

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, most Kind, most Merciful



Surat al-An'am 6:82

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ
أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ

Those who have faith and do not taint their faith with wrongdoing—for such there shall be safety, and they are the [rightly] guided.'

Learning Objectives

- To explain what is meant by *iman*
- To identify the qualities of a *mu'min*
- To compare and contrast a *mu'min* and a *munafiq*

Key Words

إِيمَان

Iman
faith

نِفَاق

Nifaq
hypocrisy

تَوَكَّلْ

Tawakkul
trust in Allah



AL-ASMA AL-HUSNA

The 99 Beautiful Names of Allah

المؤمن AL-MU'min
THE securer

Al-Mu'min is one of the names of Allah. We call on Him for protection and comfort, and we trust Him for He is always present and provides the means of security.

He is the illuminator of the light of *iman* in our hearts. Believing in this attribute of Allah blocks out everything that leads to fear of anything other than Allah.

What is *iman*?

In the Qur'an, the word *iman* (faith) is used as an opposite to the word *kufr* (disbelief). *Iman* is a state of believing and accepting something. *Kufr* means to cover something up and hide the truth, and is used to mean disbelief because a disbeliever covers up the truth and refuses to accept it. The Qur'an states:

Surat al-Baqarah 2:108

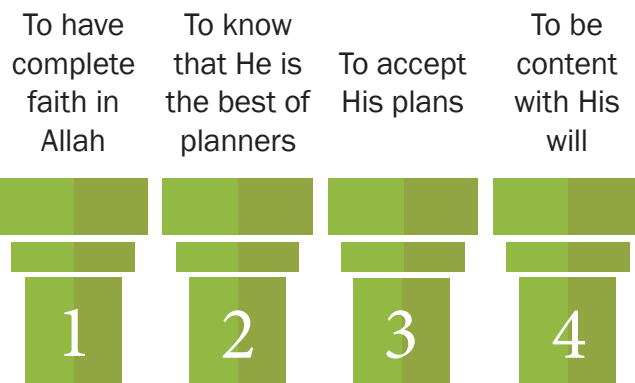


وَمَنْ يَتَّبِدَلِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ
فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ

Whoever changes faith for disbelief
certainly strays from the right way.

The word *iman* is derived from *al-amn*, meaning security. The best example of these qualities is Rasulullah (s) who was popularly known as *al-Amin* (the trustworthy) even before he taught about Islam.

Iman has four levels:



We can compare the levels of faith in the following way: Having the first level is like having a diploma in faith. If your faith is at the second level, you have a Bachelor degree in faith. Those who have reached the third level have a Masters in faith. Finally, the last level is like having a Doctoral degree in faith.

Imam Ali (a) in *Nahj al-Balagha*,
Sermon 227:

When asked about *iman*, said:

Iman is recognition with the heart,
confirmation by speech,
and action with the limbs.

Rasulullah (s) said to Imam Ali (a):

“O Ali, none shall love you but a believer
(*mu'min*) and none shall hate you but a
hypocrite (*munafiq*).

Rasulullah (s) said:

Iman is divided into two halves;
one half lies in *sabr* (patience) and the other
half lies in *shukr* (being thankful).

Who is a *mu'min*?

Allah mentions some of the qualities of the believers in *Surah 23*, verses 2-9. These include:

1 They are humble in their *salah*

The believers are humble before Allah because they are fully aware of their low position in the presence of His absolute authority. When our hearts are humble our soul is spiritually uplifted.

He has fear of Allah and his hopes for Allah's rewards are in moderation

A *mu'min* is also recognised by two essential characteristics:

He does not spend all his life in acute fear of Allah's punishment, and neither does he have a false sense of protection from this punishment.

H. Luqman advised his son:

Even if your good deeds are more than those of all men and *jinn* put together, you must fear Allah that you might attract His retribution. Even if your sins are more than all the sins of men and *jinn*, you must hope that Allah will have mercy on you! But when hoping for rewards, one must strive to earn them! The faith of a *mu'min* is not complete unless he develops the twin traits of *khawf* (fear) and *raj'a* (hope).

2 They turn away from everything that is vain (*laghw*)

Every action and speech that does not carry any benefit is vain. It is also vain to engage in useless talk, and in thoughts that are empty of the remembrance of Allah. Lying, abusive language, certain types of music, and gossip, all come under the banner of things that are vain. These types of entertainments and enjoyments, having no element of godliness in them nor any benefit, should not become an activity for true believers.

3 They are charitable

All good deeds and the payment of charity are acts of purification (*zakah*). These deeds wipe away sins, and bring forgiveness. The act of charity also makes a person less selfish.

4 They guard their private parts

Every believer must guard himself against every kind of *haram* sexual activity. This includes *haram* relationships, as well as masturbation.

