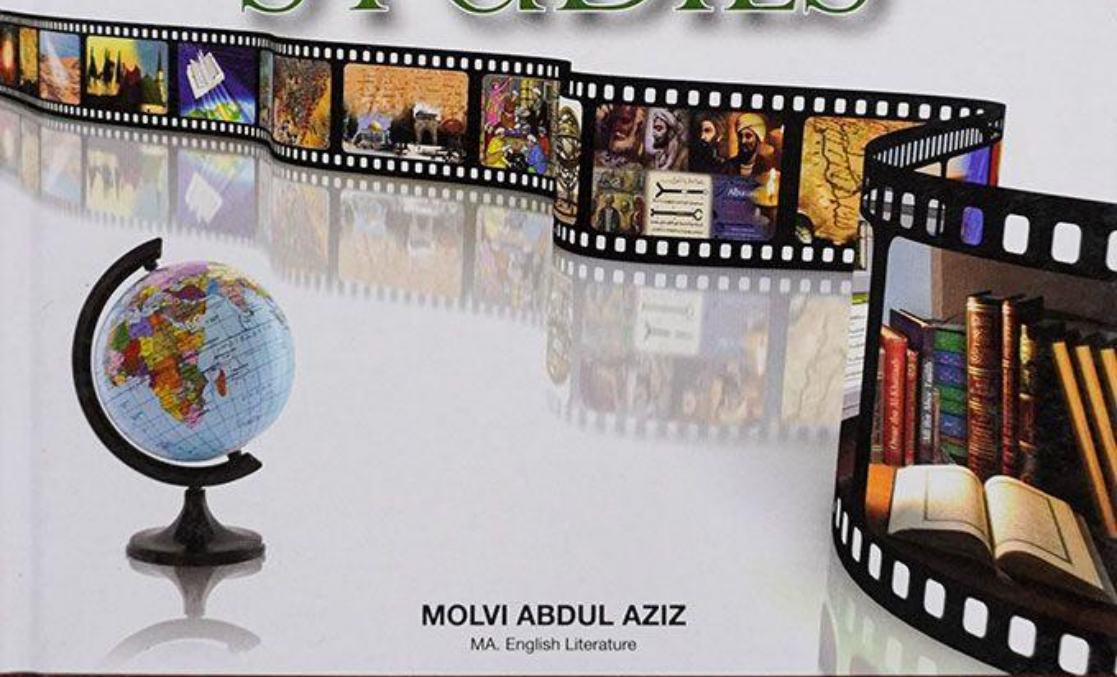


GRADE 9

# ISLAMIC STUDIES



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MA, English Literature

**DARUSSALAM**  
GLOBAL LEADER IN ISLAMIC BOOKS

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## Taqwaa:

# Allah-Consciousness or Heedfulness of Allah

### The Term Taqwaa

The conventional translation of the term *taqwaa* as fear of Allah does not render the positive content of this expression. The term *taqwaa* denotes, among other things, the awareness of Allah's all encompassing knowledge and the desire to mould one's existence, in the light of this awareness. Hence, the interpretation adopted by some translators 'guarding oneself against evil', 'carefulness of one's duty', or 'guarding oneself extraordinarily from what would harm him in the life of the world to come', etc. does not give more than one particular aspect of the concept of *taqwaa*, or heedfulness of Allah.

### The Concept of Taqwaa

*Taqwaa* is one of the most important themes in the Glorious Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. It is in fact the bedrock of religion. In numerous *ahaadeeth*, Allah's Messenger ﷺ advised believers to practise *taqwaa*. In reality, this one characteristic of *taqwaa* combines all of the good of this worldly life and the afterlife.

### Lane's Definition of the Term Taqwaa

In his monumental work titled *Arabic-English Lexicon*, E. W. Lane defines the term *taqwaa* in the following manner, 'He preserved or guarded himself exceedingly, or extraordinarily, from sin'. It may often be rendered 'he was pious or careful of his religious duties'. (Lane, vol. 2, p. 3059, 2003 Reprint)

The word *taqwaa* is often followed by the Name of Allah, Most High: have *Taqwaa* of Allah. This means that one should protect oneself from Allah's displeasure and punishment. This can only be done by obeying Him. This is the minimum aspect of *taqwaa*. In order to have complete *taqwaa* or protection from Allah's anger, one must perform all the obligatory deeds that he is capable of, and keep away from all of the prohibited acts and matters that one has doubt about. *Taqwaa*, therefore, is to act in obedience to Allah; it is to avoid acts of disobedience of Allah.

In order to attain *taqwaa*, one should protect and carefully keep oneself away from committing *shirk* – associating partners with Allah in worship. One should refrain from the great as well as small sins. One must also avoid disliked works and matters that one doubts.





