fatima, Hadrat Khadijah, and Hadrat Aisha.

Key Terms: Sahabi · Khalifah · Khulafa Rashidun

Review Questions

1. Who counts as a Sahabi, according to this chapter?
2. List the four Khulafa Rashidun in the correct order.
3. How are Muslims taught to see the disagreements that happened among the Sahabah?
4. Which women and which child of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) are given special honour in this chapter?

CHAPTER 8

The Nature of Imaan

What Makes a Person's Faith Complete

Imaan (faith) is complete only when a believer accepts as true everything that Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) told us, without exception. Each of the following makes a person's Imaan disappear completely:

- Doubting a clearly established part of the Deen.
- Rejecting it.
- Looking for faults in it.
- Mocking it.
- Rejecting the clear meaning of the Quran and Hadith, or twisting their meaning to fit our own opinion. This counts as disbelief (kufr).
- Deciding that a known sin is actually allowed. This means rejecting Allah's ruling on the matter.

Sin and the Weakening of Imaan

It is very important to know the difference between committing a sin and believing that the sin is allowed. A believer who commits even a serious sin, but still knows it is wrong, does not leave Islam because of it. But his or her Imaan does become weaker. This difference matters in real life. A person who struggles with a sin but still sees it as wrong stays within the faith. A person who decides that the sin is no longer wrong does not.

Kufr: What Counts as Disbelief

Some attitudes count as kufr (disbelief) in Islamic teaching, even if the person who holds them does not always realise it. Here is a clear example. The Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) taught that the five daily prayers are compulsory. So if a person says, “There is no need to pray in Islam,” he or she is not just neglecting a duty. That person is rejecting a clear command of Allah, and that rejection is itself kufr. Here are two more examples:

- Feeling completely safe from Allah's plan, or completely losing hope in His mercy. Both of these count as kufr, because real faith needs a balance of hope and fear.
- Asking someone about hidden or unknown matters (ghayb) and truly believing what he or she says. This is kufr, because knowledge of the unseen belongs only to Allah.

Islam teaches that no created being has independent knowledge of the unseen. There are only a few small exceptions:

- Prophets received knowledge through revelation (wahi).
- Saints sometimes receive insight through kashf or ilhaam, as explained in Chapter 5.
- Ordinary people can sometimes notice things through signs.

None of these, however, is full or independent knowledge of the unseen. That stays an exclusive quality of Allah.

On Calling Someone a Disbeliever

Calling a specific person a kafir (disbeliever) by name, or cursing that person directly, is a major sin. The only exception is when Allah or His Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) has clearly named that person as one. General statements are allowed. For example, we may ask for Allah's curse on oppressors or liars as a group, because no specific person is named.

Chapter Summary

- Complete Imaan means accepting everything from Allah and His Messenger, without doubt, rejection, or mockery.
- Committing a sin makes Imaan weaker but does not remove it, as long as the person still sees the sin as wrong. Deciding that a sin is allowed does remove Imaan.
- Feeling completely safe from Allah's plan, and completely losing hope in His mercy, are both forms of kufr.
- Knowledge of the unseen belongs only to Allah. Claiming it, or trusting someone else's claim to it, is kufr.
- Calling a specific person a kafir without a clear religious reason is a major sin.

Key Terms: Imaan · Kufr · Ghayb · Wahi

Review Questions

1. What is needed for a person's Imaan to be complete, according to this chapter?
2. Explain the difference between committing a sin and believing that the sin is allowed.
3. Give two examples of attitudes that Islamic teaching calls kufr.
4. When is it allowed to call a specific person a kafir?

CHAPTER 9

Death and the Grave

The Approach of Death

Islam teaches that when a person's time comes, the Angel of Death (Izra'eel) takes his or her soul. What happens next depends on whether the person is buried. If the person is buried, the events below begin after the burial is finished. If not, they still happen, but in a way that the living cannot notice. Either way, only the dead person experiences these things. Someone sitting nearby stays completely unaware. It is like a person sleeping next to you who has no idea what you are dreaming.

The Questioning of Munkar and Nakeer

After burial, Islam describes two angels, named Munkar and Nakeer, who come to question the dead person. They ask three questions:

- Question 1: مَن رَبُّكَ؟ – Who is your Lord?

