

MODULE 2

Class Title: Surah At Teen.

Aim of Lesson: To understand the message of the surah through mind-mapping

Category: Scripture

Lesson Format: Mind-mapping activity with discussion

Material Needed:

White board

Board markers (black, green, red, blue)

Hand outs of Surah At-Teen written in Arabic with translation and an extra blank page for all students

Pencils/colours/markers for all students (can be shared)

What will you do in class:

Step 1:

Talk about the mind mapping techniques taught in the last class and explain that we will apply that technique to understand and make notes for Surah At-Teen.

Step 2:

Start with the recitation of surah (it can be a recording/ teacher/student reciting)

Step 3:

Start the explanation of the surah and also make the mind map on the white board.

Transcription of class:

Greeting to students) *Assalam alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*
(*Taooz*) *Aoodhubillahi min AsShaytanir Rajeem*
(*Tasmiyah*) *Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem*
(*Du'a*) *Rabbish rahli sadri wa yassirli amri wahlul uqdatum millisani yafqahu qawli* (Surah At Ta-Ha 20: Verse 25-28)

(**Note to Teacher:** Mind mapping was taught in a separate class a week before – presentation/transcript of that class is in Module 2, “Life Skills” folder)

Do you all remember we talked about mind mapping last time? Today we will be applying this tool to Surah At Tin, which is the 95th Surah of the Qur’an.

I have given you these hand outs and if you look at the printouts that you have, there is a blank page here which you can use to make the mind map. Does anyone need pencils?

Now can one of you recite Surah At- Tin?

[Student recites Surah]

Teacher: Very good *MashaAllah*. Have you heard this surah before?

Students: Yes. *Alhamdulillah*.

Teacher: Today we are going to try and understand this Surah and *inshAllah* we are going to apply it in the form of a mind map. Ok so now let's see the first *ayat*. The first *ayat* is:

وَالزَّيْتُونِ وَالرَّيْحَانِ

The translation reads 'by the fig and the olive.'

When we say **by** the fig and the olive, it means that actually Allah (swt) is swearing. What does that mean? Why does Allah (swt) swear?

Student: He is taking oath.

Teacher: Why does He need to take an oath?

Student: He is telling us something very important and is swearing to emphasize his point.

Teacher: Yes, very good, *MashaAllah*. Now the word Tin means the fig. You know what a fig is? How many people have eaten a fig? Fresh or dry ones?

Student: Dry ones.

Teacher: Has anyone ever had the fresh fig? The dry fig is very different from the fresh one because you see the dry one is sliced and you see that rounded thing that I am just drawing right now and there is a hole in the centre. That's the dried fig and the fresh one is shaped like an onion. It is green from the outside and red from the inside.

So in the first *ayat* Allah (swt) is swearing by two things, figs and olives. I am sure all of you have eaten or at least seen olives. Both these things are food stuff and what does food do?

Student: It gives us energy or nourishment.

Teacher: Yes, *alhumdulillah*. Now please recite the second *ayat*

وَأُطُورِ سِينِينَ

He (swt) is swearing by a place called Mount of Toor in Sinai? Does anybody know where Sinai is? It is in Egypt now. It is the place that Allah (swt) is swearing by.

In the third *ayat*, Allah (swt) is swearing by another place and what place is that?

وَهَذَا الْبَلَدِ الْأَمِينِ

Student: By the city of security.

Teacher: Absolutely, *MashaAllah*. Now this city of security is Makkah. Does anybody know why is Makkah the city of security?

From the very beginning Makkah is called the city of peace and security and the reason being that Ibrahim (as) had made a dua to Allah (swt) when he was leaving his wife and child in the desert of Makkah (at that time Makkah was a desert. There was no body dwelling there) and he had prayed that Allah (swt) make this city a peaceful place, a secure place and bless this city with all kinds of fruits. Fruit does not literally mean fruits only but prosperity in general so Allah (swt) accepted his prayer and made the city of Makkah secure. We also learn through a hadith that Makkah is the only city which will be saved from Dajjal. He will not be able to enter Makkah.

Ok, now the Mount Toor. Does anybody know what happened on Mount Toor?