### Satan is your Enemy, so Take him as your Enemy

The activities of Satan are all-pervasive. Man must, therefore, constantly be alert and on his guard. Whenever the human self relaxes its watchfulness, it is liable to be preyed upon by Satan's beguiling although every human is, to some extent and in principle, as it were, exposed to Satan's tempting or beguiling. People who have *taqwaa* do not really lapse into evil, but become quickly aware of Satan's machinations. Thus, the Glorious Qur'an advises, 'Should a prompting from Satan invade you, seek refuge in Allah; Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. Those who are on their guard, when a seductive glamour from Satan touches them, they quickly remember [Allah] and thus begin to see things clearly [once again].' (7: 200-201)

This means that Satan's activity essentially consists in confusing a

person and temporarily clouding his inner thoughts. The Qur'an stresses that, although no human is in principle totally immune from the touch of Satan or devil, he has no sway over those who are on guard against an invasion of their moral integrity. Thus, Allah, Most High makes it very clear to Satan: 'Indeed, upon my servants, you will be able to exercise no influence, but only those errant ones who follow you.' (15: 42) He also says, 'He has no authority over those who believe and put their faith in their Lord.' (16: 99)

This shows that Satan's whisperings alone are not strong. It is only man's weakness and lack of moral courage and alertness that makes Satan seem so strong. Satan, in reality, is more cunning and artful than being strong. He is more deceitful and contriving. He is more treacherous and waylaying than giving battle. It, therefore, follows that Satan is not powerful. Man is weak. Satan's master trick is to cause something to look attractive and tempting with the dross of the world as if it were tinsel. This is why he will say, on the Day of Judgement, to those who will accuse him of leading them astray, 'Allah made you a true promise, whereas I made you a false promise. I had no power over you, but only I invited you to error and you accepted my invitation. Do not blame me, but only yourself.' (14: 22) It is, therefore, Satan's power of each person will differ.

Thus the real problem lies within man himself, because he is a blend of good and evil. He is a blend of ignorance and knowledge. He is a blend of power and impotence. The key to man's defence, therefore, is *taqwaa*. *Taqwaa* literally means defence, and it is a kind of inner light. It is a spiritual spark which man must kindle within himself to distinguish between right and wrong; between truth and falsehood; between seeming real and real; between dross and tinsel, between immediate and lasting. Once a human kindles the spark of *taqwaa* within himself, he should be able to see Satan's footsteps for what they are, and not be deceived by them.

It is reported that Umar ibn al-Khattaab ؓ once asked the learned companion Ubayy ibn Ka'b about the true meaning of *taqwaa*. Ubayy asked Umar, 'Have you ever taken a path between thorny bushes?' 'Yes, I have,' Umar replied. Ubayy asked again, 'How did you manage to get through it?' Umar replied, 'I gathered up my clothes and tried my best to avoid the thorns.' Ubayy said, 'This is precisely what *taqwaa* is.'



- ✎ Give the meaning of *taqwaa* in the words of E. W. Lane.
- ✎ What does it mean 'to have *taqwaa* of Allah'?
- ✎ What should we do in order to achieve *taqwaa*?
- ✎ What do people who have *taqwaa* do when tempted by Satan?
- ✎ What is the true nature of Satan?
- ✎ What did Ubayy ibn Ka'b compare *taqwaa* to?

#### **Taqwaa in Action**

Abu Hurayrah reported that Allah's Messenger ﷺ once came upon a stack of food, and he inserted his hand in it. When his fingers reached something moist, he turned to the food-merchant and asked, 'What is this, O Food-merchant?' The Food-merchant replied, 'It has been affected by the rain, Messenger of Allah.' Thereupon, Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Then why did you not put it on top of the stack so that people can see it? He who defrauds us is not of us.' (Muslim)

#### **A Word of Caution Regarding Taqwaa**

*Taqwaa* signifies in Arabic a state of mind and heedfulness. A pious person thinks carefully before taking any action. He sees first whether his act is permitted by the *sharee'ah* or not. This reference to the *sharee'ah* at every step is a pointer to one's *taqwaa*. Thus, *taqwaa* is an outlook; it is an attitude and temperament.



## Exercise

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### A. Fill in the blanks.

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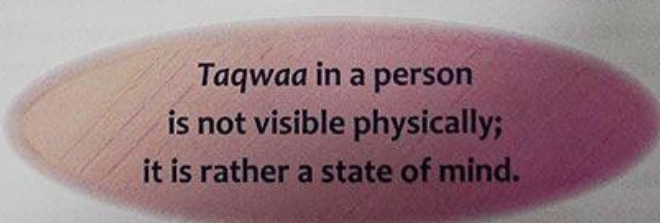
1. Taqwaa is the \_\_\_\_\_ of religion.
2. The key to man's defence against evil is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. No human is immune from the touch of \_\_\_\_\_.