  Answer: رَبِّيَ اللهُ – My Lord is Allah.

- Question 2: مَا دِينُكَ؟ – What is your religion?

  Answer: دِينِيَ الإِسْلَامُ – My religion is Islam.

- Question 3: مَنْ نَبِيُّكَ؟ – Who is your Prophet?

  Answer: نَبِيِّي مُحَمَّدٌ ﷺ – My Prophet is Muhammad ﷺ.

A believer with strong faith answers all three questions correctly: “My Lord is Allah,” “My religion is Islam,” and “My Prophet is Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam).” This believer is given comfort. A window opens toward Paradise, cool and sweet-smelling air keeps flowing in, and the believer rests peacefully.

A person without faith cannot answer. Instead, he or she faces hardship and punishment until the Day of Judgment. Allah, out of His mercy, spares some people from this test.

The Daily Showing of One's Future Home

Islam also teaches that after death, a person is shown his or her future home every morning and evening. A person who is going to Paradise (a jannati) is shown his or her place there. This is good news for that person. A person who is going to Hell (a jahannami) is shown his or her place there too, and this adds to his or her sadness.

The Value of Prayer and Charity for the Deceased

Muslims are taught that making du'aa (prayer) for a person who has died, and giving charity in that person's name, truly reaches and helps him or her. This is why Muslims often pray for their dead relatives and give charity in their name. It also shows a wider Islamic idea: the bond between the living and the dead is not completely broken by death.

Chapter Summary

- After death, the Angel of Death takes the soul. Only the dead person knows what happens in the grave.
- The angels Munkar and Nakeer question every person in the grave about his or her Lord, Deen, and Prophet.
- A believer with strong faith is given comfort in the grave. A person without faith faces punishment.
- The dead person is shown his or her future home in Paradise or Hell every morning and evening.
- Du'aa and charity given for the dead truly benefit them.

Key Terms: Munkar · Nakeer · Jannati · Jahannami

Review Questions

1. What happens to a person's soul at the moment of death?
2. Who are Munkar and Nakeer, and what do they ask the dead person?
3. Describe the difference between a believer's experience in the grave and a disbeliever's experience.
4. According to this chapter, how can the living keep helping the dead?

CHAPTER 10

The Signs of Qiyaamah

The Certainty of the Signs

Islam teaches that every sign of the coming Last Day (Qiyaamah) that Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) told us about will definitely happen. These signs show that history is slowly moving toward its final end. Islamic teachings describe them in great detail.

The Major Signs

- Imam Mahdi will appear and rule with complete fairness.
- The Dajjal (a one-eyed false figure) will appear. He will cause a great deal of trouble and testing in the world.
- Prophet Isa (alayhis salaam) will come down from the heavens and kill the Dajjal. This will end the Dajjal's evil.
- Yajuj and Majuj, a very powerful nation, will spread across the earth and cause great chaos, until Allah destroys them.
- A strange creature will come out of the ground and speak to people.
- The sun will rise from the west instead of the east.
- The Quran will be lifted from the earth. Soon after, all the remaining believers will pass away, and only disbelievers will be left in the world.

Islamic sources describe many other events that will come before Qiyaamah too. They show how greatly the world will change before it ends.

> ***Did You Know?*** *Belief in the coming of Imam Mahdi and the return of Prophet Isa (alayhis salaam) appears, in some form, in different schools of Islamic thought. However, the details are different in each school.*

Figure 10.1 — The Journey of the Hereafter



The Two Blasts of the Trumpet

When all the signs have appeared, the preparations for Qiyaamah begin. By Allah's command, the angel Israfeel will blow a trumpet, which is described as a very large horn. It will be blown twice.

- **The first blast:** The earth and sky will break apart, and every living creature will die. Even the souls of people who died earlier will lose awareness, except those whom Allah chooses to protect. This state will last for a time that only Allah knows.

The second blast: When Allah wills the universe to rise again, the trumpet will be blown a second time. The whole universe will be recreated. Every soul that has ever lived will be brought back to life and gathered together. We will learn about this in the next chapter.

