

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah,
most Kind, most Merciful



Surat al-A'raf, 7:43

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا
وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ

All praise belongs to Allah, Who guided us to this, and we
would have never been guided had Allah not guided us.

Learning Objectives

- To explain the link between Allah's justice and His guidance
- To evaluate the importance of divine guidance
- To state, with examples, the sources of divine guidance available to us

Key Words

عَدَالَةٌ	Adalah justice
هِدَايَةٌ	Hidayah guidance
هَادِي	Hadi guide



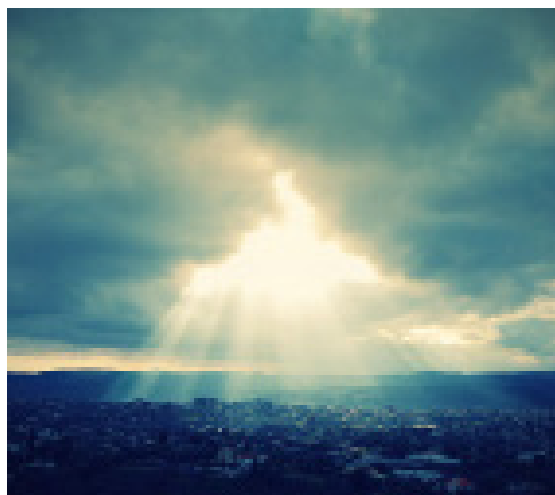
We have studied in previous lessons that belief in *adalah* (justice) of Allah is one of the roots of our faith. Allah is *Adil*, meaning He is Just. And as a result of His justice, He has always guided mankind towards Him. He has sent guidance to us in various forms, including Rasulullah (s), the *A'immah* (a), and the Qur'an. These are our maps and our guides to get to the right path. They help us in this life and in the Hereafter.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) has explained that because Allah is wise, 'It is necessary [for Allah] to send *anbiya* (prophets) and *rusul* (messengers who received a divine book) who would communicate His laws to people. They guide the people in the affairs that are beneficial and [prevent them from] those that cause everlasting misery.



Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (a) has also said:

'He sent the *anbiya* to give glad tidings of salvation and to warn against His punishment so that those who perish in disobedience must perish with the realisation of their error and all arguments must be exhausted for them.'



This means that before anyone is perished, they must have had the chance of knowing right from wrong, and they cannot have any excuse for their wrongdoing. If they have a legitimate excuse for what they did, then Allah would not allow them to be punished with eternal misery. Therefore, out of His grace and justice, Allah has ensured that everyone receives guidance (*hidayah*) to the right path. It is then up to us to decide whether we want to take the right path or not.



Surat al-Insan, 76:3

إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا

Indeed We have guided him to the way, be he grateful or ungrateful.



REFLECTION

Is it fair for Allah to expect us to be good and reach *jannah* without telling us how He wants us to be good?

Would it be fair for Him to punish us if we did not know what we were not supposed to do?



AL-Asma al-HUSna
The 99 Beautiful Names of Allah

الْهَادِي AL-HADI
THE guide

Al-Hadi: The Guide
Allah guides His servants to the right path.

Why do we need **divine** guidance?

1 It gives us a true understanding of Allah

Guidance from Allah ensures our understanding of God is correct and it helps us understand why He created us and what our purpose in life should be. Since He is our Creator and Sustainer, does it not make sense that He should be the one to guide us?



Surat al-Baqarah, 2:213

فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنْذِرِينَ
وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ
بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِي مَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ

Then Allah sent the prophets as bearers of good news and warners, and He sent down with them the Book with the truth, that it may judge between the people concerning that about which they differed.

Even those who are 'good' at heart wish to become better spiritually and would need someone to guide them. A person who tries to find God on his or her own is only guessing like a man fumbling in the dark. Without guidance, people's understanding of God is like a group of blind people trying to understand what an elephant looks like. The person who touches its trunk will say, 'an elephant is like a big hose pipe!' The person who is near the foot of the elephant will say, 'an elephant is like a tree trunk!' The person near the tail of the elephant will say, 'an elephant is like a feather duster!'