Student: Prophet Musa (as) spoke to Allah (swt) on this mountain and here he was given the book of Torah.

Teacher: And what about Makkah? What is so important about Makkah that Allah (swt) has mentioned it in the Qur'an?

Student: Ka'ba and the fact that Qur'an was revealed in Makkah too

Teacher: So in the first ayat, the two things, figs and olives are food which give nourishment to the body and the in the second ayat, the two Holy places of Mount Toor and Makkah are important because Allah (swt) revealed His two books in those places which provide food for soul. When the two combine what do we get? We get a man/ human being.

Human beings are a combination of body and soul. Are you all familiar with the Vitruvius man of Da Vinci? Can you tell me what it is? Can you draw it for me? No? Ok.

Da Vinci says that human being is so well proportioned, his body is so well proportioned that if you do this

[teacher draws on board- detailed drawing of mind map attached]

Ok this is Da vinci's Vitruvius man. Basically the idea is that the human body is very well proportioned, every limb is well proportioned and in this Surah Allah (swt) is saying something very similar. Please, recite ayat no 4

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ

'Indeed we have created man in the best stature, in the best mould.'

That is what Allah (swt) is talking about.

Now Da vinci was talking about physical beauty. What are the spiritual aspects that man has? That he can differentiate between right and wrong?? What else does man have?

Student: Knowledge, Freedom of choice, freedom of speech.

Teacher: Yes, very good, *MashaAllah*. Now in order to have control over these things we need to have guidance. Where does this guidance come from? It comes from the books of Allah (swt) and when we are able to create the right kind of balance between the two things, spiritual and physical nourishment, then human being is on *Ahsan e taqweem*, the best creature that Allah (swt) has created but unfortunately what happens? Let's read ayat no 5;

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ

'then we reduce him to the lowest of the low'

What happens is that a lot of the time people lose the balance and most of the time they get inclined towards the worldly things, ok and when that happens, such a person becomes lowest of the low, *asfala safileeen* except those who are mentioned in ayat no 6. Let's recite and review that particular ayat:

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ

'except those who believe and do righteous deeds, they shall have a reward without an end.'

So what is required? Faith and righteous deeds... If you have this and you keep a balance then only you can be on *ahsan e taqweem* and your result will be endless reward.

Now Allah (swt) is going to be the judge between the *ahsan e taqweem* and the *asfala safileeen*. He is the one who is going to decide that who is actually doing the right thing. He's asking us in the next ayat

فَمَا يُكَذِّبُكَ بَعْدُ بِالذِّينِ

'Then what causes you to deny the recompense?'

He (swt) is asking us that when I can create you in the best proportion, only I can give guidance, I have given you the physical beauty and for that I give you all the nourishment, I provide you the things that give you spiritual nourishment but then what is it that you are thinking? Where are your thoughts going?

Do you actually think that on the day of judgement, Allah (swt) is going to say that the people who were on *ahsan e taqweem* are equal to those who were on *asfala safileeen*? Do you actually believe that? Is it fair? These two people can never be equal and that is what we are going to find out on the day of judgement so what do we need to do about it?

Student: We need to create the right balance. The balance has to be created in our worldly life. This is the place where we need to do the righteous deeds and have faith that in the end we will have endless rewards.

Student: I don't understand the last ayat

Teacher: Allah (swt) is asking a question that;

فَمَا يُكَذِّبُكَ بَعْدُ بِالذِّينِ

'Then what causes you to deny the recompense?'

It means that what thought occurs to you that you think of denying my ayats? How do we deny things?

Student: By not following those commandments

Teacher: By not following them and by thinking that there is something wrong here. I don't want to do this. Isn't that the first step? Ok so the first step to denial is not accepting it in our minds, thinking that this is not something that I need not do. Denial!! And then the last ayat says,

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمِ الْحَاكِمِينَ

'Is not Allah (swt) the best of the judges?'

He (swt) is challenging us and asking that do you doubt that I am the best judge? This could be the only reason why we doubt Allah's commands because otherwise we would not only accept but depend on His judgement.

To think that despite being the best judge, He will keep *Ahsan e taqweem* and *Asfala Safileen* equal because of His traits of being Supremely Forgiving and immensely Kind is a delusion we treat ourselves with.

