

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, most Kind, most Merciful



Surat al-An'am 6:2

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ طِينٍ ثُمَّ
قَضَىٰ أَجَلًا وَأَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى عِنْدَهُ
ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ تَمْتَرُونَ

It is He who created you from clay, then
ordained the term [of your life] – the specified
term is with Him – and yet you are in doubt.

Learning Objectives

- To evaluate the purpose of our creation
- To explain the relationship of the body with the *ruh*
- To describe creation of Nabi Adam and his family

Key Words

طِين tin
clay

إِنْسَان insan
mankind

أَشْرَفُ الْمَخْلُوقَاتِ ashraf al-makhluqat
best of creation

Al-Insan: mankind

In Arabic, human beings are known as *insan*. This word may be derived from *al-uns* which means being sociable and friendly. Human beings have been created in a way that they need companionship, love, and a sense of belonging. They cannot survive alone.

Another possibility is that *insan* comes from *nasiya*, which means to forget. Humans therefore need to be constantly reminded of their purpose of existence. As the Qur'an says:



Surat al-A'raf 7:172

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ
طُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَى
أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَى
شَهِدْنَا أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا
عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ

When your Lord took from the Children of Adam, from their loins, their descendants and made them bear witness over themselves, [He said to them,] 'Am I not your Lord?' They said, 'Yes indeed! We bear witness.' [This,] lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, 'Indeed we were unaware of this.'

In sermon 1 of *Nahj al-Balaghah*, Imam Ali (a) provides a description of the creation of the first man, Nabi Adam:

- 1 At the first stage, Nabi Adam was created with earth and water.

Regarding water, the Qur'an tells us:



Surat al-Furqan 25:54

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُ
نَسَبًا وَصِهْرًا وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا

It is He who created the human being from water, then made him into the relationship of blood and marriage, and your Lord is All-Powerful.

Regarding the earth, Allah says:



Surat ar-Rum 30:20

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ
تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ إِذَا أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ تَنْتَشِرُونَ

And of His signs is that He created you from dust, then, behold, you are humans scattering [all over]!

- 2 At the second stage, Nabi Adam's form was left for a fixed period of time to solidify until it became hard.
- 3 At the third stage, Allah blew the *ruh* from Him into Nabi Adam.

A human being has therefore two sides to his creation: an earthly and physical side, and a heavenly and spiritual side.

When Allah says that He blew *ruh* into Nabi Adam from Himself, this does not mean a part of Allah left Allah and came into Nabi Adam. Rather, it is a way of according honour to the *ruh* by relating it to Himself (My *ruh*), thus giving importance to Nabi Adam and his descendants.

Another example of this is when we call the *Ka'bah*, *baytullah* (house of Allah); this is to give honour and respect to the *Ka'bah*.

A man came to Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) and asked about the significance of the *ruh*. The Imam explained that *ruh* comes from the word *rih* (moving wind). And the relationship of the *ruh* to the body is that the body remains alive as long as the *ruh* is in it. When the *ruh* leaves the body, the body starts to decay and leaves a stench. This is why we are told to dig the graves deep so that the stench does not affect others.

When Allah created man, He gave him free will, so that he can use it to reach his full potential. Just to know that each one of us has been created as part of a divine plan and to represent Him, is very powerful.

Man has the potential of elevating himself spiritually to levels higher than the angels.

Imam Ali (a) has said:

Allah has created the angels and given them intellect, but not desire. And He created the animals with desires, but not intellect. And He created humans and placed both intellect and desires in them.

Therefore, he whose intellect overcomes his desires is better than the angels, and he whose desires overcomes his intellect is worse than the animals.

Therefore, the purpose behind the creation of man is for him to reach his full potential, which is to become as close as possible to perfection, with his free will. Allah says:



Surat al-Inshiqaq 84:6

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدًّا فَمُلَاقِيهِ

O man! You are striving towards your Lord laboriously, and you will encounter Him.

The life of this world can sometimes feel full of difficulties for the believers and the righteous. Yet, they strive hard to follow the right path because of their firm belief in the Day of Judgement, in which they shall go to their Lord with their account of deeds.

DID YOU KNOW?

Jeddah is a city in Saudi Arabia where Sayyidah Hawwa is buried. *Jaddah* means grandmother. It is named in this way because Sayyidah Hawwa is the grandmother of all humanity, and the first woman ever created.

DID YOU KNOW?

Animal faeces such as cow dung, has been used for centuries as a fertiliser for farming. It helps the soil hold more nutrients and water, and the soil therefore becomes more fertile. It also helps with improving plant nutrition as it contains some nitrogen and other nutrients that assist the growth of plants.

STORYTIME!



Nabi Adam's family

Adam is the name of the very first human being that Allah created. Allah created Sayyidah Hawwa in the same form.

A Jew once came to Imam Ali (a) and asked him why Nabi Adam was named Adam? Imam replied,

“Adam is named thus because he was created from *adim al-ardh*, that is, the face of the earth.”

Nabi Adam and Sayyidah Hawwa were blessed with sons named Habil and Qabil, for whom Allah sent heavenly *huris* in order for them to have children. Later on, Allah granted Nabi Adam and Sayyidah Hawwa another son called Shayth, who was appointed as the successor to Nabi Adam.



