



YAQEEN™
curriculum

The Proofs of Prophethood



A large, stylized graphic at the bottom of the page features a blue and orange wavy banner. In the center of the blue section is a circular emblem containing the Arabic calligraphy "عَلَيْهِ الْكَفَافُ وَالْمُجْلَبُ" (Alayhi Al-Kafaf Wa Al-Mujlab). The banner is set against a dark blue background that transitions into an orange gradient at the bottom.

عَلَيْهِ الْكَفَافُ وَالْمُجْلَبُ

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Icon Key

Stage One:



Essential questions:

The most important questions that the students should be able to answer by the end of the lesson.



Key vocabulary:

These are the primary technical terms in the unit without which the student will not understand the lesson.

Stage Two:



Teacher takeaway:

This is the primary takeaway we want students to leave the lesson with. It usually outlines the learning process that describes how the different parts and sections of the lesson plan help students arrive at the learning objectives.



Teacher's note:

This is an undefined body of text that ranges between notes on instructions or a heads up on potential problems you may encounter while teaching.



Ayat:

Qur'anic verse



Hadith:

Hadith narration

Stage Three:

Formative Assessments:

Low-stake assessments used to monitor student learning during instruction in order to provide ongoing feedback and adjust teaching to improve student understanding.

Summative Assessments:

Assessments that evaluate student learning and skill acquisition at the end of a lesson or unit to determine student understanding and application of the lesson objectives.



Unit overview and objectives

Unit overview

Learning objectives

Content standards

Unit overview

For every Muslim, the testimony of faith begins with the affirmation of the Perfect, Ever-Living Creator through the utterance of “*la ilaha illa Allah*”—“there is no God but God.” Yet, this statement is just half of our declaration. The second half—“*Muhammad rasūl Allah*”—declares that “Muhammad is the Messenger of God.” Hence, in the very same testimony we utter to affirm the reality and oneness of Allah, we simultaneously affirm the prophethood of Muhammad as the means by which we come to know God and are divinely guided.

The following unit explores two significant themes in regard to prophethood. The first concerns the necessity of prophethood in general. The second deals with the claim to prophethood made by Muhammad ﷺ. These two themes are explored thoroughly in the genre of scholarly literature known as “the Proofs of Prophethood” (*Dalā'il al-nubuwwa, 'Alam al-nubuwwa*). There are over ninety scholarly works on this topic, the contents of which are too extensive to cover in a single unit. In this unit, we select a few major concepts from the many pathways of prophethood.

To begin the discussion, the first lesson plan explores the human need for prophethood. Our knowledge and abilities as humans are invariably limited. Our reason and experience alone cannot always tell us what we should believe and how we should act; consequently, we are in need of both spiritual and worldly guidance to help us answer life’s biggest questions and hence fulfill our human needs. And who would know better how to answer these questions and satisfy our human needs? Human beings, who can dabble in trial and error to arrive at some judgments, or the Creator who created these needs and instincts in the first place? By contemplating our own nature and needs, our need for guidance to make sense of why we are here, what our purpose is in this life, and what happens to us after we depart from this life can only be satisfied by having a relationship with our Creator.

After laying down some foundational pieces in the first lesson plan on why messengers are necessary, the remainder of the unit focuses on Muhammad’s ﷺ prophethood and some of the ways we can know and appreciate the truthfulness of his claim. While this subject spreads over volumes of texts, only two strands are highlighted. To help students build a basic structure around the veracity of Muhammad’s claim to prophethood, we chose to focus on the **physical miracles** he performed and his **impeccable character**.

Throughout his life, before and during prophethood, Muhammad ﷺ experienced and performed miracles that left all those who witnessed them aware of their inability of producing the like. From the water that flowed from his fingertips to the pebbles who greeted him with a *salam*, we learn of these miracles today from a generation who witnessed and reported them to succeeding generations.

While the Prophet’s ﷺ miracles help satisfy the rationally inquisitive, his ﷺ character speaks greater volumes and stirs the hearts of those looking to verify his prophethood. When we recognize his traits of bravery, selflessness, and compassion—among so many others—we cannot help but be moved to believe in his message and be inspired to follow in his path. Our final lesson plan seeks to capture these sentiments and then move the spotlight from the Prophet ﷺ to ourselves. We can recognize in awe the uniqueness of Muhammad ﷺ given his miracles and character, but the question now turns to our commitment to him and carrying forward the prophetic responsibility.

The Proofs of Prophethood

Teacher's note

The cognitive or “thinking” domain refers to ways in which we acquire, process, and use knowledge. The affective or “valuing” domain refers to our attitudes, values, and emotions.

Learning objectives

Toward the completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- ① Recognize the pitfalls of human actions in the absence of revelation. *(cognitive)*
- ② Explain and find compelling the human need for guidance through revelation/prophethood. *(cognitive and affective)*
- ③ Recognize the importance of physical miracles as a mind-based proof of prophethood. *(cognitive)*
- ④ Identify the primary purpose and audience of a prophet’s physical miracles. *(cognitive)*
- ⑤ Recount some physical miracles of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and appreciate the support they lend to his claim of prophethood. *(cognitive and affective)*
- ⑥ Recognize the character traits of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as a proof of his prophethood. *(cognitive and affective)*
- ⑦ Appreciate the Prophet Muhammad’s ﷺ beautiful character as a cause for emulation and love. *(affective)*

Content standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.2

Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; summarize complex concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.11-12.9

Synthesize information from a range of sources (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1.E

Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.6

Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.A

Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

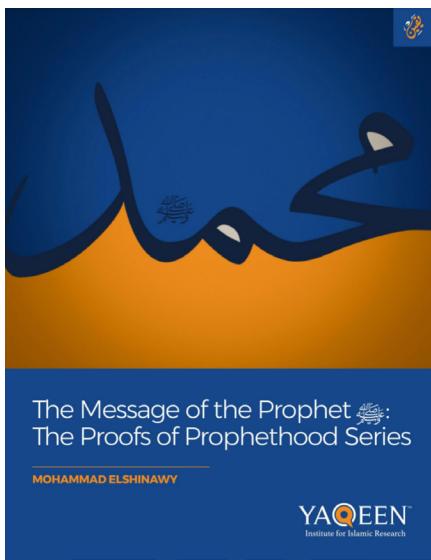


Read before you teach

Yaqeen publication(s)

Multimedia resources

General FAQs



The following unit is based on the Yaqeen publication series, [“The Proofs of Prophethood.”](#)

For additional resources, check out our related infographics and animated video series.

Proofs of Prophethood
Part 1:
Laying the groundwork for the coming of **Muhammad ﷺ**

Muslims accept Muhammad as the last in a long series of messengers sent by God to communicate the message of monotheism and good works to humanity. But why Muhammad, and why was he sent at the time he was? Let's examine some reasons why the time and place were right for a final Prophet to appear...

But first, let's answer a more general question...

