

AQAED - CLASS 9

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AQAED SECTION

Basic Beliefs of Islam (Roots of Religion)

Terminology and Vocabulary

Adalah (Adl):	Divine Justice of Allah (SWT)
Aimmah:	Plural of <i>Imam</i>
Anbiya:	Plural of <i>Nabi</i> (A Prophet)
Aql:	Intellect; Sense of Reasoning; Mental Power
Attest:	Confirm; Prove
Credentials:	Qualifications
Emulate:	Follow; Try to be like
Infallibility:	Error-free; Sinlessness
Social Welfare:	Assistance to the General Public
Substantiate:	Confirm; Verify; Validate

Adalah – Justice of God

→ The second fundamental belief in Islam is Adalah (Adl), which refers to the Divine Justice of Allah (SWT).

To believe in Adl means to believe that all actions of Allah (SWT) are in accordance with perfect justice and reason.

One sect of Sunni Muslims (Ash'arites) completely denies the Justice of Allah (SWT). They believe that Allah (SWT) has full power to act, as He likes. So by His Power and Authority, He can throw a good-doer into Hell-fire and an evil-doer into Paradise, and no one can protest against His Order.

But another group of Sunni Muslims and Shia Muslims assert that Allah (SWT) is the Supreme Power and Authority, and no one can challenge His actions or decisions, **BUT**, He is Perfect and therefore all His actions and decisions are always based on justice.

■ **What is the Meaning of Justice?**

The meaning of *justice* is sometimes confused with *equality*. A person who does not know the correct meaning of justice may ask many improper questions, such as:

- Why are there some rich and many poor people in the World?
- Why are men physically stronger and women weak and frail?
- Why do some people have long lives while some die very young?
- Why are there black and white people?

All these facts and many other realities in the world can confuse a person if he believes in Divine Justice but does not know the right meaning of justice. It is important to note that justice does not mean equality; these two concepts have different meanings entirely.

Imam Ali (A) has given an accurate definition of justice. He said that justice means to place a thing in its right place. In contrast, injustice means not placing the thing in its due place.

For example, if we sit on the table and put our books on the chair then that is injustice as they are not in their right places. Similarly, if we pay equal wages to a highly qualified professor and an ordinary teacher, or we give equal marks to both, a hardworking and lazy student, then this is not justice.

Justice demands that everyone must receive what they deserve. Hence, a professor should get more salary than an ordinary teacher; a student should be graded according to the quality of his/her work.

→ Equal treatment, or equal distribution, is **not** justice, rather it is *injustice*.

Thus, equality is not a condition for justice, rather individual rights and appropriate dealings is justice. Divine Justice therefore ensures that everyone gets his/her rights in proportion to his/her needs and abilities.

It is also important to bear in mind that the cases of injustice that we see all over the World is because of human favoritism and unjustness. Allah (SWT) is Just and He will punish such people on the Day of Judgment for their unfairness in dealings.

The Holy Qur'an confirms that the decisions and dealings of Allah (SWT) are always based on perfect justice. He is the Lord of the Universe and He can do anything He likes, as there can never be even the slightest opposition or resistance against His will, but it is one of His attributes that He is Just (Adl).

Hence, He *can* throw a good man in the Hell-fire by His Might, but He will **never do so** because of His Justice and Benevolence.

He shall pardon many people befitting for the Hell-fire because He is Compassionate, Merciful and Kind. His Mercy outshines His Justice.

The Holy Qur'an clearly states:

Allah is never unjust in the least degree.

An Nisa (4): 40

**We shall set up scales of justice on the Day of Judgment,
so that not a single soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least.**

Anbiya (21): 47

**Allah Commands justice, kindness and charity to one's kindred,
and forbids indecency and oppression.**

An Nahl (16): 90

These verses make it very clear why Adalah is considered among the basic beliefs of Islam.

Divine Justice in the Natural Systems

The definition of justice discussed by Imam Ali (A) can precisely be observed in the Divine Laws of nature governing the Universe.

Scientists have amazingly confirmed that they find everything in the right place. There is nothing in the universe that is disorderly and haphazard.

Scientists confirm that there is a precise balance between the Sun, Earth and other planets. If this balance is disturbed, the entire Solar System will collapse.

The balance, which is a beautiful demonstration of Divine Justice, is found in every atom in the universe. Since the atom is the basic unit of matter, this means that justice prevails everywhere in the universe.