Chapter Summary

- All the foretold signs of Qiyaamah will definitely happen. These include the appearance of Imam Mahdi and the Dajjal, the coming down of Isa (alayhis salaam), and the appearance of Yajuj and Majuj.
- Other signs include a speaking creature, the sun rising from the west, and, in the end, the disappearance of the Quran and of the last believers from the earth.
- The trumpet will be blown twice. The first blast ends all life, and the second blast brings it back.

Key Terms: Imam Mahdi · Dajjal · Yajuj and Majuj · Qiyaamah

Review Questions

1. List four of the major signs of Qiyaamah described in this chapter.
2. What part does Prophet Isa (alayhis salaam) play among the signs of the Last Day?
3. Describe what happens at the first blast of the trumpet and what happens at the second blast.

CHAPTER 11

The Day of Judgment

The Gathering and Intercession

After the second blast of the trumpet, all human beings will be gathered together in one huge crowd. They will understand how serious the moment is. The difficulty will be too much for them. So they will go to the prophets, one after another, and ask them to plead (shafaa'ah) for them, so that the judgment can begin. In the end, the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) will plead for all of humanity, and the judgment will start.

The Scale and the Record of Deeds

A scale (Mizaan) will be set up. The good and bad deeds of every person will be weighed and counted. Good people will receive their record of deeds in their right hand. Wrongdoers will receive theirs in their left hand. This shows what result each person can expect. According to Islamic teaching, a small number of very special believers will enter Paradise without any judgment at all.

The Fountain and the Bridge

The Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) will let his followers drink from a fountain called the **Haud-e-Kauthar** (the Fountain of Abundance). Its water is described as whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. After that, every person will have to cross a bridge called the **Sirat**, which is built over Hell. People who lived righteously will cross it safely into Paradise. People who lived sinfully will fall from it into Hell.

Hell and Paradise

Islam teaches that both Hell (Jahannam) and Paradise (Jannah) already exist right now. Hell has many kinds of punishment. Islamic sources describe them as including snakes and scorpions, among other punishments. Anyone in Hell who has even the smallest amount of Imaan will eventually be taken out and moved to Paradise. This happens after that person has been punished for his or her wrongdoing, and after the prophets and Allah's righteous servants have pleaded for them. This is true no matter how serious their sins were. But disbelievers and polytheists (mushrikeen, people who give partners to Allah) will stay in Hell forever and will never die.

Paradise, on the other hand, has every kind of comfort and blessing. Its people will feel no fear or sadness at all. They will live there forever. They will never leave it, and they will never die. The greatest reward in Paradise is seeing Allah Ta'ala Himself. Islamic teaching says that this reward makes every other blessing in Paradise seem small. No human being sees Allah with his or her own eyes in this life.

Divine Justice and Mercy

Allah has the full right to punish for small sins, to forgive even big ones, or not to punish at all. It is completely up to Him. There is one exception: kufr and shirk. Allah does not forgive these unless a person turns back to Him (repents) before death. Every other sin can be forgiven, and He forgives whoever He wants.

We can be sure only about the specific people whom Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) have named as going to Paradise. So believers are taught to stay hopeful about Allah's mercy, for themselves and for others, without being completely certain. A person's final result depends on his or her state at the time of death. Repentance and accepting Islam are always welcome during a person's life. But neither is accepted once the person is dying and sees the angels of death coming.

Chapter Summary

- After the resurrection, all people are gathered. The Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) pleads so that the judgment can begin.
- Deeds are weighed on the Scale. Believers receive their record in the right hand, and wrongdoers receive it in the left.
- The faithful drink from the Haud-e-Kauthar and cross the Sirat into Paradise. Sinners fall from it into Hell.
- Hell and Paradise already exist. Believers who sinned may leave Hell in the end, but disbelievers stay there forever.
- Seeing Allah is the greatest reward of Paradise. Allah forgives all sins except kufr and shirk that a person did not repent from.

Key Terms: Shafaa'ah · Mizaan · Haud-e-Kauthar · Sirat · Jannah · Jahannam

Review Questions

1. What is the Mizaan, and what is it used for?
2. Describe the Haud-e-Kauthar and the Sirat.
3. According to this chapter, will every believer who sinned stay in Hell forever? Explain your answer.
4. What is described as the greatest reward of Paradise?