1
Why were prophets necessary?

YAQEEN

Do we still need Prophets?
The proofs of Prophethood series

BASED ON THE ARTICLE
“An Ethical and Historical Necessity:
The Proofs of Prophethood Series”
Sh. Mohammad Elshinawy

PRESENTED BY
SH. MOHAMMAD ELSHINAWY

Read before you teach

General FAQs

How can I navigate a tough discussion?

Expect varying understandings and interpretations of religious content. To offset contestations, mention varying points beforehand and engage the strengths and weaknesses of each argument.

How do I steer tangents?

Demonstrate concern and acknowledge the feelings of those who are speaking by recognizing the value in everyone's contributions. Do not assume any student has malicious intent in their comments or tangents, and work towards a solution. Be aware of the tendency to have a “scapegoat” in the group (i.e., a student who questions a lot). Be mindful not to treat them like a black sheep and respect their journey. Use their questions to push the thinking of everyone in the group.

How do I engage a quiet group?

It is important to understand your students and tailor engagement strategies to help capture their attention. Here are some general tips that might help:

- Begin the class by mentioning any relevant anecdotes or current events to prompt student interest.
- If time permits, start the discussion with an icebreaker.
- Allow students to develop comfort for silence by giving them at least 10 seconds to reflect on the question/topic before responding, and rephrase if necessary.
- Have students talk to a partner before sharing with the larger group.

How do I respond to a question that I don't know the answer to?

Recognize that there are various types of questions. Many questions are open to individual reflection, and can be answered through personal reflection, discussion and/or engaging the perspectives of others. Other questions can be technical in nature and requires specialized study (e.g., fiqh questions). Some questions tie back to the questioner's personal life journey and require individual counseling. Finally, some questions do not have a clear-cut answer and can serve as a reminder for how limited our knowledge is as humans.

By knowing how to categorize the type of question, you will know how to appropriately respond and have a better sense of when to say, “I do not know, but I can help us find out.” Within and beyond Yaqeen, there are many resources to help you facilitate the questioner's journey towards an answer.

Multimedia usage

Our units occasionally use multimedia resources that are produced by parties external to Yaqeen. When referencing these resources, we offer a specific timestamp for your class to view. Please note that we only endorse the use of the timestamped portion and do not stand by other aspects of the video. We encourage teachers to always refer to the lesson plan document when using the presentation to ensure that only time-stamped portions of the videos are shown in class.



Instructions and activities

Lesson 1 • The need for prophetic guidance

Lesson 2

Lesson 3



Essential questions

What role does revelation play in our ideals of good and evil?



Key vocabulary

Prophet

a person regarded as an inspired teacher or proclaimer of the word of God

Lesson plan 1

The need for prophetic guidance

Stage 1: Big ideas and desired results

Lesson overview

This lesson offers students a brief introduction to the scholarly discourse on the proofs of prophethood. Once we recognize the existence and reality of a Creator, the next logical step is to ask, “What does it mean for God to exist?” Deist philosophy presupposes a non-interventionist God, one that exists indifferently to the needs of His creation. It assumes that humans can be left to their own devices to realize their purpose—using reason and experience to navigate life’s biggest questions. This worldview falls short of the Islamic belief in a Perfect, Compassionate, Nurturing God, Who has chosen to have a relationship with His creation through chosen messengers and prophets. This relationship is necessary, given the weaknesses and shortcomings of our human condition and the many needs we have that we struggle to best fulfill. Muslim scholars wrote on these matters and formed a genre of literature entitled *Proofs of Prophethood* (*Dalā'il al-nubuwwa* and/or *Ālam al-nubuwwa*). In this lesson plan, we explore a few of the issues within this discourse while focusing on the human need for guidance that only our Creator can fulfill. Had Allah not sent human prophets to humankind, we would be left wandering aimlessly on this Earth, neither commanded nor prohibited, unsure how to best live in accordance with our purpose and nature.

Learning objectives

Toward the completion of this lesson, students should be able to:

- ① Recognize the pitfalls of human actions in the absence of revelation. *(cognitive)*
- ② Explain and find compelling the human need for guidance through revelation/prophethood. *(cognitive and affective)*

Teacher's note

To prepare ahead for this lesson, print out copies of **1.1 “Scenario cards”** and cut out the three cards on each handout (the college scenario, the driver's ed scenario, and the barista job scenario). Every group of 2-4 students will select one of those three scenario cards during the opening activity in section one.

Stage 2: Learning plan

Total time: 60 min

Lesson plan outline

- Section 1, **slides 1-4**: Discovering our general need for guidance
- Section 2, **slides 5-12**: Establishing our need for ethical guidance
- Section 3, **slides 13-16**: Receiving guidance from God through prophethood

Supplies/equipment

- Lesson plan 1 presentation (for teacher)
- Projector/screen/computer/internet connection to play videos
- 1.1 “Scenario cards”**: one scenario card per group printed and cut out
- A blank sheet of paper to record their reflections

Opening activity (10 min)

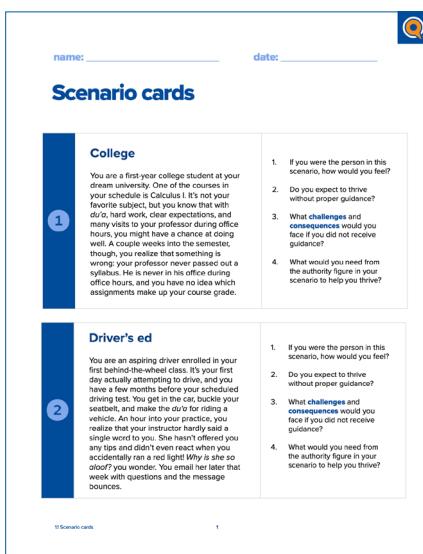
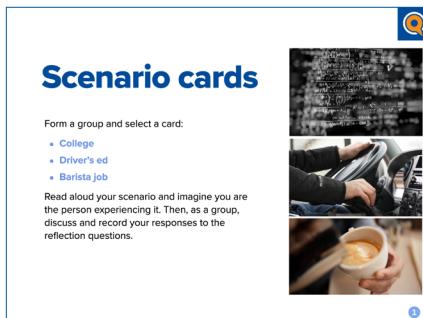
Section 1 • Slides 1-4 | Discovering our general need for guidance

Slide 1 / 1.1 “Scenario cards”

- Open **slide one**. As an opening activity, explain to students that they will form groups of 2-4 students (ideally 3). Each group will need the following:
 - A scenario card
 - A blank sheet of paper to record their reflections
 - A writing utensil
- Once their groups are formed, each group will send a runner (a member from their group) to the front of the room to grab a scenario card of their choice. There are three options for scenario cards: College; Driver's ed; Barista job.
- After the runners select their cards, they will return to their respective groups and read the scenario aloud for the rest to hear. They should all imagine that they are the person in the scenario.
- Once the scenario has been read, students will discuss (within their groups) the accompanying reflection questions on their scenario card and take turns briefly recording their group responses to each question.
- Set a timer to keep track. They have five minutes to complete the activity.

