

Core Curriculum

4 Prophethood in Islam

4.1 **A Brief Biography of the Prophet Muhammad (s): The Prophet's Childhood (PART I of III)**

N/A

4.2 **Bio: The Prophet Muhammad as a Prophet of God (PART II of III)**

N/A

4.3 **A Brief Biography of the Prophet Muhammad (s): The Prophet's Character (PART III of III)**

N/A

4.4 **The Prophet Muhammad (s) as Messenger and Teacher**

The Prophet Muhammad (s) was a messenger. Being a messenger is the next level beyond being a prophet for it means that the person in question is high enough to receive a new system of laws and even a divine scripture. A regular Prophet doesn't get these, but a Messenger does!

The Prophet (s) was also known as al-Amīn, which means "the truthful." The Prophet (s) was truthful and honest in all of his dealings, businesses and relationships with people. For this reason, the entire community of Mecca trusted him and always brought him in to solve their issues for they could trust him only in being unbiased in his opinions.

The Prophet (s) was also known as al-Mu'allim, for as a teacher he guided people's hearts to the truth and did not force belief on them.

The Prophet (s) was also known as al-Tabīb, that is, the doctor of people's

hearts and souls. His role in this regard was that of a spiritual healer and transformer. He cured the diseases that were in their hearts. This disease was none other than separation from God, which is the source of so many internal ills like anger, pride, egoism, jealousy and hatred.

The Prophet (s) was also the “Seal of the Prophets” meaning that he was the last of all prophets. This is so because the message of Islam was complete and perfect, for all times, places and peoples. No longer was there a need for additional messages. How do you perfect perfection?

4.5 **The Prophet and his Relationships**

This lesson is about looking at the kinds or levels of relationships that the Prophet Muhammad (s) had. The ones we’ve chosen are his relationships with God, the Qur’an, his progeny, the Ummah and his companions.

The Prophet Muhammad’s (s) relationship with Allah was founded on absolute trust, obedience, sincerity and love to Him. The relationship was that of total servitude. In short, the best word we can find for this is Islam, which means to submit and serve God alone.

The Prophet’s greatest relationship with the Qur’an, aside from having been the vessel for its revelation, was that he was the Qur’an in action.

We have plenty of companions at the time of the Prophet (s) who described him as the “walking and talking Qur’an.” This meant that he was a total embodiment of the Qur’an’s message.

The Prophet knew the role that the Ahl al-Bayt (as) were to play in guiding humankind after him. He therefore spent his life training them so that they would be prepared when he would have to depart this world.

The Prophet also gathered Muslims and created a new community called the Ummah. The intention of creating a Ummah or Islamic community was to break down tribal, geographic and racial barriers. These identities that people have, whether they are racial or tribal, are all mental creations and

often beget hatred towards others and eventually lead to alienation from God.

4.6 **The Prophet's Sunnah and Hadith**

The Sunnah is the sum of the actions, sayings and moral character of the Prophet Muhammad (s). The Sunnah is the way we learn about his manners, ethics and religious life. But how do we know what the Sunnah is? The way the Sunnah gets transmitted to us is through the hadiths which are chains of oral transmission.

For practical reasons, the Qur'an cannot contain every single detail of Islam.

If that were the case, the Qur'an would have had to be thousands of volumes and we all know that that would not have been practical. For this reason, the Sunnah and hadith were essential tools in expanding the meaning of the Qur'an.

But not all hadiths are equal.

The hadiths of the Prophet which have been transmitted by the Ahl al-Bayt are the most reliable. Why? Because the Ahl al-Bayt were infallible from mistakes and sins.

4.7 **Ghadir and Arafah: The Two Last Sermons of the Prophet**

The two most important sermons that the Prophet Muhammad (s) delivered to the Muslim Ummah or Islamic community are the sermons at Ghadir and Arafah. These sermons were given at the end of his life. The sermon of Ghadir was the last. These two sermons were significant as they dealt with the two major elements of human life, 1) human salvation and guidance (which is what Ghadir was about) and 2) the crisis of human relationships.

In the sermon of Arafah, the Prophet foresaw two major crises that humanity was to face until the Day of Judgment. First, it was the abuse and ill-treatment of women. He thus exhorted Muslims from mistreating women for

that was a sin and a great injustice. Mistreating women of course is not just in the form of physical abuse.

In the sermon of Ghadīr, the Prophet (s) guaranteed a line of divine leadership and guidance after his death. The sermon clearly established that guidance and authority in Islam comes from two sources, namely the Qur'an and the Ahl al-Bayt (as). The first among the Ahl al-Bayt (as) to guide and take up the mantle of religious leadership was to be Imām Alī (as) who was to be the mawla or master of Muslims.

4.8 **Jesus and Mary in Islam**

The Arabic rendering of Jesus is 'Īsā and the Arabic rendering of Mary is Maryam. According to Islam, Jesus is not God, which means that Mary is not the mother of God either. Furthermore, Islam also denies the concept of the Trinity. The Trinity is the belief that God has three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Islam believes that God is wholly One, in other words, He is undivided and has only One Person.

If Jesus is not God, then what is he? According to Islam, Jesus is a Prophet and Messenger of God or Allah. He is not only a Prophet, but he is one of the greatest Prophets of the religion of Islam.

As a Prophet and a Muslim (a Muslim is someone who submits himself or herself to God), Jesus guided people on to the Straight Path to Allah. The straight path to Allah is worshiping God in His Oneness and Unity, avoiding sins and having good moral character.

Jesus taught people through the Injīl or Gospel which was revealed to him by Allah. As Muslims we believe the Injīl to have been a divinely revealed Book, however, we do not believe it remained unchanged but its message was, over time, changed. Belief in Jesus and Mary, as well as in the original Injīl, is part of Islamic doctrine and without belief in them, one cannot be a Muslim.

Mary was not like other women. Like an exalted Prophet of God, the Angel

Gabriel had revealed himself to her communicating the message of Allah to her directly. Despite this however, mainstream Islam does not consider Mary to have been a Prophetess.