Islamic Studies: A Progressive Guide

Islamic Studies is the academic study of Islam. It covers various aspects of the religion, including its history, beliefs, practices, ethics, and laws, drawing from primary sources like the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Akhlaq (Qur'an, Hadith & Sunnah) & Aqeedah

This term continues the study of Islamic ethics and introduces the broader principles of Islamic creed or belief.

1. Akhlaq (Islamic Ethics and Morals)

- **Review:** Briefly recap the importance of Akhlaq and its sources.
- **Further Virtues and Their Application:**
    - **Generosity and Charity (Jood, Sadaqah, Zakat):**
        - **Qur'an:** "And spend [in the way of Allah] from what We have provided you before death approaches one of you..." (Qur'an 63:10)
        - **Hadith:** "Charity extinguishes sin as water extinguishes fire." (Tirmidhi)
        - **Sunnah:** The Prophet (PBUH) was the most generous of people, especially during Ramadan.
    - **Cleanliness and Purity (Taharah):**
        - **Qur'an:** "Indeed, Allah loves those who repent and loves those who purify themselves." (Qur'an 2:222)
        - **Hadith:** "Cleanliness is half of faith." (Muslim)
        - **Application:** Physical cleanliness (ablution for prayer), spiritual purity (avoiding sins).
    - **Respect for Life (Human and Animal):**
        - **Qur'an:** "And whoever saves a life - it is as though he had saved the lives of all mankind." (Qur'an 5:32)
        - **Hadith:** Stories of the Prophet's compassion for animals.
        - **Prohibition:** Murder, unnecessary harm to animals.
    - **Good Neighbourliness:**
        - **Hadith:** "Gabriel kept advising me about the neighbour to the extent that I thought he would make him an heir." (Bukhari, Muslim)
        - **Application:** Being helpful, kind, and not causing harm to neighbours, irrespective of their religion.
    - **Self-Control and Anger Management:**
        - **Hadith:** "The strong man is not the good wrestler; the strong man is only he who controls himself when he is angry." (Bukhari, Muslim)
        - **Application:** Restraining anger, seeking refuge in Allah, performing ablution.

    - **Modesty and Humility:**
        - **Qur'an:** "And do not walk upon the earth exultantly. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluded and boastful." (Qur'an 17:37)
        - **Hadith:** "Whoever humbles himself for Allah, Allah will raise him." (Muslim)
- **Consequences of Bad Akhlaq:** Discussing the negative impacts of traits like lying, cheating, backbiting, arrogance, anger, and injustice on individuals and society, both in this life and the hereafter.

2. Aqeedah (Islamic Creed/Beliefs)

- **Definition:** The fundamental tenets of faith that a Muslim believes in. These are the core beliefs that form the foundation of Islam.
- **The Six Articles of Faith (Arkan al-Iman):** These are the pillars of belief, essential for a Muslim's faith.
    1. **Belief in Allah (God):**
        - **Core:** Belief in His absolute oneness (Tawheed), His unique attributes and names, and that He is the only Creator, Sustainer, and object of worship.
        - **Qur'anic Example:** "Say, 'He is Allah, [the] One, Allah, the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor is born, Nor is there to Him any equivalent.'" (Qur'an 112:1-4)
    2. **Belief in His Angels:**
        - **Core:** Belief in the existence of angels as unseen beings created by Allah from light, who obey His commands perfectly. They have specific duties (e.g., Gabriel delivers revelations, Michael brings rain, Israfil blows the trumpet, Recording Angels record deeds).
        - **Qur'anic Example:** "...but [true] righteousness is in one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets..." (Qur'an 2:177)
    3. **Belief in His Books (Revealed Scriptures):**
        - **Core:** Belief that Allah has revealed holy books to various prophets throughout history as guidance for humanity.
        - **Known Books:** Scrolls of Abraham, Torah (to Moses), Psalms (to David), Gospel (Injil to Jesus), and the Qur'an (to Muhammad PBUH).
        - **Significance:** The Qur'an is considered the final and preserved revelation, confirming and superseding previous scriptures.
    4. **Belief in His Messengers (Prophets):**
        - **Core:** Belief that Allah sent prophets and messengers to every nation to convey His message of Tawheed and guide humanity.
        - **Examples:** Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and the final Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon them all).
        - **Significance:** All prophets preached the same fundamental message of Tawheed. Muhammad (PBUH) is the Seal of the Prophets.
    5. **Belief in the Day of Judgment (The Last Day):**
        - **Core:** Belief in the ultimate end of the world, the resurrection of all humanity, and accountability for their deeds.
        - **Events:** Resurrection, gathering, reckoning, weighing of deeds, crossing the Sirat (bridge), and ultimate entry into Paradise or Hellfire.
        - **Importance:** Motivates Muslims to live righteously, fearing Allah's punishment and hoping for His reward.

6. **Belief in Divine Decree (Qadar):**
    - **Core:** Belief that Allah has complete knowledge of everything that will happen, has already happened, and is happening. He has willed all things, and they occur according to His perfect knowledge and plan. This does not negate human free will and accountability.
    - **Aspects:** Allah's knowledge, His writing (in Al-Lawh al-Mahfooz), His will, and His creation of all things.
    - **Importance:** Provides inner peace and reliance on Allah, understanding that everything happens by His wisdom.

- **Importance of Aqeedah:**
    - It forms the bedrock of a Muslim's faith and provides direction in life.
    - It offers a clear understanding of the universe, humanity's purpose, and the afterlife.
    - It inspires submission to Allah and shapes moral conduct.