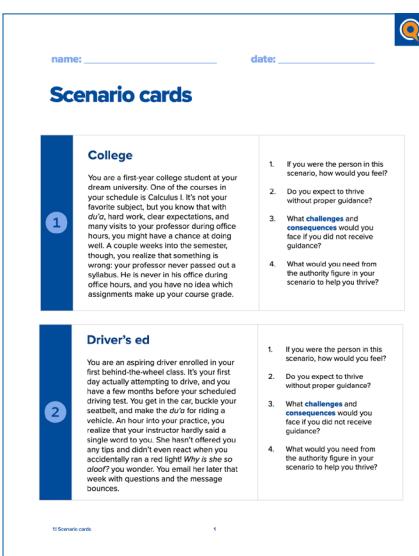
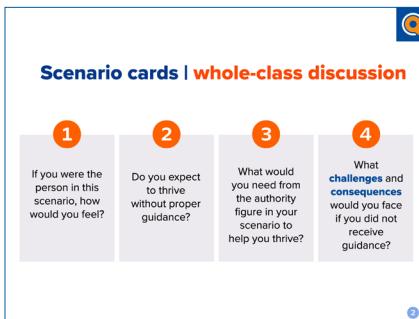
Below are the three scenarios and their questions:

- Scenario 1 • College:** You are a first-year college student at your dream university. One of the courses in your schedule is Calculus I. It's not your favorite subject, but you know that with *du'a*, hard work, clear expectations, and many visits to your professor during office hours, you may have a chance at doing well. A couple weeks into the semester, though, you realize that something is wrong: your professor never passed out a syllabus. He is never in his office during office hours, and you have no idea which assignments make up your course grade.
 - 1. If you were the person in this scenario, how would you feel?
 - 2. Do you expect to thrive without proper guidance?
 - 3. What challenges and consequences would you face if you did not receive guidance?
 - 4. What would you need from the authority figure in your scenario to help you thrive?
- Scenario 2 • Driver's ed:** You are an aspiring driver enrolled in your first behind-the-wheel class. It's your first day actually attempting to drive, and you have a few months before your scheduled driving test. You get in the car, buckle your seatbelt, and make the *du'a* for riding a vehicle. An hour into your practice, you realize that your instructor hardly said a single word to you. She hasn't offered you any tips and didn't even react when you accidentally ran a red light! *Why is she so aloof?* you wonder. You email her later that week with questions and the message bounces.
- Scenario 3 • Barista job:** You got hired at your dream coffee shop just across the street from your neighborhood. Although a coffee aficionado, you've never made



a latte before, but you're excited to learn. To your surprise, your manager doesn't schedule any training hours for you. When you ask him for a barista manual, he says he doesn't have one for employees. He instead schedules you to start on the holiday weekend for a full-day shift, starting at 6 a.m. when the cafe is at its busiest. You try calling, emailing, and texting him throughout the week with questions, but nothing works.

- As they complete the activity, pace around the room and listen to the conversations. If you notice students expressing frustration, help them recognize that feeling frustrated in these types of scenarios is a valid emotion. They may worry about the uncertainties, challenges, and consequences awaiting them in their hypothetical scenarios.



Slide 2 / Scenario cards: whole-class discussion

- After five minutes, proceed to **slide two** to display the reflection questions **(1.1)**. Read aloud each question and then call on students from each group to share their responses. Below are some sample responses to guide the class conversation.

- Imagine that you are the person in this scenario. How would you feel?
 - Sample student response:** I would feel frustrated, anxious, and overwhelmed. Being in a new and challenging situation, such as a college course, driving practice, or a coffee shop, I know I need to perform in a certain way in order to thrive. I would need guidance as I struggle to navigate the many challenges my scenario presents.
 - Do you expect to thrive without proper guidance?
 - Sample student response:** No.
 - What consequences would you face if you did not receive any guidance?
 - Sample student response:** As a college student, I would most likely fail my Calculus I course, thereby lowering my GPA and holding me back from graduating. I would also lose a lot of time and money in having to retake the course at a later semester. As a new driver, I would most likely struggle to operate the motor vehicle, violate many traffic laws, and potentially get into a car accident, hurting other drivers, passengers, and pedestrians as a result. As an inexperienced barista, I would most likely struggle to operate the espresso machines, anger many unsatisfied customers by failing to make their drinks correctly, drive away business, and eventually lose my job, thus leaving me financially unstable. Many of these negative consequences can be prevented with some clear and immediate guidance from the authority figure in my scenario.
 - What would you need from the authority figure in your scenario to help you thrive?
 - Sample student response:** I would need the authority figure, be it a professor, a driving instructor, or a cafe employer, to communicate immediately and clearly what I need to do to thrive in my scenario. I would also need them to address my questions, or to refer me to a manual/syllabus for clarity. It is unfair that I am abandoned to figure out what to do on my own, without direction and assistance while also facing potential challenges and consequences.
- After all groups have shared, conclude the discussion with the following point: *In a new situation where you are presented with all kinds of challenges and uncertainties, it is highly unlikely to thrive without proper guidance. Without support from the authority figure, or a manual to refer to, a person will most likely feel defeated and thus face the consequences of their failed performance.*

Uncertainty, challenges, and consequences
will we be left alone?



Would God create humans on this Earth, filled with **uncertainty, challenges, and consequences**, and leave them 'roaming at will'?

Learning activity (40 min)

Slide 3 / Uncertainty, challenges, and consequences: will we be left alone? (reflection question)

1. Transition to **slide three**. Explain that we are placed in this complex world, riddled with uncertainty, challenges, and pending consequences (some of which we cannot preempt or navigate using rationale alone)—a reality that would leave any of us feeling anxious and overwhelmed as we grapple with life's big existential questions on our own. Pose the question, “Would God create humans on this Earth, filled with **uncertainty, challenges, and consequences**, and leave them ‘roaming at will’? Let students ponder the question. You may explain that the phrase “roaming at will” refers to people being left alone to do as they please or as they think, without any clear guidance on why they exist and by what standard to live. They do not necessarily have to formulate an answer yet.
2. After students have been given time to reflect, facilitate a discussion around the displayed question. Explain that the question links back to the opening activity, where students may have expressed frustration when placed in a new and challenging situation and deprived of the guidance they needed to thrive. They were left with no guidance, no manual to reference, no role models to follow, and without any connection to the one evaluating them on their performance. Instead, the authority figure was passive, absent, and uncommunicative on what they needed to do.
3. Continue by zooming out from the scenarios to our reality as humans in this world. Ask students how they will know how to thrive in this world and live in harmony with their purpose without guidance, without a manual to reference, without role models to follow, and without a connection or avenue of communication with the One who fashioned us and placed us on this Earth.
4. Inform students that, when contemplating these questions, we can consider two options:
 - a. We can either try to figure out these large, existential questions on our own, as individuals and collectives, ultimately relying on limited human reasoning, facing the consequences as we go along, or;
 - b. We can recognize our limitations and seek guidance from our Creator.
5. Explain to students that our existence in this complex world—riddled with questions, uncertainty, challenges, and consequences—leaves us in need of guidance and a relationship with our Creator. In the discourse on Proofs of Prophethood, scholars use this line of reasoning to establish “the human necessity for a relationship with their Creator.”



أَيْحَسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُرْكَ سُدًّا

“Does humankind think that they will be left [on this Earth] roaming at will (*sudā*)?”
[Surat al-Qiyamah, 75:36]

Human need for guidance
will we be left alone?



Does humankind think that they will be left [on this Earth] **roaming at will (*sudā*)?**
أَيْخَسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُرْكَ سُدًّا
[Surat al-Qiyamah, 75:36]

Slide 4 / Human need for guidance: will we be left alone?

1. Proceed to **slide four** and read aloud the displayed verse and its translation.
2. Use the following discussion points to explain the verse: 
- a. Revelation prompts us to rationally consider a scenario where we do not have a relationship with our Creator and guidance from Him. God poses the rhetorical question in this verse to show us why we need a relationship with Him.

- b. The rhetorical question in the verse leads to the discourse on Proofs of Prophethood. It encourages us to think about why prophethood is necessary.
- c. Muslim scholars wrote extensively on why prophethood is necessary and why Muhammad ﷺ was a prophet. For example, Imam al-Shāfi‘ī, may Allah have mercy on him, explained that the word *sudā* was classically used by Arabs to describe the behavior of cattle when left in a pasture to graze: they are wandering without direction, capable only of fulfilling their animalistic needs (i.e., eating and reproducing). He also explained that the word *sudā* means “neither commanded nor prohibited,” or roaming at will. By using this word in the verse, God is asking us to consider our need for prophets as a medium to know God’s commands and prohibitions, and to be connected with His guidance.

Teacher takeaway

This unit begins by establishing our human need for divine guidance. Students entertain this proposition by considering real-life scenarios in which they are pursuing a desired outcome and cannot succeed without some instruction from the authority figure. Similarly, when we identify that the desired outcome of our lives is God (gaining nearness to Him and embodying His perfect goodness, as we established in the previous creed unit), it would seem unreasonable to be left without direction.

Section 2 • Slides 5-12 | Establishing our need for ethical guidance

Ethical guidance

will we be left alone?

Humans, as individuals and as a collective, have a need for guidance.

Think about it: What happens when individuals in a society try to determine what is correct and acceptable on their own without any recourse and reference back to the Creator?



Human zoos

In 1878 and 1889, the Parisian World Fair in France drew crowds of 28 million people to their constructed “Negro villages,” where 400 black men, women, and children were on display in their “primitive habitat.” Decades later in 1931, the ‘human zoo’ exhibition in Paris attracted 34 million visitors in six months.

What happens when we are left to “roam at will”?



Gladiators

In ancient Roman civilization, gladiators were slaves, former slaves, or condemned prisoners who fought to the death in organized games before the public. These games attracted 30-50 thousand spectators at a time; they sought entertainment in the bloody sport, where wild and exotic animals were hunted; prisoners executed, gladiators thrown to the lions, and more.

What happens when we are left to “roam at will”?



1. Next, proceed to **slide five**. Explain to students that they will now explore a series of captioned photos that showcase various acceptable practices across time and space. Tell them to keep the following question in mind as they reflect on each displayed practice: “Humans, as individuals and as a collective, have a need for guidance. **What happens when individuals in a society are left to determine what is correct and acceptable on their own, without any recourse and reference back to the Creator?**”

2. As you move through the slides, call on a different student to read the displayed caption. Then, allow the class thirty seconds or so to silently reflect on the images and descriptions. After thirty seconds of silent reflection has passed, and before moving onto the next slide, read aloud the question repeated on the bottom of each slide: “What happens when we are left to ‘roam at will’?”

- a. The topics displayed between slides 6-12 include:

- i. **Slide six:** In 1878 and 1889, the Parisian World Fair in France drew crowds of 28 million people to their constructed “Negro villages,” where 400 black men, women, and children were on display in their “primitive habitat.” Decades later in 1931, the ‘human zoo’ exhibition in Paris attracted 34 million visitors in six months.

- ii. **Slide seven:** In ancient Roman civilization, gladiators were slaves, former slaves, or condemned prisoners who fought to the death in organized games before the public. These games attracted 30-50 thousand spectators at a time; they sought entertainment in the bloody sport, where wild and exotic animals were hunted, prisoners executed, gladiators thrown to the lions, and more.

Female infanticide

In pre-Islamic Arabia (and in parts of China and India today), families sometimes practiced female infanticide with baby girls they did not want to raise. "Male bias" has families believe that sons "carry the family name," provide security to aging parents, do not financially burden their parents as girls would, and are better for safeguarding the family's social standing.

What happens when we are left to "roam at will"?

Guantanamo Bay

Guantanamo Bay became a detention camp in 2002 at the start of the "War on Terror." Since then, over 700 men have been held there without a trial or any charges. They have also been subjected to inhumane conditions and torture methods, including physical and mental abuse.

What happens when we are left to "roam at will"?

Hazing rituals

Hazing is a common practice in college fraternities where "pledges" are forced to complete dangerous tasks to join the group. At times, these pledges are forced to lead to traumatic injuries (e.g., drinking toxic amounts of alcohol, stunts, etc.). These cases usually go unreported because of the pressure to fit in and be accepted into the fraternity.

What happens when we are left to "roam at will"?

Ethnic cleansing

Hundreds of thousands of indigenous people lived in present day America and Canada for at least 2500 years before Europeans began their invasion in the 1500s. Europeans used their superior technology to forcefully colonized the land with their advantage of horses and guns, killing countless Native Americans and forcing the remainder to surrender.

What happens when we are left to "roam at will"?

Waste and overconsumption

Overconsumption leads to millions of tons of waste being produced globally every year. Most of this waste comes from developed countries. North America and Western Europe form 12% of the world's population but consume 60% of the world's resources. Our hyper-capitalist society promotes and even glorifies living beyond one's means. This has normalized the exploitation of natural resources and environmental degradation.

What happens when we are left to "roam at will"?

iii. Slide eight: Female infanticide in pre-Islamic Arabia, as well as modern

China and India: in pre-Islamic Arabia (and in parts of China and India today), families sometimes practiced female infanticide with baby girls they did not want to raise. "Male bias" has families believe that sons "carry the family name," provide security to aging parents, do not financially burden their parents as girls would, and are better for safeguarding the family's social standing.

iv. Slide nine: Guantanamo Bay became a detention camp in 2002 at the start of the "War on Terror." Since then, over 700 men have been held there without a trial or any charges. They have also been subjected to inhumane conditions and torture methods, including physical and mental abuse.

v. Slide ten: Hazing is a common practice in college fraternities where "pledges" are forced to complete dangerous tasks to join the group. At times, these can be life-threatening or lead to traumatic injuries (e.g., drinking toxic amounts of alcohol, stunts, etc.). These cases usually go unreported because of the pressure to fit in and be accepted into the fraternity.

vi. Slide eleven: Hundreds of thousands of indigenous people lived in present day America and Canada for at least 2500 years before Europeans began their invasion in the 1500s. The Europeans violently and forcefully colonized the land with their advantage of horses and guns, killing countless Native Americans and forcing the remainder to surrender.

vii. Slide twelve: Overconsumption leads to millions of tons of waste being produced globally every year. Most of this waste comes from developed countries. North Americans and Western Europeans form 12% of the world's population but consume 60% of the resources. Our hyper-capitalist society promotes and even glorifies living beyond one's means. This has normalized the exploitation of natural resources and environmental degradation.