---

### B. State whether these statements are true (T) or false (F).

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1. Satan sways even people who are continually guarding their moral integrity. \_\_\_\_\_
2. The activities of Satan are not all-pervasive. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Man's weakness makes Satan seem so strong. \_\_\_\_\_



**Taqwaa in a person  
is not visible physically;  
it is rather a state of mind.**

## The Believers

### Soorat al-Mu'minoon 23: 1-11

#### The Seven Attributes of a Believer

Most of the classical commentators agree that this *soorah* was revealed towards the end of the Makkan period. It consists of one hundred and eighteen verses. It is the twenty-third *soorah* of the Qur'an. From the first to the last verse, the discourse centres, as the title of the *soorah* suggests, on the issues of:

- (1) True faith,
- (2) The overwhelming evidence, which points to the existence of an Almighty Creator,
- (3) Man's ultimate responsibility before His Creator.

The objective of this lesson is to study the first eleven verses of this *soorah*.

#### Translation of the Meaning

In the name of Allah, the Most Kind,  
the Most Merciful

1. Successful indeed are the believers.
2. Those who humble themselves in their prayers.
3. And those who turn away from all that is senseless.
4. And those who are active in *az-Zakaat*.
5. And those who guard their chastity.
6. Except from their wives or what their right hand possesses – for then, they are free from blame.
7. But whoever seeks beyond that, they indeed are the transgressors.
8. Those who are faithfully true to their trusts and promises.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾  
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ  
فَاعِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ﴿٥﴾ إِلَّا عَلَى  
أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴿٦﴾  
فَمَنْ أَبْغَىٰ ذَاكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ ﴿٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ  
لَأَمْنَتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَوَاتِهِمْ  
يَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ  
الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١١﴾

9. And those who strictly guard their prayers.
10. Those are indeed the heirs,
11. Who shall inherit Al-Firdaws (Paradise). They shall dwell therein forever.



**Explanation:**

The success is for the believers, whose qualities are described here (verses 2-9). Faith or true belief (*eemaan*) requires its owner to respond to the commandments and prohibitions of Allah with excellent obedience and full compliance.

The name believer (*Mu'min*) is among the most noble of all names and descriptions. Since Allah refers to us in the world with the most noble of all names and descriptions, we may hope that, from His gracious favour, He will treat us in the hereafter with the best kind of treatment. The Arabic word *falaah* means success and prosperity. To say that someone has acquired *falaah* amounts to saying that he has achieved his objective. He has achieved prosperity and well-being.

The opening verses of this *soorah* (2-9) set forth the qualities of the true believers. These qualities serve as proof that it is the act of believing that leads the believers to success.

**The First Attribute: 'Those Who Humble Themselves in prayers.'** (Verse 2)

Those who are *khaashi'oon* during their *salaah*: The true meaning of *khushoo'* is to lower oneself before someone. It means to be submissive and show humility. The state called *Khushoo'* is related both to the heart and the outward conditions of one's body. *Khushoo'* in *salaah* is realised when the

person's heart is attuned to the prayer. The feeling in the heart is then reflected on the body. The person remains still and calm. His gaze is lowered. Even his voice displays the feeling of his heart. They feel the reverence of the prayer, as they stand to address Allah. Their hearts are thus filled with awe. It is, in turn, reflected in their features and movements. Their spirits feel Allah's Majesty as they realize that they stand in His presence. Thus, all their preoccupations and distractions vanish. In His sublime presence, they are heedless of all their surroundings.

Allah's forgiveness and pleasure are closely related to the prayers. Allah's Messenger ﷺ once said, 'If a person performs two units of prayer without the distraction of any worldly thought, all his previous sins will be forgiven.' (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Allah, Great and Glorious is He, also said, 'Do not approach the prayer when you are intoxicated until you know what you are saying.' (*an-Nisaa* 4: 43) The root of the matter resides in the wording 'until you know what you are saying'. Many are those who pray without really having drunk wine; yet do not know what they are saying in their prayers!

How can one better focus one's mind on prayer? Concentration relates to the whole of life. A man, who is normally distracted by worldly matters, cannot suddenly switch off all the noises within him and achieve full concentration.

# ISLAMIC STUDIES

## Grade 9

### ABOUT THE BOOK

The present series covers all areas of Islamic studies: *tafseer*, *hadeeth*, *tawheed*, *fiqh*, *seerah*, and general etiquette relating to different areas and situations. Every effort has been made to ensure that the material presented in the series is authentic, and most of the terms are presented in their original Arabic script, along with the transliteration and the translation of their meanings. This also applies to supplications which have to be memorised in their Arabic version. The aim here is to help the reader read the original text and understand its meaning. Each lesson is followed by exercises covering questions about the lesson.

One striking feature in the series is the colourful artwork used in it that certainly appeals to children. This is certainly bound to attract the young readers' attention, stimulate them, amuse them as well as educate them.

The series aims to acquaint the student with the teachings of Islam in every aspect: beliefs, practices and moral conduct. The series, with its unique features, certainly fills a gap in this area which has long been partially neglected.



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