5 They keep their word

A true believer is one who fulfils his promises to others, and also fulfils the contract he has made with Allah to obey and worship Him. Safeguarding promises, trusts, and contracts is an outstanding quality of a believer.

Each one of Allah's various blessings is His trusts; our body, our parents, our wealth, and our intellect. We must safeguard each of these.

In the year 10 AH, at Ghadir al-Khumm, all those thousands who were present made a covenant with Allah and Rasulullah (s) that they would obey Imam Ali (a) as their *wali* and *mawla*, after Rasulullah (s). But history tells us that most of them did not fulfil their covenant.

6 They guard their *salah*

The first point mentioned above regarding *salah* refers to humility, which is a special inner attitude, which is the spirit of the *salah*.

In this sixth point, however, the Qur'an focuses on the discipline and conditions for the performance of *salah* relating to praying on time, with concentration, and keeping *salah* as a priority above all other activities.

Conditions of *taharah*, *najasah*, and other *fiqh* rules regarding *salah* should also be taken care of for the prayers to be in order.

To fully protect our *salah*, we must also keep away from sins, and avoid *haram* and *najis* food.

In *Surat al-Mu'minun*, Allah begins by saying:

Surat al-Mu'minun 23:1

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

Successful indeed are the believers.

The first *ayah* mentions the good and successful end result for the believers, and then goes on to speak about their qualities. This is because Allah wants believers to have enthusiasm and commitment in reaching their goal.

What is *nifaq*?

Nifaq is translated as hypocrisy. A person who outwardly shows he is a Muslim but inwardly is not, is a hypocrite (*munafiq*).

Basic types of *nifaq*

- Behavioural *nifaq*: when the outward appearance of a person is friendly, sympathetic, supportive and sincere, while in reality it is the opposite inside his heart
- Verbal *nifaq*: when a person praises and flatters another person or people in front of them but then speaks bad about them in their absence

Characteristics of *nifaq*

- Hurting others with actions as well as with speech
- Disclosing confidential secrets
- Idolising people, considering them more powerful and influential than Allah
- Becoming very happy when hearing one's own praise and unhappy when others are praised
- Eagerness to be in the company of the rich and the affluent and not keen to be in the company of the poor and needy
- Devotion to Allah and *taqwa* are not genuine, but done only for the sake of this world and its people

DID YOU KNOW?

During the battle of Khandaq, Amr ibn Abd Wudd, a famous warrior known for his great strength and bravery, came to the battlefield and threw down the challenge to the Muslims for someone to come and fight with him. The Muslims began to panic. Ultimately, Imam Ali (a) volunteered and went for the challenge with Rasulullah's (s) permission. He successfully killed Amr. This had a huge positive impact on the spirit of the Muslims, and led to their victory over the enemy. Imam Ali's (a) action of killing Amr helped Islam's army to be victorious over the unbelievers; when Imam Ali (a) was going to fight with Amr, Rasulullah (s) stated: The whole of iman is confronting the whole of kufr.

Who is a *munafiq*?

Surat an-Nisa 4:142

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَى يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

The hypocrites indeed seek to deceive Allah, but it is He who outwits them. When they stand up for prayer, they stand up lazily, showing off to the people and not remembering Allah except a little.

A person who pretends to believe, and behaves with their faith in a hypocritical manner, is a *munafiq*. There were few *munafiqin* amongst the companions of Rasulullah (s) due to their attachment with old habits, customs, beliefs, and their own greed.

A person who expects Allah's mercy but continues with sinful acts is also regarded as a type of hypocrite. This is like a person who does not plant seeds in the soil but still expects to reap the fruits.

Surat al-Baqarah 2:14

وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا
وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا
مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ

When they meet the faithful, they say, 'We believe,' but when they are alone with their devils, they say, 'We are with you; we were only deriding [them].'

In the Qur'an, Allah says regarding the *munafiq*:

Surat al-Hashr 59:11

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا يَقُولُونَ
لِإِخْوَانِهِمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ
الْكِتَابِ لَئِنْ أُخْرِجْتُمْ لَنَخْرُجَنَّ
مَعَكُمْ وَلَا نَطِيعُ فِيكُمْ أَحَدًا
أَبَدًا وَإِنْ قُوتِلْتُمْ لَنَنْصُرَنَّكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ

Have you not regarded the hypocrites who say to their brethren, the faithless from among the people of the book: 'If you are expelled, we will surely go out with you, and we will never obey anyone against you, and if you are fought against we will surely help you,' and Allah bears witness that they are indeed liars.

Rasulullah (s) says:

A hypocrite is he who lies, breaks promises, and proves himself dishonest if trusted.



ACTIVITY...

'Write down 3 characteristics of a *munafiq* given by the Quranic verses shown here

And 3 characteristics of a *munafiq* given from the sayings of Rasulullah(s).