- After going through all of the slides, pose the question from the slide to the class: "What happens when humans are left to 'roam at will'?" Call on some students to share their answers.

Guided student response:

Sample response for the first question: When humans roam at will, what we tend to see is the worst of human actions such as genocide, infanticide, and racism. Students should respond by highlighting some of the examples provided to them in the slides that illustrate what can arise when humans are left to their own whims.

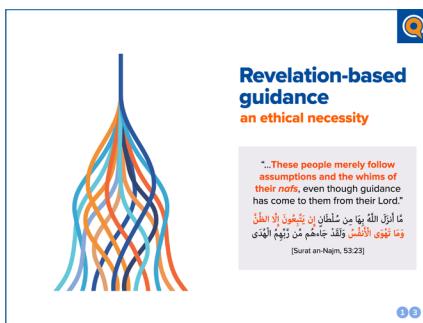
Sample response for the second question: Students should characterize the question as somewhat absurd given what they know about the human condition and the necessity of guidance. Student should remember the opening activity as a clear example of why humans need guidance when dealing with somewhat complex situations. Within the context of life there is far greater uncertainty, challenges, and consequences making the need for guidance far more paramount. Students should also recognize that in lieu of what they know about God's nature, it would be nonsensical to think that God would not provide guidance while also holding humans accountable for their actions. This would clearly go against the ultimate justice of God.

4. Conclude with the following remarks.

- Remind students that the beliefs and practices in the photos were, at one point (and possibly today), regarded as “correct” and “acceptable” by the average “decent person” of that time.
- Inform students that if humans are left to “roam at will” without guiding principles or revelation, then there wouldn’t be any accountability for our actions. In other words, there would be no way of determining ethical boundaries or ensuring that the boundaries are not transgressed.
- Ask students to reflect on this question: These actions are clearly problematic, so why did they occur, and why do they continue to occur? Give students a chance to share some of their thoughts before you transition to the necessity of revelation.

Teacher takeaway

This activity supports the objectives of this lesson by exploring the moral and ethical necessity of prophethood. These slides depict practices and beliefs that are or were reasonable and acceptable to the societies to which they belonged, but they clearly had a disastrous effect on many people. Without guidance, human beings will accept and participate in many abhorrent beliefs and practices since there are no guiding principles to ensure accountability. Whereas, with revelation, certain beliefs and practices are not even afforded the privilege of being considered (e.g., human zoos, female infanticide, etc.) irrespective of how reasonable and logical these beliefs and practices may seem to a people. This activity allows students to appreciate the verse where God informs us that He would not leave us to “roam at will.” Rather, He has given us guidance through revelation.



Revelation-based guidance
an ethical necessity

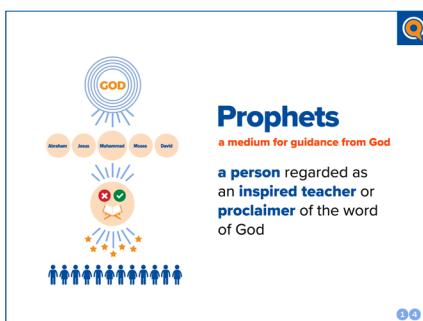
“...These people merely follow assumptions and the whims of their nafs, even though guidance has come to them from their Lord.”
وَمَا تَهُوَ إِلَّا الظَّنُونُ
وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِنْ يَتَبَعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنُونُ
[Surat an-Najm, 53:23]



مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِنْ يَتَبَعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنُونُ
وَمَا تَهُوَ إِلَّا الظَّنُونُ
وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِنْ يَتَبَعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنُونُ

“...These people merely follow assumptions and the whims of their nafs, even though guidance has come to them from their Lord.”

[Surat an-Najm, 53:23]



Prophets
a medium for guidance from God

a person regarded as an inspired teacher or proclaimer of the word of God

Abraham, Isaac, Moses, David

Section 3 • Slides 13-16 | Receiving guidance from God through prophethood

Slide 13 / Revelation-based guidance: an ethical necessity

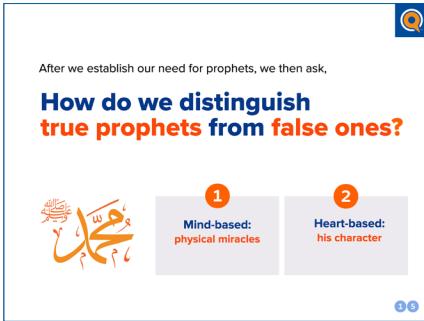
- Proceed to **slide thirteen** and read aloud the displayed verse and its translation. Then provide students with the following commentary: 
 - In this verse, God is addressing the people who believe that they do not need an authoritative figure (i.e., God) to guide them to what is good and ethical. Instead, they base their beliefs and practices on assumptions and speculation. Remind students of the examples they explored in the gallery walk and draw a connection to this verse. Explain that the examples explored are an indication of beliefs and practices formed upon a foundation of problematic ideas. When revelation-based guidance is not taken into consideration, people are left with nothing but their speculations, whims, and desires as a compass to determine right from wrong. The verse concludes by God telling us that His guidance is divine, pure, and free from all human limitations.
- Conclude this discussion by informing students that when we base our moral and ethical choices on assured or definitive knowledge (i.e., revelation), and not on a person’s speculations and assumptions, we can be certain that our ethical framework is grounded in divine wisdom.

Slide 14 / Prophets: a medium for guidance from God

- Next, continue to **slide fourteen**. Direct student attention to the infographic, which illustrates God communicating to select humans—His prophets—who then convey God’s ethical guidance to the rest of humankind. Elaborate on this phenomenon using the following points:

Teacher's note

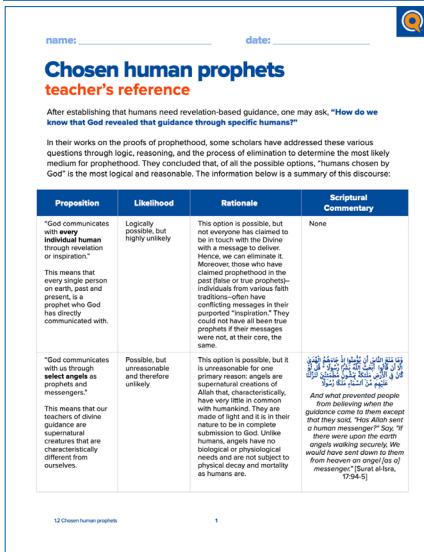
At this point, some students may wonder the following: Why did God choose specific humans to be His prophets? To help answer this question, the teacher may refer to **1.2 Chosen Human Prophets** (Teacher's Reference).