And the person sitting on the elephant will say, 'an elephant is like a mountain!' While the person near its head and touching its ears will say, 'an elephant is like a bird with two large wings that flap about!'

None of these are correct. The only person who truly knows what the elephant looks like is the one who has seen it. Similarly, without divine guidance, everyone makes up their own understanding of God and the universe. Only a *nabi* who communicates with Allah can really tell people the truth about Allah.

2 It gives us the laws to govern our lives

In order for us to live peacefully on earth and prepare for eternal life in the hereafter, laws must be established and upheld so that the rights of each individual are preserved and there is no injustice in society. When these laws are made by people, there is always self-interest involved. Even if a group of people make decisions, their lack of knowledge of the future as well as their lack of objectively understanding the true nature of human beings makes it impossible for them to come up with laws that are truly fair and just. Only the Creator can truly tell His creatures what's best for them.

3 It keeps us away from superstitious beliefs

Whenever people live without divine guidance, they are driven by greed and fear and they don't give importance to knowledge. The rise in ignorance then encourages people to become superstitious about everything. When a human being does not fear Allah, he will fear everything else. A person who serves only Allah is truly free and no one can enslave them. But a person who rejects Allah will be a slave of everything else: wealth, career, relationships, those in power and authority, and so on.

The word *hadi* comes from the root word *hada*, which means 'to guide'. Allah says in the Qur'an:

Surat Yunus, 10:25



وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى دَارِ السَّلَامِ وَ
يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

Allah invites to the abode of peace, and He guides whomever He wishes to a straight path.

How does Allah guide us?

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that the laws given by Prophets are like boundaries of God's disobedience that we should not cross?

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ
حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ

These are Allah's bounds, and whoever transgresses the bounds of Allah certainly wrongs himself. *Surat at-Talaq (65:1)*

In this verse, Allah tells us that He has revealed the Qur'an for our guidance. However, the Qur'an by itself is not sufficient. In order to understand the Qur'an correctly, we need Rasulullah (s) and the A'imma (a) to explain it to us. As an example, the Qur'an tells us to perform *salah*, but it does not tell us the details of *salah*. To get the details we have to refer to the *Ahlul Bayt* (a) to guide us.

This is why Rasulullah (s) said,

'I leave among you two important things: the book of Allah [the Qur'an] and my progeny; if you hold firmly to them you will never go astray. And these two shall never separate from each other till they meet at the heavenly fountain [of *Kawthar*].'

In addition to revealing the Qur'an and sending the Messengers and A'imma to guide us, Allah has also given us an instinct (*fitrah*). This *fitrah* is built into our consciousness and helps us differentiate right from wrong. Allah says in the Qur'an,

Allah sent many *anbiya* to guide us. He also revealed several divine books to His Messengers for our guidance. Can you recall the names of some of the *anbiya* and divine books revealed by Allah? To which *anbiya* were these books revealed?

Allah says in the Qur'an:

Surat an-Nahl, 16:89



وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَى لِّلْمُسْلِمِينَ

We have sent down the book to you as a clarification of all things, and as a guidance and mercy and good news for the Muslims.

Surat ar-Rum, 30:30



فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا
فِطْرَتِ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا
لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ
ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ
وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

So set your heart on the religion as a people of pure faith, the instinct (*fitra*) of Allah according to which He originated mankind. There is no altering Allah's creation; that is the upright religion, but most people do not know.



In other words, no matter what we do, as human beings, we will always instinctively want to believe in God because that is how Allah made us and the belief in *Tawhid* is built into us as a natural instinct.

We will study all these different forms of divine guidance in the next few lessons.



Faith in Action

Allah calls out to the believers directly in 89 *ayat* of the Qur'an by saying:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
O you who believe!

Imam Hasan (a) would always say: 'Labbayk allahumma labbayk!' When he recited these *ayat*.

Find three *ayat* in the Qur'an that start with 'O you who believe' and practice or ponder over them for a week to see if you are doing what the *ayat* have instructed you to do.

