

Lajna Ima'illah UK Ta'lim Lesson Plan

Month: APRIL 2021 (Term 3: JUNE 2021 to SEPTEMBER 2021)

Learning Objectives:

- To learn the key points from Holy Qur'an Surah An-NUR Verses 42-65
- To learn the key points from the advice given by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad^(RA) to improve one's Salat

ACTIVITY **Holy Qur'an:** **Key points from Surah An-NUR Verses 42-65**

RESOURCE: Lajna Ima'illah UK Ta'lim Syllabus - Feb 2020 to Sep 2022, Page 192-212

Verse 42: The word (من) who has taken to mean both animate and inanimate things, the expression "who are in the heavens and the earth and the birds with their wings outstretched" would signify three classes of beings i.e. (1) angels of the heaven; (2) animate and inanimate things which live upon or are related to the earth such as man, animals, vegetables, and minerals; (3) and the birds which fly in the air. Taken in a spiritual sense, the words "who are in the heavens," would mean persons of very high spiritual status, and "who are in the earth" would signify those unfortunate worldly-minded persons whose whole attention and efforts are devoted to material pursuits and who have no thought or time for spiritual things, and the words "the birds with their wings outstretched" would apply to those people whose spiritual condition is midway between that of the two above-mentioned categories. At one time they soar spiritually so high as to touch the very confines of the celestial firmament and at another time sink so low as to grovel in the dirt and dust of the earth.

Verse 45: The verse means to say that the spiritual development of man referred to in the preceding verse is not always uniform and uninterrupted. Sometimes it is very rapid, at another time it is slow and yet some other time it comes to a dead stop. This ebb and flow in the spiritual development of man is called قبض (contraction) and بسط (expansion) or the alternation of night and day in spiritual terminology. ...

Verse 46: This verse describes the nature and form of the progress of spiritual pilgrims to their destined goal. The progress of some of them is extremely slow. They creep and crawl to their destination. Others go quicker like animals that move on two legs, yet others go faster like four-legged animals. What is hinted at here is speed and not the method of locomotion. The four-legged animals are, as a rule, speedier of movement than the bipeds or the crawlers. The same is the case with the spiritual travellers.

Verse 51: The verse signifies that disbelievers suffer from one or all of the three spiritual diseases or that some of them suffer from one disease and others from other diseases. In fact, the three main things that stand in the way of a man's spiritual progress and retard and arrest it, are doubt, fear and envy. These must be conquered before any real and substantial progress is possible.

Verse 56: This verse embodies a promise that Muslims will be vouchsafed both spiritual and temporal leadership. The promise is made to the whole Muslim nation but the institution of Khilafat will take a palpable form in the person of certain individuals who will be the Prophet's Successors and the representatives of the whole nation. They will be, as it were, Khilafat personified. The verse further says that the fulfilment of this promise will depend on the Muslims' observing the Prayer and giving the Zakah and on their obeying the Messenger of God in all religious and temporal matters concerning the nation. When they will have fulfilled these conditions, the boon of Khilafat will be bestowed upon them and they will be made the leaders of nations; their state of fear will give place to a condition of safety and security, Islam will reign supreme in the world, and above all the Oneness and Unity of God—the real purpose and object of Islam—will become firmly established.

The promise of the establishment of Khilafat is clear and unmistakable. As the Holy Prophet^{saw} is now humanity's sole guide for all time, his Khilafat must continue to exist in one form or another in the world till the end of time, all other Khilafats having ceased to exist. This is among many others the Holy Prophet's distinct superiority over all other Prophets and Messengers of God. Our age has witnessed his greatest spiritual in Khalifa the person of Ahmad, the Promised Messiah.

Verse: 58: The verse purports to say that the kingdom and dominion of the world will be bestowed upon the followers of Islam and they will become the leaders and teachers of mankind. It is God's plan and His decree and no one can frustrate Divine decree. All efforts on the part of the enemies of truth to alter this inviolable Divine decree will end in failure. As long as Khilafat will endure among Muslims as an active force Muslims will march from success to success.

Verse: 59: ... The present verse, however, refers to another kind of "purdah," viz. that domestic servants and minor children too should not enter the private apartments of their masters or parents at three particular hours mentioned here without getting prior permission.

Verse 61: The verse shows that even old women are not allowed to display their finery or ornaments and the beauty of their person and form or countenance to strangers.

Verse 62: ... Here it has stressed the importance and usefulness of free social intercourse and collective dining among all classes of society, and has encouraged and preferred eating together to promote familiarity and to remove those bars that keep apart people of different social standing, though it has not disallowed eating separately. ...

