

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah,
most Kind, most Merciful

Surah Aal Imran, 3:59

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ
ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

Indeed the case of Isa with Allah is like
the case of Adam: He created him from
dust, then said to him 'Be' and he was.

Learning Objectives

- To recall the miraculous birth of Nabi Isa
- To describe three miracles attributed to Nabi Isa
- To understand what constitutes shirk

Key Words

شِرْك

Shirk
belief in more than one
god; polytheism

حَوَارِيُّونَ

Hawariyyun
disciples of Nabi Isa

A small group of twelve people became very close followers of Nabi Isa. They went with him wherever he went and helped him spread the teachings of the *Injil*. The Qur'an calls these followers the *hawariyyun*. The Arabic word *hawari* (disciple) means to wash or to whiten. It refers to the white clothing as well as to the pure hearts of Nabi Isa's disciples, who were inwardly pure and called upon others to also purify themselves. The disciples were respectable and honest men.

In the previous lesson, we looked at the miraculous birth of Nabi Isa, who is known as Jesus in English. Nabi Isa is honoured in this world and the next, and has a special position near to Allah. He is mentioned by name in a few chapters of the Qur'an and is also known as *Ruhullah* (the spirit of Allah).

Nabi Isa performed miracles by Allah's command; one of his greatest miracles mentioned only by the Qur'an, was his ability to speak eloquently whilst he was a baby.

When Nabi Isa grew up he began preaching the teachings of the *Injil*. He invited the people to worship Allah alone and not to love the world. Nabi Isa lived a very simple life. His clothes were simple and he ate basic food, in small quantities. He would travel from one place to another reminding and advising people to prepare themselves for the Hereafter, their permanent abode.

Nabi Isa also gave the people good tidings of the coming of Rasulullah (s), as the final *nabi* who would come after him and whose name would be Ahmad.

With the permission of Allah, Nabi Isa was able to bring the dead back to life, cure the sick, including the lepers and the blind, create birds out of clay and breathe life into them, and even walk on water! Nabi Isa could also tell people what they had hidden in their homes, and the foods they had eaten or were to eat the next day. The ability to perform miracles in order to prove their *nubuwwah* is among the qualities of a *nabi*.

Imam Ali ar-Ridha (a) quotes the following description of Nabi Isa's lifestyle from Nabi Isa himself:

'My food is what grows from the soil for animals, my drink is what can fill my hand from river water, my lantern is the moon, my bed is the sand, my pillow is a rock, my clothes are from [animal] hair, I have no son who dies, or a woman who is saddened, or a house that falls apart, nor money that vanishes. I am the richest man among the children of Adam.'

It is reported from Imam as-Sadiq (a) that Nabi Isa said,

"I treated the sick and cured them with Allah's permission, I healed the blind and the leper with Allah's permission, I blew in the dead and brought them back to life with Allah's permission, and I tried to treat the foolish people but could not fix them."

He was asked, "Who is foolish ya Ruhallah?"

He replied, "The self-conceited person who is satisfied with himself and with his opinion; the one who sees all merits for himself and nothing for others, the one who regards all rights to be his and nothing for others. This is the foolish that cannot be cured."

ACTIVITY...

List one miracle attributed to each of the *anbiya* mentioned below:

Nabi Sulayman _____

Nabi Musa _____

Nabi Ibrahim _____

Rasulullah (s) _____





Christians believe that Nabi Isa was crucified on a cross. The Holy Qur'an explains that it was actually someone else who resembled Nabi Isa.

During the time of Nabi Isa, the Bani Isra'il were ruled by the Romans. As the people began listening to Nabi Isa and obeying his teachings, the priests of Bani Isra'il became jealous and turned to the Roman rulers for help. They asked the ruler to arrest Nabi Isa and crucify him and so a group of Roman soldiers were sent to arrest him. Allah raised Nabi Isa to Himself at this point, saving him. Ironically, the man who had compromised Nabi Isa to the soldiers, resembled Nabi Isa at the moment of arrest. He was arrested and crucified instead of him. Allah says in the Qur'an:

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

And for their saying: 'We killed the messiah, Isa son of Maryam, the prophet of Allah.' But they did not kill him and they did not crucify him, but it was made to appear to them [that they had]. Indeed those who differ concerning him are surely in doubt about him: they do not have any knowledge of that beyond following conjecture, and certainly they did not kill him. Rather Allah raised him up toward Himself, and Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise. (Surat an-Nisa, 4:157-158)

After Nabi Isa was raised to the heavens, the belief spread that he was crucified and killed, and came back to life after three days. This rumour, together with the fact that Nabi Isa was born without a father, has led some people to believe he was the son of God. These ideas spread and became part of Christian religion. The majority of Christians today believe that Nabi Isa is the son of God. The Qur'an rejects this idea because Allah can have no partner or son. He can create a child without a father very easily just as He created Nabi Adam without a father or a mother.

During the time of Rasulallah (s), a group of Christians accompanied by their highest priest came from Najran to Medina to debate with Rasulallah (s) regarding Nabi Isa. They stated that the birth of Nabi Isa without a father was a sign of him being a part of Allah. The following ayah was revealed:

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

Indeed the case of Isa with Allah is like the case of Adam: He created him from dust, then said to him 'Be' and he was. (Surah Aal Imran, 3:59)

The miraculous birth of Nabi Isa is a reminder to us that Allah has ultimate power, and He only needs to will something for it to happen.