The *ahsan e taqweem* people work very hard, live purposeful lives in which they make a lot of sacrifices and cannot possibly be equal to those who live a frivolous life devoid of any purpose. It would be totally unfair and that's what Allah (swt) is saying that he is the Best Judge and is fair in His judgement.

There is a story that I want to share with you about the physical beauty. In the court of *Khalifah* Abu Zafar Manzoor, there was a high rank officer, Essa bin Musa who loved his wife very much. One day he was sitting with his wife in a moon lit night and suddenly cried out that I will divorce you thrice if you are not more beautiful than the moon. Now the woman started thinking that how can I be more beautiful than the moon so she went into her room and closed herself inside and she said that she was not coming out since the husband has divorced her. The man got worried and after spending a sleepless night went to the *Khalifah* in the morning and conveyed what he had done in foolishness. He desperately wished to undo what he had done as he loved his wife very much.

So the *Khalifah* spoke to all the alims or scholars and asked for a solution. Most of the people said that they were divorced and could no longer be joined in holy matrimony. They felt that the man had been ridiculous in wondering how a woman could be more beautiful than the moon. However, there was one scholar who declared that he had a solution. He recited an ayat from surah At-Tin:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ

‘Allah (swt) has indeed created all man, all human beings in the best stature.’

As the ayat says, human being is the most beautiful creation of Allah (swt) and this means that this woman is more beautiful than the moon. Then he asked the other scholars if they agreed or not. They all agreed that the man can go back to his wife since his wife is more beautiful than the moon.

Do you understand this? So do you understand how much beauty Allah (swt) has endowed us with? We all wish to be beautiful and Allah (swt) knows that so he has made us perfectly proportioned and beautiful. Let’s look at this word, *ahsan e taqweem*. The word *ahsan* is derived from the word *husn*. What is *husn*?

Student: Beauty

Teacher: In Arabic, the word *ahsan* means excellence or perfection so people who are on *ahsan e taqweem* are different from everyone else because they strive for excellence.

Once Rasul Allah (pbuh) was sitting with a group of sahabas and a man came to him. He seemed to be a traveller and was wearing white clothes. He came and sat down so close to the Holy Prophet (saw) that his knees were touching Rasul Allah’s (saw) knees. He said that he had come to ask some questions and then he asked a number of questions, one of which was that what is *ahsaan*? So Rasul Allah (saw) replied that *ahsaan* is to do something with such conviction as if you can see Allah (swt) and if you cannot see Him, know that He sees you. (Bukhari)

Just imagine that you are preparing something that you know everyone is going to come and see, for e.g, an elocution contest. Will you not practice with excellence so that you win or at least don’t make a fool of yourself in front of others so if we know that Allah (swt) is going to look at each and everything that we do, we need to do it with excellence.

The second part of the *hadith* is very difficult to do. I feel that it is difficult to imagine that you are doing some work and Allah (swt) is right in front of you and that you can see Him. But if you can do it, *alhumdulillah!* Nothing better than that! But if not, then at least imagine that Allah (swt) is looking at you. This is a thought we all have grown up with so it is not too difficult to comprehend or do. This thought will help you to achieve excellence in your work *InshaAllah*.

There is another *hadith* in which what happened was that one of the *sahaba* died so RasulAllah (saw) told the rest of the *sahaba* to dig a grave for him but dig it in such a way that the sides of the grave are straight. The sahabas were not like you and me. They did not ask too many why's and what's and they tried to take extreme care to follow RasulAllah's instruction precisely. So they got down to work and were very careful about keeping the lines of the grave straight. When Rasul Allah (saw) saw them working, he said that do not think the straight lines are going to help the dead person in anyway. It is just that whenever a Muslim does any job he should do it to the best of his ability, in an *ahsan* way. (Ahmad, Nasai)

You see even a small task like digging up a grave should be done with *ahsan* and that is the message of Surah At-Tin that you should put your best in everything you do.

(Du'a for end of a gathering) *Subhana Rabbika Rabbul Izzati 'amma yasifun wa salamun 'alal mursaleen, walhamdulillahi Rabbil 'alameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *Assalam alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*