PART THREE

SAFEGUARDING ONE'S FAITH

CHAPTER 12

Kufr and Shirk

Guarding the Foundation of Faith

What is Shirk?

Shirk is the **opposite of Tawheed**.

- **Tawheed** means believing that there is **only one God – Allah**.
- **Shirk** means believing that there are **other gods** or that **anyone is equal to Allah**.

Who is a Mushrik?

A person who commits shirk is called a **Mushrik**.

Examples of Shirk:

- Worshipping idols.
- Believing anyone besides Allah can **create the world**.
- Thinking that anyone other than Allah can **hear all prayers** or **control life and death**.

Beliefs and Actions That Harm Tawheed

The Shariah forbids the following beliefs and actions, because they are so closely connected to kufr or shirk:

1. **Admiring disbelief or helping others in kufr:** Liking or praising the ways of disbelievers or assisting them in disbelief leads one toward kufr.
2. **Regretting one's Islam:** Thinking, "If I were not a Muslim, I could have gained worldly benefits," is a form of disbelief.
3. **Blaming Allah during sorrow:** Uttering words like "Allah should not have done this" or accusing Him of cruelty is an act of kufr.
4. **Finding fault in divine commands:** Criticizing any law or command of Allah or His Messenger (peace be upon him) is disbelief.
5. **Mocking prophets or angels:** Insulting or making fun of any prophet or angel takes a person out of the fold of Islam.

6. **Consulting astrologers or jinn-possessed people:** Asking them about the unseen and believing their words is forbidden and leads to kufr.
7. **Acting on omens or superstitions:** Taking a pious person's words as an omen and treating them as absolute truth without Shariah basis can also lead to shirk.

This list is not complete, but it shows the main idea. Any belief or action that gives a created being a power, knowledge, or right that belongs only to Allah puts the very base of Islamic faith at risk.

Why This Matters

When a student reads this list for the first time, he or she may notice that people usually do not do these things because they want to disbelieve. Often these things come from habit, emotion, or simply not knowing better. This is exactly why Islamic teaching treats the topic with such care. Shirk often enters through emotion and habit, not through clear denial. So protecting Tawheed needs real, continuous awareness, not just good intentions.

Chapter Summary

- Kufr and shirk can happen not only through open disbelief, but also through beliefs, habits, and customs that give Allah's exclusive rights to others.
- Common examples include believing that a created being has power or complete hidden knowledge by itself, and doing things like tawaaf, bowing, or making vows for anyone other than Allah.
- We must stay alert about these matters, because they often come from habit and not from a deliberate choice.

Key Terms: Kufr · Shirk · Mushrik · Tawaaf

Review Questions

1. Explain shirk in your own words.
2. Give three examples of beliefs or actions in this chapter that put Tawheed at risk.
3. Why does this chapter say that protecting ourselves from shirk needs more than good intentions?