Rasulullah (s) has said:

There are three things that if a person possesses them then he is a *munafiq* (hypocrite), even though he may be fasting and praying and thinks he is a Muslim: When he is trusted he betrays, and when he speaks he lies, and when he promises he breaks it.



Faith in Action

Read the *ta'qibat* of *fajr salah* every morning and try and memorise it.

How many times in this *du'a* can you find where it says that Allah is sufficient for us and our affairs?



The companions of the cave (*ashab al-kahf*) were few men who lived in Ephesus (an ancient Greek city). They lived in a society that worshipped idols, but they were believers in Allah, and were true followers of Nabi Isa (a). The city in which they lived was ruled by a cruel ruler who was an idol-worshipper. He forced people to worship idols, otherwise they would be punished by death.

These young men had to make a choice, either to accept idol-worshipping or to refuse and be killed. They had very strong *iman* and *tawakkul* in Allah. They therefore decided to leave the city and migrate in order to seek refuge elsewhere, away from the reach of the ruler. They left the city and a dog named Qitmir joined them. They went towards the hills and finally found a cave. They prayed for Allah's help, and Allah made them sleep for 309 years! They woke up not realising that they had been sleeping for so long until they saw everything around them had changed drastically. Those who wanted to persecute them had died and the faith of Christianity had prevailed over idol-worship.

They lived for a short while to see by their own eyes the power of God in supporting the weak and crushing the arrogant and to increase faith and trust in Him and then passed away.

Moral of the story

Those who stand firm in their *iman* and have *tawakkul* in their Lord, even if they are a minority, Allah helps them with His grace every step of the way.

Their firm belief in Allah made them migrate to a place where they could avoid worshipping idols. This was a risk to their lives but they were strong and had certainty in their hearts that they will find a way out.

Allah liked this action so much that He made the sleepers of the cave an amazing example for us all to learn about and ponder upon, until the Day of Judgement. Allah narrates their story to us in the Qur'an in *Surat al-Kahf* (The Chapter of the Cave)']



HIGHER LEVEL

Allah compares a *Mu'min* with a *Fasiq* in
Surat as-Sajdah;

أَفَمَنْ كَانَ مُؤْمِنًا كَمَنْ كَانَ فَاسِقًا لَا يَسْتَوُونَ

Is someone who is a believer like someone who is a transgressor? They are not equal.

(*Surat as-Sajdah* 32:18)

This sentence has been stated in a positive interrogation with a negative form; the answer emerges from the intellect and nature of any person indicating that these two are never equal. Yet, in order to emphasize, the Qur'an specifies this inequality.

The word *fasiq* is often translated as 'transgressor'. It usually refers to someone who commits sins openly and who does not repent. This word *fasiq* originally is taken from the Arabic phrase 'the fruit has come out from its cover, or the stone of the date has separated from the date and has come out from it.'

Then it has been used for coming out from the obedience of the command of Allah and wisdom; and we know that whoever blasphemes or commits a sin has come out of the command of Allah and wisdom.

This point is also notable that as long as a fruit is inside its cover it is safe, but when it comes out from its cover it will decay. Therefore, when a person becomes a transgressor, he has indeed become decayed.

In *Du'a Kumayl*, Imam Ali (a) quotes the same verse to compare the two opposites;

أَفَمَنْ كَانَ مُؤْمِنًا كَمَنْ كَانَ فَاسِقًا لَا يَسْتَوُونَ

What? Is someone who is a believer like someone who is a transgressor? They are not equal.

ACTIVITY...

Given that a *fasiq* and *mu'min* are opposites, can you list some characteristics of a *fasiq* given what you have learnt in this lesson about the characteristics of a *mu'min*?



FIQH FACTS

It is *haram* to make horoscopes and predict the future of people by looking at the movement or alignment of stars. It is also not permissible to believe in palmistry. A Muslim should trust in the intelligence that Allah has given to him or her, work hard, and rely for success on divine grace (*tawfiq*).

Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a) says:

O my Lord! When my attention goes to my sins, I become fearful of retribution, but I am also hopeful of Your mercy and forbearance!

KEYPOINTS

- 1 Lying, abusive language, and certain types of music and gossip, all come under the definition of 'vain' in *Surat al-Mu'minun* (23:3).
- 2 *Sabr* and *shukr* are two vital parts of a person's *iman*.
- 3 *Al-Mu'min* is an attribute of Allah which means the One Who gives us protection and upon Whom we can put our complete trust.
- 4 A person who pretends to believe, and behaves with their faith in a hypocritical manner, is a *Munafiq*.





- 1 State the difference between *iman* and *kufr*.

- 2 State three characteristics of a *mu'min*.

- 3 State three characteristics of a *munafiq*.

- 4 What does *tawakkul* mean?

NOTES