

MODULE 1

Class Title: Man is Allah's *Khalifah*

Aim of the lesson: To understand the concept of us being Allah's viceroys on Earth.

Category: *Aqeedah*

Lesson Format: Power point presentation with discussion

Additional material: Presentation: The Wise Way, Nasheed: Alhamdulillah by Dawud Warnsby.

(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)

How is everyone?

Slide 2:

Today, inshaAllah, we will talk about some visible creations of Allah (swt) and we will also look at a challenge that Allah (swt) has thrown at us.

Slide 3:

Allah (swt) says in the *Qur'an*, "He Who created the seven heavens one above another: no want of proportion wilt thou see in the Creation of the Most Gracious. So turn thy vision again: seest thou any flaw? Again turn thy vision a second time: (thy) vision will come back to thee dull and discomfited, in a state worn out." (Surah Al-Mulk 67: Verse 3-4)

This is the challenge that Allah (swt) has put to us. Now let's look at Allah's creation with this challenge in mind.

Slide 4:

Look at this picture of the universe. How would you describe it? (Discuss with students)

Slide 5:

Here are some descriptions of the universe that I came up with:

- Huge.
- Looks beautiful.
- Science has told us that there are many laws governing the universe.
- Organized.
- Disciplined.

Alhamdulillah.

Slide 6:

Now let's take a look at the planets and describe them. (Discuss with students.)

Slide 7:

Some characteristics of planets are that:

- they're different sizes,
- they're different colors,
- they're disciplined; they all follow fixed paths.

Slide 8:

Allah (swt) says in the *Qur'an*, "It is not permitted to the Sun to catch up the Moon, nor can the Night outstrip the Day: each swims along in orbit." (Surah Ya-Sin 36: Verse 40)

This is the description that Allah (swt) has given about the rotation of day and night. So, what're some words that describe day and night? (Discuss with students.)

Slide 9:

When I think of day and night I think of the sun and moon. The words that come to my mind are:

- A sense of time.
- Rotate.
- We work during the day and rest at night.
- Organised and disciplined.

Slide 10:

What do you think is the purpose of the mountains? (Discuss with students)

I feel that mountains are pegs for the Earth and they stabilize the Earth.

Slide 11:

What is the purpose of the clouds? (Discuss with students)

Clouds protect us from harmful rays of sunlight and they also carry water droplets and cause rain.

Slide 12:

Lightning? (Discuss with students)

To me, lightning suggests the power of Allah (swt).

Slide 13:

This picture shows one of Allah's (swt) many miracles: dry earth comes alive when it receives rain and water and, in turn, gives vegetation.

Slide 14:

Allah (swt) has also created many different types of plants and vegetation.

Slide 15 and 16:

The Earth has been blessed with a huge variety of plants:

- There are flowering plants and then there are plants which don't flower.
- Some plants provide us with fruits while others give us many different vegetables.
- Many stunning plants help to beautify our surroundings.
- Some plants can only flourish outdoors while others survive even if kept indoors.
- Different plants grow in different environments for example, tropical, seasonal and aquatic.
- Plants come in an endless variety of colors, shapes and sizes.

Slide 17 and 18:

Now let's look at another huge category of Allah's creation: the animal kingdom.

As you can see, there is diversity and variety even in the animal kingdom.

Slide 19:

- There are land animals and sea animals and birds, which live in trees and travel on wings.
- There are insects, reptiles and amphibians.
- Animals also come in a myriad of colors, shapes and sizes.
- They reproduce and can survive in even harsh conditions.
- They add color and beauty to our surroundings.
- They provide us with food: meat, milk etc.
- Some animals are also used for transportation.

All the creations that we saw have been created for a certain purpose and fulfill the role that they have been created for.

Slide 20:

The *Qur'an* tells us, "And unto Allah (Alone) falls in prostration whoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and so do their shadows in the mornings and in the afternoons." (Surah Ar-Ra'd 13: Verse 15)

All the creatures of Allah (swt) have their own functions and purpose and they all fulfill them without fail. The sun is ordered by Allah (swt) to rise in the east and set in the west and it does so without asking any questions. Similarly, the planets, stars, lightning, plants, bees, animals, even the tiniest micro-organisms have been told what to eat, how to get their food and what purpose they have to serve and they do so unquestioningly.

Slide 21:

But, what about man? You and me?

Let's look at ourselves. Are we the same as the rest of these creations of Allah (swt)? If I ask you to define some characteristics of man, as we did for the others, what would you say?

One thing that immediately comes to mind is that, while all other creations of Allah (swt) are disciplined and follow the purpose set for them by Allah (swt), man always seems to want to break away from discipline and order.

Let's do a comparison between man and animals.

Slide 22-26:

Learning abilities: Animals also have learning abilities. You can teach them many tricks. But can they become as smart as you?

Power of speech: Animals also have their languages but this faculty is highly advanced and developed in humans. Some animals can also learn to imitate sounds, like the parrot, but do you think it can become an effective talker like yourself?