Verse 63: The several preceding verses contained directions for Muslims as how to conduct themselves in affairs of social importance. The present verse, however, deals with affairs of national importance. The Muslims are enjoined that when they are with the Holy Prophet, engaged in transacting a business of national importance, they are not to leave the assembly without his permission. It may also be inferred from this verse that in affairs concerning a whole nation or community, the individual loses his independence of action. He must abide by the decision arrived at by the assembly of Muslims presided over by the Prophet, his Successor or their accepted and elected leader. When a person withdraws himself from such assembly, he, in fact, deprives himself of the opportunity to contribute his share to the good of Islam and Muslims and consequently to that extent he becomes deprived of God's grace and mercy. The Holy Prophet, therefore, has been told to ask forgiveness of Allah for such an individual for an inadvertent lapse on his part. ...

Verse 64: ... The Prophet's or the Leader's call is not to be treated lightly. It must be accorded the respect it deserves, as it always concerns highly important affairs. The verse may also mean that the privacy of the Prophet or the Leader should not be intruded upon, and unnecessary demands should not be made upon his very precious time, and when addressed he should be treated with the respect due to his very exalted position. In fact, reverence and respect paid where it is due, is recognised by Islam as an effective means of spiritual advancement. ...

Verse 65: The verse means to say that the commandments and injunctions given above are meant for the social, moral and spiritual uplift of Muslims, and, as God is the sole Master of all that is in the heavens and the earth, therefore, no real and enduring progress is possible without giving unstinted and unconditional obedience to His commandments. ...

ACTIVITY SALAT

RESOURCE: "Remembrance of Allah" By: Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad^{ra}
Khalifatul Masih II taken from Lajna Ima'illah UK Ta'lim Syllabus - February 2020 to September 2022, Page 213-217

I will turn to methods which are not the required conditions of Prayer, nor has the *Shari'ah* prescribed them as components of Prayer, but which can help maintain concentration in Prayer.

11. If you are unable to concentrate, recite the words slowly. ... Until their mind forms a good picture of one phrase, they should not proceed to the next. They should say “*Bismillah ir Rahman ir Raheem*” ... and try to form a good image of its true significance. They should not proceed to “*Alhamdulillah Rabbil-Aalameen*” ... until the image of the previous phrase is vivid and clear. ... Unless they get into the habit of such slow and deliberate recitation, the words on their lips would be different from the images in their minds. ...

12. ... the Holy Prophet^{saw}... instructed that the eyes must be focused on the place of prostration during Prayers. Many people ignore this instruction. They close their eyes during Prayers, thinking that they would thereby achieve concentration. Not so. Concentration can only be achieved by keeping the eyes open. ... In his book *Awariful Ma'arif*, Hadhrat Shahabuddin Suherwardi says that during *Ruku* the eyes should be focused upon the space between the two feet. I agree with this suggestion; ...

The Holy Prophet^{saw} has also directed that the place of prostration should be free from decoration and should be uniformly simple. ... Once, a decorated sheet was placed where the Holy Prophet^{saw} offered his Prayer. He ordered it to be removed; pointing out that it affects concentration in Prayer. His instruction was for the benefit of his followers.

13. ... *Niyat* (the intention) is required at the beginning of Prayer. It will also be helpful if, at the beginning of the Prayer, you resolve not to let any stray thoughts distract your mind. ...

14. When following an *Imam*, the recitations made by the *Imam* will keep you awake and alert. The *Imam* thus protects his followers. This, incidentally, shows how important it is to offer Prayer behind an *Imam*. When offering Prayer alone, you should follow an excellent method applied by the Holy Prophet^{saw}, his Companions, and many pious Muslims. Some verses of the Holy Qur'an are particularly conducive of humbleness; repeat them often. For instance, when reciting *Surah Al-Fatiha*, repeat the following verse often:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَ إِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾ *Thee alone do we worship and Thee alone we implore for help. (1:5)*

This would put the soul to remorse. If it is lost in random thoughts, the soul will return to the act of worship feeling that since it is claiming to worship God alone, it should not wander around.

15. The next method is to help those who cannot hold their concentration for long. ... A useful technique for them is to concentrate on one posture at a time. When they stand for *Qiyam* they should resolve not to let any thoughts disturb them up to the end of *Ruku*. Going in to *Ruku* they should make the same resolution for the time up to the end of *Ruku*. They should do the same at every change of posture. This will give them great strength to overpower any distracting thoughts.

16. If you succumb to other worldly thoughts, they will chase you. But if you confront your thoughts and resolve not to let them disturb you, they will stop. Offer a stiff resistance, therefore, to all such thoughts; stop them immediately. For example, if during the Prayer, you think of your sick child, stop thinking of it by telling yourself that the child is not going to get better by thinking about him nor is he going to get worse if you do not think of him. Resolve, therefore, not to think of him. Continue this practice about every thought until you get a masterly command over them.

17. When you offer *Nawafil* at home, recite the words loud enough to hear them. ... This method should generally be practiced during the night. If you put the ears to use in Prayers during the day, they will be distracted by all kinds of noise.