Professor J.B.S Haldane, a very famous biologist, researched and eventually wrote several articles on being the right size. In these interesting articles, he proves that every living creature (man, animals, insects, etc.) has the right size, that is, their bodies perfectly meet the needs of their living conditions and circumstances.

Thus the whole Universe and its uncountable components are the witnesses of Divine Justice, the Adalah of Allah (SWT).

The Holy Qur'an confirms the scientific view of the universe:

He has raised the Heavens and has set up a standard balance for everything.

Ar Rahmaan (55): 7

Nabuwwah – Prophethood

The Prophets are divine leaders chosen by the Almighty to guide mankind toward the path of righteousness. They were the perfect Role Models in their times and were the embodiment of virtues. Every action they performed was for the sake of Allah (SWT).

Ponder:

- Have you seen the beautiful flowers that flourish in the gardens?
- Or the trees that bear abundant fruit in orchards?
- How long does it take for a tiny seed to grow into a fruit-bearing tree?
- How complex are the steps that a flower must go through in order to mature into a beautiful blossom?
- Who guides the trees and the flowers so that they fulfill their aim in existence?

According to our belief in Tawheed, we know that all creatures are designed by Allah (SWT). The continuation of their existence (their growth and maturity) is also under the direction of the Almighty.

Who else besides Allah (SWT) can make the seed bloom into a tree?

All other creations are similar to the tree and benefit from Divine Guidance. This movement towards perfection (fulfilling the objective of one's creation) can be referred to as *General Guidance*.

Human beings differ from other creations in one major aspect. They possess the power to think, make their decisions and consider their choices. Allah (SWT) bestowed this favor in its highest form on human beings only. Some of the other creations have the same capability, but with limitations.

Human beings, like other forms of creation, do receive the general guidance. But their special powers of Aql and reasoning can not be catered for by this same guidance.

So, who shows human beings the difference between good and evil? Who guides man towards the right ideals and values?

→ It has always been the Prophets who have taken up the responsibility of showing man the path of salvation. They were the *Warners* and the *Bearers of Truth*.

Having bestowed upon them a Divine Command, all the Prophets were given the task of guiding the intellect of man towards progress and maturity in this world and the Hereafter.

The Duties of the Prophets

The Holy Qur'an precisely describes the responsibility of each Prophet towards his nation.

**It is He, who sent forth among the unlettered an apostle of their own,
to recite to them the revelations, to purify them,
and to instruct them in the scriptures and wisdom.**

Al Jumu'ah (62): 2

From the above verse, we derive the conclusion that there are four main assignments for the Prophets. No other individual except a divine representative is capable to perform these tasks:

1. To guide mankind onto the right path.
2. To inform the people about the unseen and hidden realities which they shall never know, or be able to perceive by themselves.
3. To purify their souls and to develop their morals to divine standards.
4. To certify the actions of the people on the Day of Judgment.

- **1st Duty – To Guide Mankind**

This was the first and the main duty of all the Prophets. To complete this task efficiently and adequately, Allah (SWT) provided the Prophets with both, a theoretical book containing core concepts, and a practical book outlining the Shari'a.

All actions and activities of the Prophets were totally according to the Divine Will. In this way, the life of the Prophet itself was an open book. All Prophets taught their respective nations all essential things that are necessary for a meaningful life in this world, and for the ultimate success of the Eternal world.

- **2nd Duty – To Inform People about the Hidden and Unseen Realities**

This was the second important work of the Prophets. There are many facts and truths, which are totally beyond human reach. Man can never know them unless a reliable person from Allah (SWT) tells and explains these facts.

- **3rd Duty – To Purify the Souls and to Develop High Morals**

This is the third important duty of the Prophets. The Qur'an declares Prophethood as a great favor of Allah (SWT) to mankind and a source of His unlimited Mercy.

O Mankind!

**There has come to you indeed an admonition from your Lord, and a healing
for what is in the hearts,
and a guidance and a mercy for the believers.**

Yunus (10): 57

- **4th Duty – To Certify the Actions of People on the Day of Judgment**

The Qur'an informs us that on the Day of Judgment, the Prophets and their true successors, the Aimmah, will be asked to give full reports of their respective nations.

**One day We shall call together all people with their (respective) Imam;
those who are given their record in their right hand will read it,
and they will not be dealt with unjustly in the least.**

Bani Israail (17): 71

Characteristics of the Prophets

Apart from their many exceptional features, all Prophets have five things in common.