HIGHER LEVEL

The physical growth of every human being begins from lifeless matter, and then becomes a seed, fertilised ovum, foetus, baby, child, youth, and then experiences old age, and then death. It is amazing to see how man, the best and chosen of all creatures with all his talents and excellent characteristics, has been created from the humble earth. In *Surat al-Mu'minun* (23:12-16), Allah describes the process of growth of a human being in the following stages:

Surat al-Mu'minun 23:12-16

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِّن طِينٍ
ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ
ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً
فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ
أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ
ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ لَمَيِّتُونَ
ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ تُبْعَثُونَ

Indeed We created man from an extract of clay. Then We made him a drop of [seminal] fluid [lodged] in a secure place. Then We created the drop of fluid as a clinging mass. Then We created the clinging mass as a fleshy tissue. Then We created the fleshy tissue as bones. Then We clothed the bones with flesh. Then We produced him as [yet] another creature. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators! Then indeed you die after that. Then you will indeed be raised up on the Day of Resurrection.

The fascinating process of the placement of male and female seeds and foetal development in the womb are described in these ayat. The womb is fully protected on all sides and provides a place of nurture for the development of a child.

The embryo then passes a stage where it appears as a blood-clot and as a lump. Many of its cells change into bony ones. This indicates that the lump is at first changed into bones and then it is covered by flesh.

Furthermore, just as garments protect the body, muscles protect the bones. If there were no muscles, blows landed on the body would constantly hurt the bones or they would easily break.



FIQH FACTS

RULING 38

Ground that is *najis* becomes *tahir* if rain falls on it.

It is reported from Imam Ali (a) that once Jibril came to Adam (a.s) and said,

“I am ordered to offer you three things. You may choose one and leave the other two.”

Adam asked,

“What are those three things?”

Jibril replied,

“They are intellect, modesty and faith.”

Adam said,

“I choose Intellect.”

Jibril then asked modesty and faith to return and leave intellect with Adam.

They said to Jibril,

“O Jibril, we are commanded to be with intellect wherever it may exist.”

Jibril said, “So do as you have to.”

He then ascended to the heavens.



Faith in Action

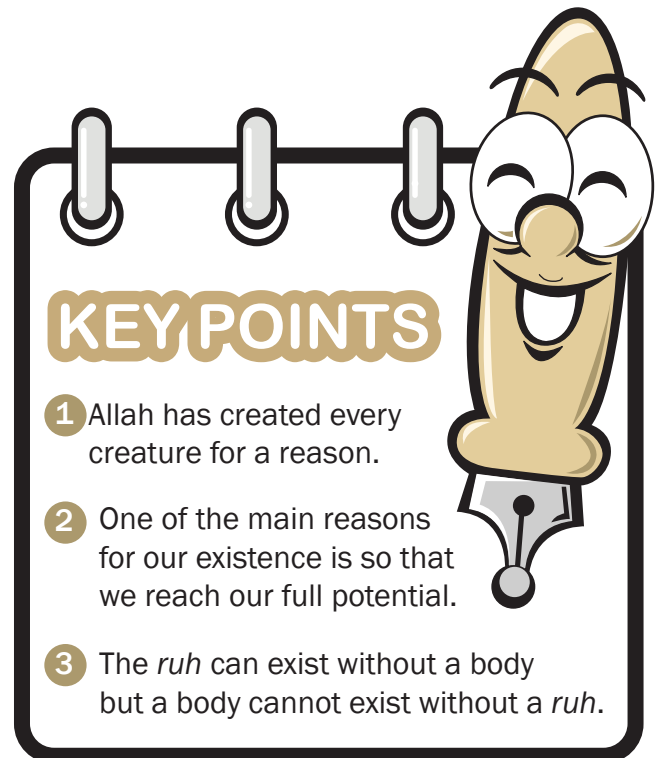
Allah has created everything for a reason.
Nothing exists without purpose.

In your class, research and find why Allah has created the following creatures. Create a PowerPoint presentation to share with the class. Students can be divided into group of three or four, and each group can be given two points each, which are:

- 1 Pigs (whose meat is *haram* for Muslims to eat)
- 2 Snakes (whose venom is poisonous and can kill a human)
- 3 Mosquitoes (those that cause malaria)
- 4 Fire ants (they have painful bites)
- 5 Artemisia plant (it has an unpleasant aroma)
- 6 Four o'clock plants (they have poisonous foliage)
- 7 Tea tree oil (dangerous to dogs and cats)
- 8 Lizards (look like useless creatures)
- 9 Spiders (they scare away people!)
- 10 Cockroaches (they give us the creeps)

DID YOU KNOW?

The power of Allah has been demonstrated through the diversity of creation. If we look around us amongst the 6.5 billion people in the world, we will not find two human beings that look exactly the same! Even identical twins are not completely identical.



KEY POINTS

- 1 Allah has created every creature for a reason.
- 2 One of the main reasons for our existence is so that we reach our full potential.
- 3 The *ruh* can exist without a body but a body cannot exist without a *ruh*.



- 1 List two main things with which Nabi Adam was created.

- 2 Explain what happens to the body when the *ruh* departs at death.

- 3 How do we say 'the best of creation' in Arabic?

- 4 What has Allah given human beings that makes him the best of creation?