After we establish our need for prophets, we then ask,

How do we distinguish true prophets from false ones?

1 Mind-based: physical miracles 2 Heart-based: his character



name: _____ date: _____

Chosen human prophets
teacher's reference

After establishing that humans need revelation-based guidance, one may ask, "How do we know that God revealed that guidance through specific humans?"

In their works on the proofs of prophethood, some scholars have addressed these various questions through logic, reasoning, and the process of elimination to determine the most likely medium for prophethood. They concluded that, of all the possible options, "humans chosen by God" is the most logical and reasonable. The information below is a summary of this discourse:

Proposition	Likelihood	Rationale	Scriptural Commentary
"God communicates with every intelligent human through revelation or dreams."	Locally possible, but highly unlikely	This option is possible, but it is unreasonable for one primary reason: angels are superior to humans in that Allah that, characteristically, have very little interaction with them. They are made of light and it is in their nature to obey Allah's command to submission to God. Unlike humans, they do not have biological or physiological needs and are not subject to physical death and mortality as humans are.	None
"God communicates with us through select angels as personal messengers."	Possible, but unreasonable and therefore unlikely	This option is possible, but it is unreasonable for one primary reason: angels are superior to humans in that Allah that, characteristically, have very little interaction with them. They are made of light and it is in their nature to obey Allah's command to submission to God. Unlike humans, they do not have biological or physiological needs and are not subject to physical death and mortality as humans are.	And what prevented people from believing when the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) presented them that they said, "Has Allah sent a prophet in our country, if there were upon the earth angels working secretly, We would have known about them? Does not each one of us have a spirit (angel) who guides him?" (Surat al-Isra', 17:14-15)

12 Chosen human prophets



- Explain to students that we have a need for God's ethical guidance given the flimsiness of our human alternatives. The human need for guidance is fulfilled through prophethood as a mercy from God. It is through this line of reasoning that the scholars have established guidance as an ethical necessity.
- Next, highlight the definition of prophet: "a person regarded as an inspired teacher or proclaimer of the word of God." Explain that God sent many prophets to various societies so that they may teach and convey His message for the guidance of humankind. Of all the possible ways God could have delivered His guidance, scholars have established that prophets, chosen by God, are the most appropriate medium.  Historically, since prophethood is necessary to cultivate human spirituality, prophets were sent to societies with signs and lessons that were relevant to their social context.

Slide 15 / Looking ahead: proofs of Muhammad's ﷺ claim to prophethood

- Proceed to **slide fifteen**. Tell students that believing in prophethood as a necessary phenomenon may lead to the next question: "How do we distinguish true prophets from false ones?" It is natural to wonder what criteria should be used to evaluate the veracity of a person's claim to prophethood.
- Continue to explain that one man in particular has made the claim to prophethood: Muhammad ﷺ. Even more, he claimed to be our prophet, worthy of following, and the prophet of all future people until the end of time. Our belief in his claim may be solidified by studying the proofs of his prophethood.
- Inform students that in the upcoming lessons, they will explore specific components from the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ life to help us evaluate his claim to prophethood:
 - Lesson two will explore Muhammad ﷺ's performance of physical miracles as a mind-based proof of his prophethood.
 - Lesson three will explore Muhammad's ﷺ impeccable character and lifestyle as a heart-based proof of his prophethood.

Consolidation (5 min)

Slide 16 / "Bugs on a windshield": post your questions!

- Proceed to **slide sixteen** and hand each student one post-it note for their exit-ticket activity.
- Instruct students to record 1-2 questions or points of confusion they have about this lesson. Once they have recorded their question(s) on their post-it note, they should stick their note on a designated classroom wall.
- Use the remainder of class time to address student questions and clarify any points of confusion written on their post-its.

Teacher takeaway

This final section expands on the premise that humankind is in need of revelation-based guidance, not only to acquaint us with our Creator, but also to provide us with a stable ethical framework that operates independent of our whims, speculations, and desires. Without recourse to that ethical guidance, our notions of right and wrong are flimsy and can be manipulated to justify immoral acts such as those seen in this lesson (e.g., human zoos, female infanticide, etc.). After understanding the need for an ethical framework, students then begin to explore God's medium for guidance: prophets. Students are introduced to a basic definition of "prophets" in order to highlight that prophets were sent as a means of conveying the word of God. Finally, this section and lesson conclude by laying down the framework for the rest of the unit and focusing in on Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. As the unit continues, students will understand that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was sent with a multitude of proofs that were relevant to both his ﷺ time and for all time to come. The primary goal of the discourse on the proof of prophethood is to increase our conviction and dispel any doubts regarding Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ authenticity.

Lesson plan 1

The need for prophetic guidance

Stage 3: Assessments

Performance task

Formative assessment 1.1

1. The opening activity (**1.1 “Scenario cards”**) and the subsequent class discussion should prepare students for the first and second objectives. In other words, the challenges and consequences they would expect to face without guidance in a coffee shop, a college course, or a driver’s ed practice are a microcosm of our broader human experience. The activity reflection questions prompt them to consider the adverse effects of being left on earth without guidance.

2. To informally assess the first objective, you may use student responses to the activity on **slides 5-12, “Ethical guidance: will we be left alone?”**.

While showcasing examples of human depravity and transgression, elicit students’ emotive reactions and responses to the activity’s two primary questions:

- a. What happens when individuals in a society try to determine what is correct and acceptable on their own without any recourse back to the Creator?
- b. What happens when we are left to ‘roam at will’? Students should recognize that, in the absence of revelation-based guidance, harmful beliefs and practices become commonplace and acceptable, even to sound-minded people.

3. To informally assess the second objective, you may use student responses during the class discussion for slide three. Students are asked, “Would God create humans on this Earth, filled with uncertainty, challenges, and consequences, and leave them ‘roaming at will’? If students accept our general need for guidance and for knowing their purpose and having an ethical standard by which to live, then they have met both objectives for the lesson.