CHAPTER 13

Innovations (Bid'ah) and Evil Customs

Defining Bid'ah

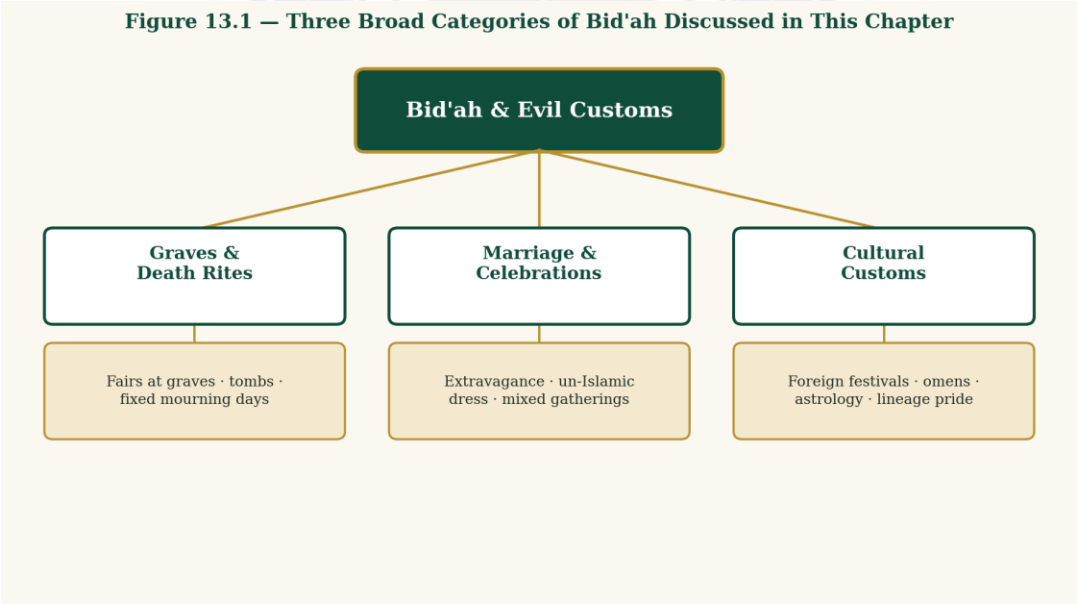
Bid'ah (innovation) is when someone does all three of these things:

- Adds something to the Deen that has no basis in the Shariah.
- Treats it as part of religion.
- Does it while hoping for reward.

Islamic teaching treats bid'ah as a major sin. It is different from ordinary sins because it makes something look like part of Allah's religion when it is not. The Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) warned: “Every innovation is misguidance, and misguidance leads to the Hellfire” (Sahih Muslim). The sections below group together many innovations and bad customs that Islamic scholars have pointed out over time. They are organised by the area of life where they happen.

Did You Know? *The Arabic word bid'ah simply means “something newly invented.” This word does not condemn everything that is new. It applies only to things that people treat as part of formal religious practice without any basis in the Quran or Sunnah.*

Figure 13.1 — Three Broad Categories of Bid'ah Discussed in This Chapter



Innovations Connected with Graves and Death

- Holding fairs, lighting lamps, or gathering at graves, and covering graves with decorated sheets.
- Building fancy tombs, or showing too much reverence to graves in the hope of getting blessings from the person buried there.
- Doing tawaaf around graves, bowing toward them, or praying facing them.
- Leaving food or sweets as offerings on graves, or hanging decorations on them.
- Treating the third day and the fortieth day after a death as required mourning days, along with related customs. Examples are breaking the dishes used during a person's last illness, avoiding normal cooking (like pickles) in a house of mourning for a year, or bringing back grief on fixed dates every year. None of these come from the Shariah. Du'aa for the dead can be made at any time. Islam does not fix a special day for it.

Innovations Connected with Marriage and Family Celebrations

- Holding the ceremonies of Nikah (marriage), Khatna (circumcision), or Bismillah (the ceremony when a child starts learning) in a very expensive way, sometimes even going into debt, and adding music and dancing.
- Dressing the groom in a way that goes against the Shariah, decorating him with garlands and henna, and adding fireworks and unnecessary decoration.
- Bringing the groom in front of the women of the house, or letting the bride's grown-up sister appear in front of him in a teasing way.
- Secretly listening to the private conversation of a newly married couple, and repeating what was heard to others.
- Fixing an extremely high mehr (the money or gift that a husband gives his wife at marriage) only out of pride or to show off, and spending too much on weddings in general.

Cultural Customs That Go Against the Shariah

- Following the customs and festivals of other religious communities, including celebrations such as Holi and Diwali.
- Using greetings other than the Islamic greeting, As-salaamu 'alaikum.
- Believing that some days, dates, or months carry special meaning, or that some months are unlucky.
- Believing that the stars control what happens in life.
- Being proud of one's family background, thinking that a job allowed by the Shariah is beneath one's dignity, or teasing someone about his or her family background.
- Spending too much time and effort on looks and beauty. On the other hand, ignoring basic care and cleanliness in the name of “simplicity” is also wrong.