1. All Prophets were appointed by Allah (SWT) and none of them was self-appointed, or appointed by the public.
2. All Prophets were infallible and perfect human beings. No angel was sent as a *Nabi* or *Rasul*. All Prophets were males. No woman was appointed by Allah (SWT) as a *Nabi* or *Rasul*.
3. All Prophets were endowed with some kind of unique and distinct signs.
4. All Prophets taught the basic beliefs of Islam, that is, *There is no god but Allah (SWT), who has no partner*; and that *there shall be a Day of Judgment*; during which *each person will get rewarded according to his/her deeds*.
5. All Prophets successfully completed their task.

Appointment of the Prophets

All of the Prophets were appointed by Allah (SWT), and none out of the 124,000 messengers, was a self-appointed one, or a nominee chosen by the general public.

The reason why Allah (SWT) Himself should appoint the Prophet is a self-explanatory fact. The nature of Prophet's work clearly demands that he should be appointed by Allah (SWT), and not by the public or by the individual himself. This rule shall also apply to the successors of the Prophets.

The Prophets are therefore divinely chosen people who are capable of:

- ❖ Receiving Divine Guidance from the Almighty Lord
- ❖ Communicating this guidance to the people living in the physical world

They are the most trustworthy, selfless and noble people. It is Allah (SWT) alone who can judge who can successfully perform this task and, hence is suitable to be a Prophet.

The Holy Qur'an attests to this rule in the following verses:

Allah knows best whom to entrust with His Message.

An'aam (6): 124

He [the Messenger] is taught by One who is Mighty in Power.

An Najm (53): 5

Thus, no ordinary person, no matter how intelligent and knowledgeable, can qualify to this criterion except the one who is appointed by Allah (SWT), the Almighty.

Infallibility of the Prophets

Ismat ul-Anbiya

Infallibility

Prophets are Ma'soom, which means that they are free from all kinds of sin, mistake and evil. This infallibility is a result of their knowledge about the Almighty, Allah (SWT).

Due to the deep understanding of the Prophets, they do not commit any sort of sin or even attempt to be in the company of the evil-doers.

The Arabic word to express this unique quality is:

- ❖ **Ismah**, meaning the immunity from committing a sin, or even making a mistake.

Thus, every action of a Prophet is always accurate and correct, and can not be questioned for verification.

This *Ismah* also allows them to receive:

- ❖ The **Wahy**, which is the Heavenly Message that the Prophets receive and in turn convey to humanity.

They never go wrong in guiding and leading the people towards true path of Allah (SWT) and they are always under His Protection.

The Qur'an has ascertained that Prophets never do anything out of their own desire or under any pressure. They always follow the Commandments of Allah (SWT), whether they act in private or in public.

He [the Messenger] does not speak out of his own desire.

An Najm (53): 3

Another strong evidence for the infallibility of the Prophets is that Allah (SWT) has asked all mankind to follow the footsteps of the Holy Prophet (S) without any reservation.

This Divine Command in itself is a valid proof that His Prophets always do the right thing, and there is no chance of any error.

Say: If you do love Allah, follow me. Allah will love you.

Aali Imran (3): 31

Thus, from the verses of the Qur'an and also through common sense, the Prophets are therefore totally free from all kinds of indecencies and human errors.

A Prophet vs. A Common Man

In physical appearance, all Prophets and their successors (Anbiya, Rasul and Aimmah) are like common human beings. They all have the same body as we do, with the same needs as we have, such as, they used to eat food, drink water, sleep and rest, get married, have children, die after certain age, etc.

But despite these many common characteristics, all Prophets were highly elevated souls with special signs and extraordinary characters. The Holy Qur'an has described this unique combination of similarity and difference of the Prophet's personality.

**Say: I am only a man like you,
(but) it is revealed unto me that your God is but one God.**

Al Kahf (18): 110

From this verse of the Holy Qur'an, we can infer two important facts of their personality:

1. In general physical appearance, a Prophet is not different from common human beings, and his body functions wholly like them.
2. In addition to this bodily resemblance, he also receives Divine Revelations. This additional and exceptional quality of the Prophet, i.e. capability of communicating with Allah (SWT), which no ordinary human being can do, makes him *indescribably higher* than all human beings. **This difference is beyond any imagination.**

This exceptional quality of the Prophet, of being prominently like a common man but at the same time remarkably different from man, is not a mystery or unusual. We can explain it rationally and scientifically with the following example.

→ Similarity and Difference between a Diamond and Charcoal

Every student of chemistry knows this fact very well that pure Carbon occurs in nature in four different forms – Diamond, Graphite, Amorphous Carbon and Fullerene.