Shirk



Faith in Action

Pause and take a moment to think of how hidden *shirk* may have crept into your life. Identify your weak spots and write these down. Stick this note on your wall or bookshelf and assess yourself regularly. Cross out your weak points as you strengthen your soul. Actively work to ensure that each act you carry out would not displease Allah.

Shirk is the belief that there is more than one god, or to associate anything or anyone with Allah. *Shirk* is the greatest sin. Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) says: 'The greatest of the greater sins is to attribute partners to Allah.'

As Muslims we recognise that there is no god except Allah and He has no partners. We must also make sure we understand *shirk* and its different levels, to avoid falling into this great sin.

Shirk al-khafi (hidden *shirk*) is when a person believes and says there is no god but Allah, but his thoughts and actions do not properly reflect this belief. This level of *shirk* is very subtle and difficult to spot. We must try to regularly evaluate ourselves to check whether our actions, intentions, and beliefs are all truly for Allah alone.

Some examples of *shirk al-khafi*:

- 1 Showing off in worship and trying to impress others, rather than Allah.
- 2 Seeing others as the cause of our blessings, instead of Allah.
- 3 Loving something or someone more than Allah.
- 4 Giving other things importance over the commands and laws of Allah.

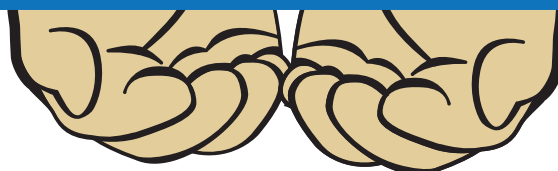
One way to protect yourself against *shirk al-khafi* is to always try and do every worship and act of charity purely *qurbatan ilallah*. The Prophet is instructed in the Qur'an to say the following:

Surat al-An'am, 6:162-163



قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

Say 'Indeed my *salah* and my worship, my life and my death are for the sake of Allah, the Lord of all the worlds. He has no partner, and this [creed] I have been commanded [to follow], and I am the first of those who submit.'





HIGHER LEVEL

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا أَنْصَارَ اللَّهِ كَمَا قَالَ
عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ لِلْحَوَارِيِّينَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى
اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ فَأَمَنْتَ
طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَكَفَرَتِ طَائِفَةٌ
فَأَيَّدْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَىٰ عَدُوِّهِمْ فَأَصْبَحُوا
ظَاهِرِينَ

O you who believe! Be Allah's helpers, just as Isa son of Maryam said to the disciples: 'Who will be my helpers for Allah's sake?' The disciples said: 'We are Allah's helpers.' So a group of the Bani Isra'il believed and a group disbelieved. Then We strengthened those who believed against their enemy, and they became the dominant ones. (*Surat as-Saff*, 61:14)

This *ayah* narrates the historical event when Nabi Isa spoke to his disciples about helping him, and they proudly answered that they were Allah's helpers. They rose up to confront the enemies of the truth. Some of the Bani Isra'il believed in Nabi Isa and joined the disciples, while some of them disbelieved. Allah in turn provided those believers with assistance and made them victorious.

Similarly, we should see ourselves as the disciples of Imam al-Mahdi (a), and we should take pride in the fact that we have the potential to also be the helpers of Allah.

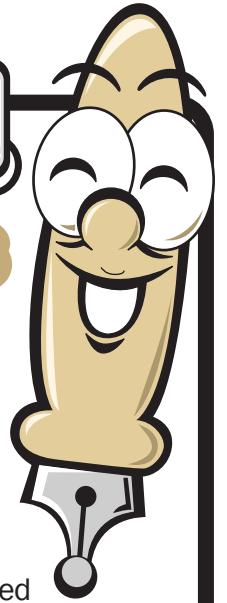
Take a moment to reflect on how you can help the cause of Allah by helping Imam al-Mahdi (a).

Note down two ways you can help Imam al-Mahdi (a) while he is in *ghaybah*, and two ways you would like to assist Imam al-Mahdi (a) once he reappears.



KEY POINTS

- 1 The miraculous birth of Nabi Isa does not make him the son of God.
- 2 The twelve disciples of Nabi Isa were pious, honest, and respectable believers who accompanied him in his travels and helped him to spread the teachings of the *Injil*.
- 3 Nabi Isa performed miracles, by Allah's permission; he spoke when he was a baby, raised the dead back to life, cured the severely ill, walked on water, breathed life into a clay bird, and could tell the people what was hidden in their houses and what they had eaten.
- 4 Shirk is believing in more than one God or associating partners with Allah.
- 5 Examples of hidden *shirk* include showing off, seeing others as the source of our blessings, and giving other things importance over the commands and laws of Allah.



Faith in Action

The *Hawariyyun* said to Nabi Isa, "Ya *Ruhallah*! Who should we sit with?" He said, "The one who looking at him reminds you of Allah, whose talk adds to your knowledge and whose action makes you eager towards *akhirah*."

Do you know anyone like that? Try to locate someone like that in the community.





- 6 Explain the concept of *shirk al-khafi* and state any three examples of this form of *shirk*.

A vertical sheet of lined paper with a blue cloud-shaped sticker at the top that says "NOTES". The paper has horizontal ruling lines and a curled bottom edge.