Other Everyday Customs to Be Mindful Of

There are a few more everyday matters, beyond belief and worship as such, that a Muslim should also pay attention to:

- Dressing modestly and covering the body properly, for both men and women.
- Avoiding unnecessary mixing between men and women who are not mahram to each other. (Mahram means close relatives whom a person can never marry.)
- Each gender keeping to its own way of dressing and behaving, and not copying the other.
- Tattoos are best avoided. If a person already has one, he or she should remove it if possible. If it cannot be removed, the person should cover it and ask Allah for forgiveness.

A Closing Note

The examples above are not a complete list. As the original source explains, they are given only to show the pattern. What connects them is this: each one adds a practice that has no real basis in the Shariah, whether it comes from grief, celebration, superstition, or copying other cultures. Yet many people treat it like a religious duty or something that earns reward. A student does not need to memorise every example. What matters is to understand the main idea: religious practice is limited to what Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) actually taught. Nothing may be added to it, however good the intention seems.

Chapter Summary

- Bid'ah means adding a practice to religion that has no basis, and treating it as if it earns reward. It is considered a major sin.
- Common types include innovations connected with graves and mourning, very expensive or un-Islamic marriage customs, and copying the festivals and customs of other communities.
- The main idea is that religious practice is limited to what the Quran and Sunnah have established.

Key Terms: Bid'ah · Mehr

Review Questions

1. Explain what bid'ah is, and why it is considered a major sin.
2. Name the three broad kinds of innovation discussed in this chapter and give one example of each.
3. Which main idea does this chapter want you to remember, instead of only memorising the examples?

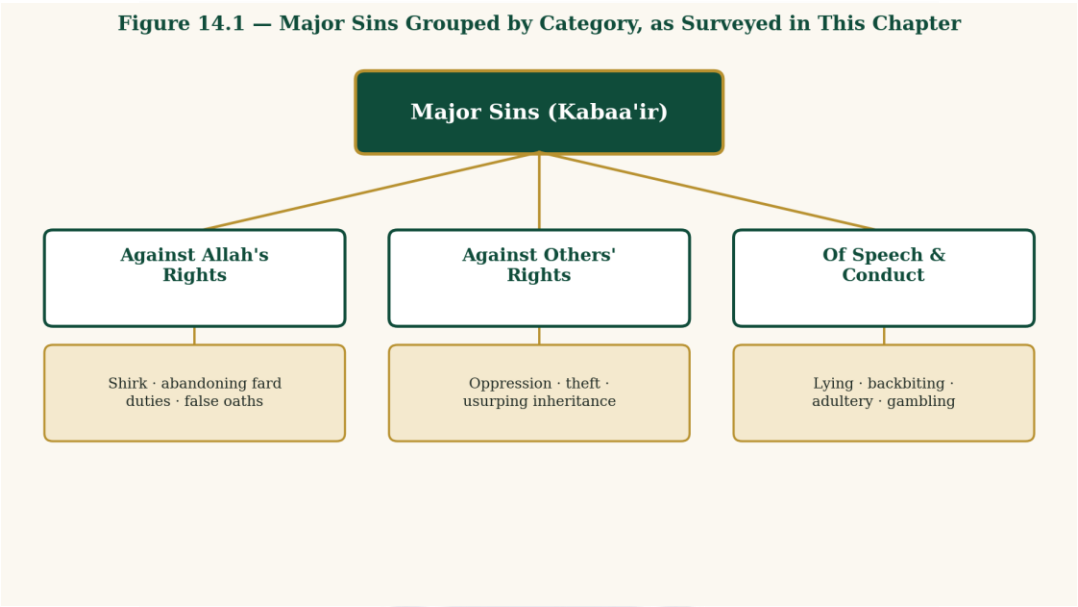
CHAPTER 14

Major Sins

What Makes a Sin "Major"

Islam separates small mistakes from major sins (kabaa'ir). Small mistakes are usually forgiven through regular worship and repentance. Major sins come with strong warnings in the Quran and Hadith, because of the harm they cause: to a person's own soul, to other people, or to society. This chapter looks at the major sins mentioned in the source material, grouped by theme to make them easier to study.