This means that as far as the chemical composition of Charcoal (which is Amorphous Carbon) and Diamond is concerned, **they both are utterly the same.**

Diamond is entirely made up of Carbon. And black charcoal (common wood charcoal) also consists mainly of Carbon.

Hence, there can be no dispute or argument when we say that a Diamond and wood Charcoal are **basically the same** (pure Carbon), but **remarkably different** in value and worth.

This is a scientific fact, which none can deny. But, can we exchange Diamond with coal?

Can we present a wedding ring made up of black Charcoal to our newly-wed wife telling her that basically it is the same as a Diamond?

Despite the basic similarity of origin (both are basically Carbon), Diamond and Charcoal are totally different. Diamond is extremely costly and Charcoal is pretty cheap. Diamond is the hardest and most lasting substance, while Charcoal is easily breakable and powdery.

Exactly in the same way, we can understand the similarity and the difference of the Prophets and the common person. They all are basically the same – human beings, but they are **remarkably different** in **character** and **values**.

If anyone quotes the above verse of the Holy Qur'an and says that the Prophets and Aimmah are just like us, then they are not acting sensibly. They are lacking the knowledge and facts about the Prophets and Aimmah.

Apart from this pure scientific argument, we can also show great differences among the people living around us. Some are highly educated, intelligent, and extremely rich, while others are uneducated, dull, and extremely poor.

Basically, they all are the same, but in actuality, there is a world of difference.

Why were Prophets Human Beings and not Angels?

This question was asked by the people to many Prophets. The Holy Qur'an has given a very rational explanation of this subject matter.

**Nothing prevents man from having faith when guidance is revealed to them,
but the excuse: why has Allah sent a human being as an apostle?
Say: Had the earth been a safe place for angels to dwell in,
We would have sent to them an angel from Heaven as an apostle.**

Bani Israail (17): 94

A beautiful explanation to this question has been given by M.J. Chirri, in his monumental book *Inquiries about Islam*, which says:

A Prophet is an example to mankind. He should share with them the same nature, the same ability, and the same limitation. But his personality (disposition) must be attractive for the general people to emulate.

→ If the Prophet was of a different nature, people will not be able to follow his example.

When perfection is shown by a Prophet, it becomes possible for his followers to imitate with the thought in mind, that both are humans, and hence what is possible for the Prophet, is possible for me.

But if an angel showed a high degree of morality, the human being may not attempt to follow his example thinking that what is possible for him may be impossible for me since he is not from the same nature.

There is another reason to believe that mankind should receive human Prophets. We understand that a Prophet is expected to substantiate his truthfulness by demonstrating to people extraordinary actions.

By doing so, people would realize that the individual who is a Prophet has indeed been empowered by Allah (SWT) because what he does is beyond man's natural ability.

This will not work if the Prophet is not human, and is an angel. A human Prophet may show his truthfulness by taking an unaided flight. Should an angel do the same, it will not demonstrate his natural ability, since the angel may not be affected naturally by gravitation.

**Indeed there is for you in the Apostle of Allah (SWT),
an excellent pattern of conduct.**

Al Ahzaab (33): 21

Miracles – Visible Sign of Prophethood

When a person makes a claim, it is his duty to give a satisfactory proof in support of his claim. For example, when the ambassador, who is among a nation's highest-ranking diplomat, arrives to take charge of his office, he first delivers authentic papers certifying his position.

The government in that country will never entertain any person in that capacity unless he shows valid credentials as an evidence of his candidacy for that position. The same rule applies for Prophethood.

Thus, if a person claims that he is the Prophet of Allah (SWT), it is his religious duty to show satisfactory evidence in support of his statement. In Islamic terminology, such evidence is known as *miracle* or *Ayah*, meaning sign of Prophethood.

The Holy Qur'an discusses that every Prophet sent by Allah (SWT) was endowed with some kind of supernatural power, by means of which he was able to demonstrate one or more miracles to prove his Prophethood as genuine and Divine.

Think and Respond

1. Discuss the various miracles provided by Allah (SWT) to the Prophets.
2. How were the miracles utilized by the Prophets?
3. What reaction did the miracles have on the people?

A Prophet vs. A Scientist

There is a stark difference between a Prophet and a Scientist. In fact, there is no comparison. However, for the sake of understanding the unparalleled position of the Prophet, few basic differences are being mentioned here.