Every *nabi* was sent to guide his people to the right path and to teach them about the laws of Allah. Without divine guidance, we see that people followed superstitions, baseless customs and corrupt practices, and this came to be accepted as normal behaviour.

There once was an Arab tribe that led a happy life in the village of Madyan. The people of Madyan had been blessed with many bounties.

Everything was available in their markets to buy and sell. However, they used to cheat in trading and business. When they bought something, they falsely decreased its weight so they could claim more for their money, and when they sold something they would give a falsely increased weight so they sold less for the same price.

Allah sent Nabi Shu'ayb to guide them. Nabi Shu'ayb told his people to believe in Allah, to stop worshipping idols, and to stop cheating in business.

Nabi Shu'ayb warned them that their cheating will disturb the peaceful nature of the village. He said: 'Beware of cheating. Be careful not to decrease the weight of the things you sell. Do not take good items for bad ones. If you do not stop these deeds, Allah will destroy your houses.'

The people of the town thought it was acceptable to cheat whilst trading, because everyone else was doing it. Divine guidance from Allah was necessary to remind the people that cheating was wrong.



HIGHER LEVEL

The most important message of every *nabi* and *rasul* was *Tawhid* – to have faith in One God only and to worship no one but Him. Every time people forgot this or started making idols in memory of their prophets and becoming superstitious, believing that other powers can benefit or harm them, Allah sent another *nabi* to remind people that no one can benefit or harm them without Allah's permission and there is no one worthy of being worshipped except Allah.

One of the most important messages of the Qur'an is Allah's promise to allow into *Jannah* those who have faith in Him, who do not associate partners with Him, who believe in His Prophets and Angels, and who keep away from all that is *haram* and do all that is *wajib*. Another important message from Allah is His warning to punish the evil ones.

Rasulullah (s) came to do both: give us good news of Allah's promise and to warn us of Allah's punishment. For this reason, the Qur'an calls him 'the giver of good news' (*Bashir* or *Mubashshir*) and 'the Warner' (*Nadhir*).

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا
وَنَذِيرًا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

We did not send you except as a bearer of good news and Warner to all mankind, but most people do not know. (*Surah Saba*, 34:28)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ
شَهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا

O Prophet! Indeed We have sent you as a witness, as a bearer of good news and as a warner. (*Surat al-Ahzab*, 33:45)

In the verses above, Allah refers to Rasulullah (s) as *Bashir* and *Nadhir*.

What do these two titles mean?

Bashir – _____

Nadhir – _____

List any two other titles of Rasulullah (s) that you are aware of, and state their meanings

1 _____

2 _____

There are several chapters of the Qur'an which have been named after Rasulullah (s). Can you name any three?

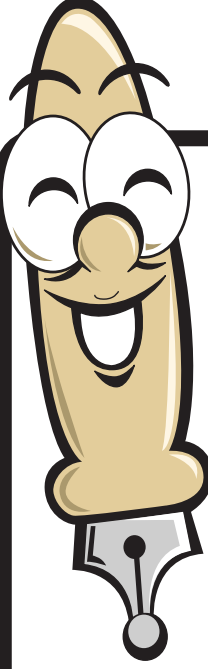
1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Why is it important for a *nabi* to be from among the community?





KEYPOINTS

- 1 Human beings need guidance from Allah at all times.
- 2 Allah has sent the *anbiya*, the *Ahlul Bayt* (a), and divine books to guide us. He has also given us a *fitrah* (natural instinct) to help us differentiate right from wrong.
- 3 It would be unfair for Allah to judge us on the Day of Judgement if He had not guided us to the right path.
- 4 It is not acceptable to do something just because everyone else is doing it. We must follow the guidance given to us by Allah through the Qur'an, the *anbiya* and the *A'imma* (a).



- 1 Define the words *adalah* and *hidayah*.

- 2 One of Allah's beautiful names is *al-Hadi*. What does it mean?

- 3 What is the *fitrah*? How does it help us?

- 4 What are the different ways in which Allah has guided us?

- 5 Explain why divine guidance is the best form of guidance for mankind.