Sight: This is present in animals as well as human beings. In fact, some animals have sharper vision than us because their survival depends on it, for example, eagles and hawks.

Sense of smell: This too is highly advanced in animals such as dogs. Animals which have a highly developed sense of smell are often used for hunting.

Hearing: Some animals have stronger hearing than we do and can hear frequencies that human beings are incapable of registering.

Slide 27:

So, it's safe to say that we have the same five senses as most animals do. Some senses are better developed in animals and some senses are stronger in us. So what does that mean? Are we the same as animals? Is man nothing but a social animal?

Slide 28:

If not, then what is the difference between men and animals?

Slide 29:

The difference is the 'freedom of choice' that we possess.

Slide 30:

Everything in this world, from the sun and the moon, the mountains, the rivers and the waterfalls, to the plants and animals has been created to serve man. Man has the freedom to choose to use these things in whatever way he wants to.

Slide 31:

In the *Qur'an*, Allah (swt) says, "And surely, We gave you authority on the earth and appointed for you therein provisions (for your life). Little thanks do you give." (Surah Al-A'raf 7: Verse 10)

In this verse, Allah (swt) is talking about the blessings He has bestowed on us. He has given us full ownership and control of the Earth and has filled it with blessings and comforts for us. The world has been made a giant warehouse of human needs and comforts. Now, it is left to us humans to learn to use these resources to fulfill our needs and desires. Scientific and technological innovations are essentially no more than a way to use the resources, given to us by the Master of the universe, as thoroughly and beneficially as we can.

Those who don't have the sense and manners to know how to use the things provided for them in this warehouse remain deprived. An intelligent person will be able to benefit amply from the things provided for him. This intelligent person is the vicegerent or the *khalifa* of Allah (swt).

Slide 32:

The *Qur'an* says, "Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: "I will create a vicegerent (*khalifa*) on earth...." (Surah Al-Baqarah 2: Verse 30)

Slide 33:

So let's try and understand what it means to be Allah's *khalifa*.

Slide 34:

It means that in addition to our 5 senses, Allah (swt) has given us the faculties of thinking and understanding and has given us the power to distinguish right from wrong.

Slide 35:

We have also been given free will and the power to use the resources of the world in whatever way we want to.

Slide 36:

But the only right course for us is to acknowledge that *Allah (swt) is the only Lord* and our sole objective should be *to earn His approval*.

Slide 37:

In the *Qur'an*, Allah (swt) says, "And verily! This, your religion (of Islamic Monotheism) is one religion, and I am your Lord, so keep your duty to Me." (Surah Al-Mu'minun 23: Verse 52)

Man is at the center of the universe and the master and custodian of nature. When I say 'man' I mean us; you and I. **We** are responsible for our environment: the natural resources as well as human society. **We** must learn to handle these effectively and not create a disbalance in our world. Being the *khalifas* of Allah (swt), we must use our lives and our resources to establish the law of Allah (swt) on this Earth.

Slide 38 and 39:

Allah (swt) says, "Verily, Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their properties for (the price) that theirs shall be Paradise. They fight in Allah's cause, so they kill and are killed. It is a promise in truth which is binding on Him in the Torah and the Injeel and the *Qur'an*. And

who is truer in his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success.” (Surah At-Taubah 9: Verse 111)

So a Muslim is one who agrees to use his life and property for Allah (swt) because he knows that only Allah (swt) can give him the reward of a life in Paradise in the Hereafter where he will live forever. No one but Allah (swt) can grant him a home in *jannah*.

That is the nature of his contract with Allah (swt).

Slide 40:

How can we be Allah’s (swt) *khalifas*?

Slide 41:

We must use our resources, time and energy to please Allah (swt).

Slide 42:

We should try to be as disciplined and organized as the rest of Allah’s (swt) creation. This is a challenge that we must take so that we have time for ourselves, our families, our friends, work and leisure and are able to handle our responsibilities better.

Slide 43:

Most importantly, like every creature knows the purpose of its creation, we should also know that the purpose of our creation is to obey Allah (swt).

Slide 44:

We must be conscious of our environment and try to keep it clean, physically as well as morally. So, not only must we pick up and properly discard any garbage that we may find lying around, we should also stop others, if we see them doing something that is morally wrong or at least tell them that they are wrong or, at the very least, know in our hearts that their behavior is wrong and never indulge in such behavior ourselves.

Slide 45:

We should be trustworthy and honest. These are the qualities that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) had even before he became a Prophet.

Slide 46:

Being *khalifas* of Allah (swt), our highest aims should be:

- pleasing Allah (swt),
- obtaining a place in Jannat-al-Firdous and
- being close to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).

Slide 47:

Now, as a conclusion, I would like you to observe this small presentation. This will help you understand that whatever we do is between us and Allah (swt) alone.

(Note to teacher: click on small power point icon on slide 47 and show the short presentation: The Wise Way.)

Slide 48:

We'll now end our class with this nasheed.

(Nasheed: Alhamdulillah by Dawud Warnsby.)

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

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