1. A Prophet demonstrates miracles to prove his Prophethood. A miracle is a certain act, which leaves the people astounded, and that act can not be done by anyone else.

A scientist can also demonstrate something, which can astound people, but that act can be performed by many other scientists of his caliber. No scientist has ever shown anything, which was **impossible by another scientist to perform.**

2. The Prophet tells about the future or about the unseen, which has never been proved wrong. Scientists also tell many things about future on the basis of certain knowledge and experiments, but many of their reports have been proved wrong by other scientists.
3. Scientists have extraordinary talent, sharp memory, and incredible thinking faculties. They have designed an *Electron Microscope* of tremendous magnifying power to see an object as small as 1/250,000,000 inch. They have also designed high power telescope to see extremely distant objects.

Using the penetrating eyes of these powerful tools Scientists can see inside an invisible atom and the outmost galaxy, but despite these powerful instruments at their disposal, **they can not see inside the grave, and what shall happen after the death.**

On the other hand, the Prophets have a quite different power – and that is of receiving absolutely accurate news from a totally invisible world – a world, which will always remain beyond the range of a highly sophisticated telescope or microscope.

All great Prophets were given some kind of special miracle to establish their authority over the people of their nation. These miracles were in accordance with the specialization of their time.

For instance, in order to prevail over the magicians who were specialists in camouflaging the ropes as snakes, Prophet Musa was given the miracle whereby his staff turned into a deadly serpent.

During the time Prophet Isa, Greek medicine was at its peak, and therefore he was bestowed with the miracle of bestowing life unto the dead, curing the lepers and those who were born blind.

The miracle of the Holy Prophet (S) – the Holy Qur'an – is a miracle for **all** nations that will emerge until Day of Reckoning. The Holy Qur'an will remain a challenge in every field of study and every sphere of specialization.

Thus, the scientists can accomplish a lot of useful work if they wholeheartedly recognize the Prophets as their teachers and guides.

The above explanation clarifies that the Almighty made special arrangements for the guidance of mankind. However, we find people who deny the existence of God, and also do not accept the divinity of Prophets and/or their successors.

Such people speak or write negatively about God and his chosen Prophets. Any such statement is termed as *blasphemy*.

→ **Blasphemy involves:**

- Denying the existence of God.
- Defamation (insult) of the name of God.
- Saying evil things about God; Asserting incorrect beliefs about God.
- Speech, thought or action manifesting contempt against God.
- Words that are spoken against God.
- Any display of gross irreverence towards any person (Prophets and Aimmah), or anything deemed worthy of exalted esteem (respect).
- Any acts, utterances and writings showing slightest disrespect to (all or any of) the Prophets and/ or Aimmah.

Total Number of Messengers

The exact number and names of all Prophets is not known, but according to one famous hadith, there were 124,000 Prophets. Among these Prophets, the names of 25 Prophets have been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. They are as follows:

1. Prophet Adam
2. Prophet Idris (Enoch)
3. Prophet Nuh (Noah)
4. Prophet Hud
5. Prophet Saleh
6. Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham)
7. Prophet Ismail (Ishmael)
8. Prophet Ishaq (Isaac)
9. Prophet Lut (Lot)
10. Prophet Yaqub (Jacob)
11. Prophet Yusuf (Joseph)
12. Prophet Shuaib
13. Prophet Ayub (Job)
14. Prophet Musa (Moses)
15. Prophet Haroon (Aaron)
16. Prophet Dhul-Kifl (Ezekiel)
17. Prophet Dawood (David)
18. Prophet Sulayman (Solomon)
19. Prophet Ilyas (Elias)
20. Prophet Al-Yasha (Elisha)
21. Prophet Yunus (Jonah)
22. Prophet Zakariya (Zachariah)
23. Prophet Yahya (John the Baptist)
24. Prophet Isa (Jesus)
25. Prophet Muhammad (S)

In a particular sequence of verses of the Holy Qur'an, the names of 17 Prophets have been mentioned:

**We gave him *Ishaq* and *Yaqub*: each did We guide;
And before him We guided *Nuh*, and among his progeny:
Dawood, *Sulayman*, *Ayub*, *Yusuf*, *Musa*, and *Haroon*.
Thus do We reward those who do good.**

**And *Zakariya* and *Yahya* and *Isa* and *Ilyas*;
all in the ranks of the religious.
And *Ismail* and *Al-Yasha* and *Yunus* and *Lut*;
And every one We made to excel in the Worlds.**

An'aam (6): 84 - 86