Figure 14.1 — Major Sins Grouped by Category, as Surveyed in This Chapter



Sins Against the Rights of Allah

- Giving Allah a partner (shirk).
- Skipping a required duty (fard) commanded by Allah, such as salaat, fasting, hajj, or zakaat, or missing salaat without a valid reason.
- Forgetting the Quran after memorising it.
- Swearing a false oath, or swearing by the name of anyone other than Allah.
- Bowing down to anyone other than Allah.
- Giving up hope in Allah's mercy.

Sins Against the Rights of Other People

- Unfairly harming or killing someone, or using witchcraft to cause harm or death. This also counts as murder.
- Being cruel to one's parents.
- Taking an orphan's wealth unfairly. For example, a widow may take her husband's property and refuse to give his children their fair share.
- Not giving daughters their fair share of inheritance.
- Accusing a woman of a serious sin without clear proof.
- Being unfair to someone, backbiting, or spreading rumours.
- Breaking a trust (amaanah), such as misusing something left in your care.
- Stealing, and taking interest (riba).

Sins of Speech, Character, and Behaviour

- Telling lies, especially false oaths.
- Calling a fellow Muslim a kafir, or wishing Allah's anger on him or her, without a valid reason.
- Complaining unfairly about someone, or listening to such a complaint.
- Mocking someone to embarrass him or her, or always looking for other people's faults.
- Being unfaithful in marriage, being alone with a ghayr mahram (a person you could marry), or gambling.
- Breaking one's promises or not keeping one's word.

A Note on Everyday Business

Several major sins in Islamic sources are about trade and business. Two examples are feeling happy when prices rise, since this usually comes at other people's expense, and trying to lower a price again after already agreeing to it. Examples like these remind us that Islamic ethics is not only about formal worship. It also covers fairness and honesty in everyday business.

Chapter Summary

- Major sins are of three kinds: against Allah's rights, against people's rights, and of speech and behaviour.
- Shirk, abandoning required duties, and giving up hope in Allah's mercy are among the most serious sins against Allah's rights.
- Unfairness, stealing, taking someone's inheritance, and breaking a trust are major sins against people.
- Islamic ethics also covers fairness in everyday trade and business.

Key Terms: Kabaa'ir · Amaanah · Riba · Ghayr Mahram

Review Questions

1. What makes a sin “major” and not just an ordinary shortcoming, according to this chapter?

2. Give two examples of major sins against the rights of Allah, and two against the rights of other people.
3. How does this chapter connect major sins with everyday matters like trade and business?

CHAPTER 15

The Consequences of Sin and Obedience

Why This Chapter Is Here

We have looked at belief, the Hereafter, and the major sins that put a believer's faith in danger. This last chapter turns to something closer to home: how sin and obedience affect our life right now. The final reward or punishment for our actions belongs to the Hereafter. But Islamic teaching also describes real effects in this world that come from how we live. These effects are meant to encourage good behaviour and discourage wrongdoing, even before we think about the Hereafter.

The Worldly Harms of Sinning

Islamic sources describe many ways that repeated sinning affects a person's life, even in this world. Some of the most common ones are:

- Less useful knowledge and less provision (rizq).
- Loss of the purity of the heart, and weakness of both heart and body.
- More difficulty in daily life, and a shorter life.
- Slowly losing the feeling that a sin is serious, which makes it harder to repent.
- A weaker mind, loss of modesty and self-respect, and drifting away from good, pious people.
- Being hit by hardship and disaster. In the most serious cases, a person may find it hard to say the kalimah (the declaration of faith) at the moment of death.

These effects usually build up over time. Small sins that no one fixes slowly add up, and they wear down a person's spiritual life and even everyday wellbeing.

> ***Did You Know?*** *Classical Islamic scholars often compared the harm of sin to a mirror that slowly becomes cloudy from breath. Each sin leaves a little more mark on the heart, until its original clearness is lost.*

The Worldly Benefits of Obedience

On the other hand, a life of obedience to Allah is said to bring matching benefits in this world. These include:

- More provision and blessings of every kind.
- Greater ease in meeting one's needs, and a general feeling of contentment.
- Protection from disasters, together with real respect and honour from other people.
- Comfort and peace in the heart, and a longer life with more blessings.
- Good news from the angels, both in this life and at the moment of death.