4. Finally, you may use the **“Bugs on a windshield”** activity on slide sixteen to elicit any outstanding questions students have about the lesson’s core content. Read the post-it notes to determine which instruction, if any, needs to be retaught for clarity.

name: _____ date: _____

Scenario cards

College	
<p>You are a first-year college student in your dream university. One of the courses in your schedule is Calculus I. It's not your favorite subject, but you know that with due work, clear expectations, and support from your teacher during office hours, you might have a chance at doing well. A couple weeks into the semester, though, you realize that something is going wrong: your professor never passed out a syllabus. He is never in his office during office hours, and you have no idea which assignments make up your course grade.</p>	
1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> If you were the person in this scenario, how would you feel? Do you expect to thrive without proper guidance? What challenges and consequences would you face if you did not receive guidance? What would you need from the authority figure in your scenario to help you thrive?
Driver's ed	
<p>You are an aspiring driver enrolled in your first behind-the-wheel class. It's your first day of class, and you know that you have a few months before your scheduled driving test. You get in the car, buckle your seatbelt, and make your way to the vehicle. An hour into your practice, you realize that your instructor hardly said a single word to you. You’re not sure if you got any tips and didn’t even react when you accidentally ran a red light! Why is she so quiet? You’re feeling a bit nervous later that week with questions and the message bounces.</p>	
2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> If you were the person in this scenario, how would you feel? Do you expect to thrive without proper guidance? What challenges and consequences would you face if you did not receive guidance? What would you need from the authority figure in your scenario to help you thrive?

11 Scenario cards

name: _____ date: _____

Chosen human prophets
teacher's reference

After establishing that humans need revelation-based guidance, one may ask, “How do we know that God revealed that guidance through specific humans?”

In their works on the proofs of prophethood, some scholars have addressed these various questions through logic, reasoning, and the process of elimination to determine the most likely medium for prophethood. They concluded that, of all the possible options, “humans chosen by God” is the most logical and reasonable. The information below is a summary of this discourse:

Proposition	Likelihood	Rationale	Scriptural Commentary
“God communicates with us through individual human beings; revelation or inspiration.”	Logically possible, but highly unlikely	This option is possible, but it is unlikely. It is difficult to be in touch with the Divine Himself and receive His Word. Moreover, those who have claimed to receive divine revelation in the past (false or true prophethood)—including numerous faith traditions—often have conflicting messages in their “prophecy.” “How can they could not have all been true prophets? Their messages were not, at their core, the same.”	None
“This means that every single person on Earth is present, is a prophet who God has directly communicated with.”	Possible, but unreasonable and therefore unlikely	This option is possible, but it is unreasonable for one primary reason: angels are superior to humans. Allah that, characteristically, have no desire to interact with humankind. They are made to be in and out of submission to God. Unlike humans, they do not have biological or physiological needs, and are not subject to physical decay and mortality as humans are.	And what prevented people from believing when the guidance was given except that they said, “Has Allah sent a prophet? No, it is that there were upon the earth and walking around us insects and bugs which he sent to show from heaven an angel [or] messenger to whom he sent al-lats, 77:94-5]

12 Chosen human prophets



Instructions and activities

Lesson 1

Lesson 2 • Verifying prophethood: the Prophet's ﷺ miracles

Lesson 3



Essential questions

How do we verify someone's claim to prophethood?

How do miracles prove the claim of prophethood?

How can we affirm and appreciate the occurrence of Muhammad's ﷺ physical miracles while not having witnessed them firsthand?



Key vocabulary

Miracle (*mu'jiza*)

a supernatural event; an event that occurs in defiance of the laws of nature of the universe at the hands of our Prophet ﷺ, by the will of God, lending support to his ﷺ prophethood

Mutawatir

in the science of hadith authentication, *mutawatir* is the strongest class of hadith, narrated by a large number of reliable narrators at each stage of transmission

Lesson plan 2

Verifying prophethood: the Prophet's ﷺ miracles

Stage 1: Big ideas and desired results

Lesson overview

In the previous lesson, students explored the need for prophethood to guide us in living our lives and distinguishing between good and bad. While this reality suffices as proof for some, humans vary in their dispositions and intellectual and spiritual insights. Out of Allah's mercy, He brought forth a prophet with many proofs to his prophethood. Some believed in Muhammad's ﷺ prophethood by being intimately familiar with his character. Others believed by recognizing the enormity of his successes. Still others came to believe by witnessing the miracles (*mu'jizāt*) he performed. In fact, in Islamic theological texts, the miraculous sign receives an abundance of attention and discourse. The quintessential proof of prophethood is the miracle.

There are two categories of miracles of the Prophet ﷺ. The first category is the literary miracle of the Qur'an itself, which we cover extensively in a separate unit. The second category is the physical miracles the Prophet performed. These miracles are numerous. Some are directly mentioned in the Qur'an, as is the case with the splitting of the moon, while the majority of them are recorded in authentic hadith. In this lesson plan, students will explore the authenticity of these miracles in detail and will be invited to reflect on how the physical miracles of the Prophet ﷺ provide yet another outlet that affirms his prophethood.

Learning objectives

Toward the completion of this lesson, students should be able to:

- ① Recognize the importance of physical miracles as a mind-based proof of prophethood. (*cognitive*)
- ② Identify the primary purpose and audience of a prophet's physical miracles. (*cognitive*)
- ③ Recount some physical miracles of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and appreciate the support they lend to his claim of prophethood. (*cognitive and affective*)

Stage 2: Learning plan

Total time: 60 min

Lesson plan outline

- Section 1, **slides 1-7**: identifying true miracles as a method to evaluate Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ claim to prophethood
- Section 2, **slides 8-12**: understanding the criteria needed confirm the authenticity of a prophetic miracle
- Section 3, **slides 13-16**: group activity on physical miracles specific to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Supplies/equipment

- Lesson plan 2 presentation (for teacher)
- Projector/screen/computer/wifi-access to play videos
- 3 sheets of paper with the letters A, B, C largely written
- Printout of **2.1 “Mu’jiza misconceptions”** for teacher
- Printouts of **2.2 “Prophetic miracles”** (one topic per student per group)
- Printouts of **2.3 “Infographic requirements”** for each student
- Small poster board (per group)
- Coloring utensils for poster

Opening activity (10 min)

Section 1 • Slides 1 - 7 | Identifying true miracles as a method to evaluate Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ claim to prophethood

Slides 1 / Distinguishing between true and false prophets: physical miracles as a mind-based proof

1. Begin by opening the lesson plan two presentation and proceeding to **slide one**. Remind students that the previous lesson established our need for prophets. As humans, we have a need for general guidance in order to navigate life's many questions, uncertainties, and challenges in addition to, more specifically, ethical guidance.
2. Ask students to recall some examples from the previous lesson that highlight the types of injustices that can occur in the absence of God's ethical guidance (e.g., human zoos, female infanticide, Guantanamo Bay).
3. Then, read aloud the displayed question: "After establishing our need for prophets, how do we verify someone's claim to prophethood?" In other words, if someone claims to be a prophet, such as Muhammad's ﷺ claim in seventh century Arabia, how can we determine whether or not their claim is true?
4. Inform students that a true prophet must bring forth proofs that resonate with all people of various orientations. The remainder of this unit focuses on two avenues that prove that Muhammad ﷺ was a true prophet. This lesson will cover a mind-based proof—his performance of physical miracles—and the next lesson will cover a heart-based proof—his impeccable character.

What makes one a miracle and not the other?