- Being given something better in return for any loss.

Islamic teaching also says that these benefits are not limited to one person. They can continue to future generations, so the good results of one person's obedience can benefit his or her children too.

A Closing Thought

This chapter closes both Part Four and the whole book, so it is worth pausing to see how it connects with Chapter 2. There, we learned about Tawheed: the belief that Allah alone is the true source of everything we have, including our provision, honour, and outcome in life. This last chapter applies the same idea to daily life. Allah alone truly controls what happens to us. So a life built around obedience to Him brings real benefit, and a life given to sin brings real harm. In this way, the practical lessons of this chapter take us back to the belief we started with. They show that Islamic belief is not just a set of ideas. It is meant to shape the whole life of a believer.

Chapter Summary

- Sin brings real harm in this world, including loss of blessings, more difficulty, and spiritual decline.
- Obedience brings real benefit in this world, including more provision, protection, and inner peace.
- These worldly effects come in addition to the final reckoning described in Part Three. They do not replace it.

Key Terms: Rizq · Taubah

Review Questions

1. According to this chapter, does sin have consequences only in the Hereafter? Explain your answer.
2. List three worldly harms of sinning and three worldly benefits of obedience from this chapter.
3. How does this last chapter connect back to the teaching of Chapter 2?

Glossary of Terms

This glossary lists the key Arabic and Islamic terms used in this book, for quick reference.

Aqeedah — The beliefs that make up Islamic faith.

Amaanah — A trust; something valuable left in your care.

Auliya — The plural of wali; the close friends of Allah.

Bid'ah — A new practice added to religion that has no basis in the Shariah.

Dajjal — A one-eyed false figure who will appear before the Last Day.

Deen — Religion; the complete way of life in Islam.

Du'aa — A prayer or request made to Allah.

Ghayb — The unseen world. Only Allah knows it fully.

Ghayr Mahram — A person of the opposite sex whom one could marry. Being alone with him or her is not allowed.

Hadith — A recorded saying, action, or approval of the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam).

Haud-e-Kauthar — The Fountain of Abundance, where the Prophet's followers will drink on the Day of Judgment.

Ilhaam — Inspiration given to a righteous person; accepted only if it matches the Quran and Sunnah.

Imaan — Faith; believing in Allah and everything He has revealed.

Jahannam — Hell.

Jannah — Paradise.

Jinn — Beings made from fire, who have free will.

Kabaa'ir — Major sins.

Kafir — A disbeliever; a person who rejects Islam.

Karaamah — An amazing act done by a wali, with Allah's permission.

Kashf — Unveiling; hidden knowledge given to a righteous person.

Khalifah — A leader who takes charge after another, especially one of the four leaders after the Prophet.

Mushrik — A person who commits shirk.

Kufr — Disbelief; rejecting Allah or a clear part of Islamic faith.

Malaaikah — Angels; beings made by Allah from light.

Mehr — The gift a husband gives his wife at marriage.

Mi'raj — The night journey and ascension of the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam).

Mizaan — The Scale that will weigh everyone's deeds on the Day of Judgment.

Mu'jizah — A miracle given to a prophet to prove he was telling the truth.

Qiyaamah — The Last Day; the Day of Resurrection and Judgment.

Rizq — Provision (sustenance) given by Allah.

Sahabah — The Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam).

Shafaa'ah — Pleading for someone, especially by the prophets on the Day of Judgment.

Shariah — Islamic law, based on the Quran and Sunnah.

Shaytaan — Satan; the best-known of the disobedient jinn.

Shirk — Giving Allah a partner in belief or in worship.

Sirat — The bridge over Hell that everyone must cross on the Day of Judgment.

Sunnah — The example and way of life of the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam).

Taqdir — Allah's decree or plan for everything that happens; destiny.

Taubah — Repentance; turning back to Allah.

Tawaaf — Walking around something. This should be done only around the Ka'bah.

Tawheed — The belief that Allah is One.

Wahi — Revelation sent by Allah to a prophet.

Wali — A friend of Allah; a person who has grown close to Him through devotion.

Waliyah — The female form of wali; a righteous woman who has grown close to Allah.