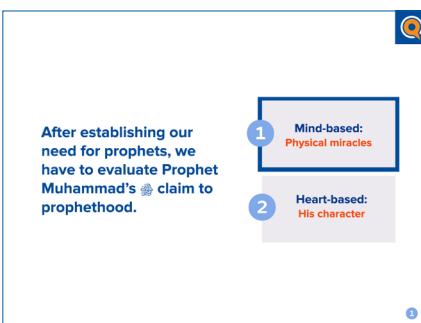


Prophet Muhammad split the moon in half while the Makan Arabs watched.

American astronauts traveled 230,000 miles through space for three days and safely landed on the moon.

Slides 2-5 / What makes one a miracle and not the other? 📝

1. Proceed to **slide two**. Remind students that the focus of this lesson is to show how Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ physical miracles are a proof of his prophethood. Explain that in the following activity, they will examine several



After establishing our need for prophets, we have to evaluate Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ claim to prophethood.

1 Mind-based: Physical miracles

2 Heart-based: His character

Teacher's note

While facilitating the opening activity, spend one minute or less on each slide to give students time to examine the two juxtaposed events and consider their differences. These examples will come up again in section two of this lesson after they have gained more vocabulary related to this topic. They will then use the examples from the opening activity to complete a formative assessment.

What makes one a miracle and not the other?



Prophet 'Isa restored vision to the blind, cured the leper, and resurrected the dead back to life.

Medical doctors invented prosthetic limbs and cochlear implants (to restore hearing to the deaf), and recently transplanted the heart of a genetically-modified pig into a human being.

What makes one a miracle and not the other?



Prophet Musa struck his staff on the ground and split the Red Sea in half so that he and the children of Israel could cross to the other side.

Its base is as thick as the length of two football fields, the Hoover Dam can store up to nine trillion gallons of water. It has 17 gates that weigh up to five million pounds each. This helps to generate hydroelectric power and control seasonal flooding.

What makes one a miracle and not the other?



Prophet Dawud melted iron with his bare hands and molded it into chain mail (armor).

Engineers invented robots that weld the body panels of a car using Tungsten Inert Gas, a high heat fume that allows for precise welding techniques.

Wall splash

On your post-it note, record your response to the question: **In each pair of events we explored, what makes one a miracle and not the other?**

Stick your post-it on the wall when you finish.



فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنِ اتْرِبِ بِعَصَمَ الْبَحْرِ
فَانْفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرقٍ كَالْطَّوْدِ الْعَظِيمِ

"Then We inspired to Moses, "Strike with your staff the sea," and it parted, and each portion was like a great towering mountain."
[Surat ash-Shu'ara, 26:63]

pairings of "miraculous events," one from the past juxtaposed with one from the present. As students look at each pairing of events, ask them to reflect upon the question, "What makes one a miracle and not the other?"

i. **Slide two:** [Left] Prophet Muhammad ﷺ split the moon in half while the Makkan Arabs watched. [Right] American astronauts traveled 230,000 miles through space and safely landed on the moon.

ii. **Slide three:** [Left] Prophet 'Isa restored vision to the blind, cured the leper, and resurrected the dead back to life. [Right] Medical doctors invented prosthetic limbs and cochlear implants (to restore hearing to the deaf), and recently transplanted the heart of a genetically-modified pig into a human being.

iii. **Slide four:** [Left] Prophet Musa struck his staff on the ground and split the Red Sea in half so that he and the children of Israel could cross to the other side. [Right] With a base as thick as the length of two football fields, the Hoover Dam can store up to nine trillion gallons of water. The water is controlled by gates that weigh up to five million pounds each. This helps to generate hydroelectric power and control seasonal flooding.

iv. **Slide five:** [Left] Prophet Dawud melted iron with his bare hands and molded it into chain mail (armor). [Right] Engineers invented robots that weld the body panels of a car using Tungsten Inert Gas, a high heat fume that allows for precise welding techniques.

Slide 6 / Wall splash: What makes one a miracle and not the other?

1. Proceed to **slide six**. To conclude this activity, provide students with one post-it note each and instruct them to record their response to the displayed question: "In each pair of events we explored, what makes one a miracle and not the other? What are the implications of such events for the person who performs them?"
2. Give students 1-2 minutes to record their responses on their post-it notes and stick them on a wall at the front of the room.
3. Once all post-its have been submitted to the front of the room, read several of them aloud and invite students to elaborate on their understanding of the term "miracle" as it pertains to the events displayed on slides 2-5. The goal is to quickly assess students' prior knowledge about the term.
4. While surveying student responses, prompt the discussion further by adding the following point: "In each pairing of events, one is clearly a prophetic miracle while the other is not. The question is, what is required of an event to qualify it as a true miracle? Why don't our extraordinary scientific, medical, and technological achievements qualify as true miracles?"
5. Remind students that this unit is taking two avenues to evaluate Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ claim to prophethood: mind-based and heart-based proofs. We need these proofs in order to verify the authenticity of a self-proclaimed prophet. In the rest of this lesson, we will define the nature of a true miracle to determine why our extraordinary scientific, medical, and technological achievements don't qualify as true miracles. Also, we will explore the purpose of true miracles as a proof for prophethood.



Slide 7 / A mind-based proof: extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence

1. Proceed to **slide seven** and tell students that no sensible person would accept someone's claim that they are speaking on behalf of God without heightened scrutiny. It is often said that "extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence."
2. Next, explain to students that when we require "extraordinary evidence" to prove the authenticity of a true prophet, the evidence must follow specific, required criteria. In other words, the criteria used ensures that the miraculous occurrence was indeed a miracle performed by an authentic prophet on behalf of God and wasn't simply an illusion or some form of sorcery.
3. Remind them of the examples they explored in the opening activity.
4. This criteria for miracles will be explored further in the upcoming slides. Expand on this point by using the following example:
 - a. Throughout history, humankind has evolved and is continuously advancing through various scientific and technological discoveries. Events like sending a man to walk on the moon or developing life-saving medical procedures can easily be mislabeled and considered as a miraculous event. When we deem modern-day advancements as "miraculous," it can lead us to believe that the people who made those discoveries are somehow prophetic in nature. Consequently, these figures become so highly respected that people begin to regard them as most worthy of being followed. Therefore, when it comes to recognizing a truly miraculous event performed by a true prophet, we must have a set criteria that makes it a distinctive, qualitative event to identify a true prophet from a false one.
5. Conclude by informing students that without a set criteria for identifying prophets, many people can claim to be false prophets without extraordinary evidence, i.e., a true miracle. In the rest of the lesson, we will explore stringent criteria that can help determine a true prophet from a false one. We will do this by defining and exploring the nature of miracles produced by prophets, through the permission of God, as possible, purposeful, and proven. Ultimately, true miracles are irreplicable other than at the hands of a true prophet and therefore serve as a proof of prophethood.

Teacher takeaway

In this section, two incidents are juxtaposed to gauge how students might perceive supranatural acts of the past. The grandeur of these phenomena are diminished through the age of science and technology advancements. In other words, humankind tends to consider phenomenal occurrences as miracles, without a true understanding of the meaning and criteria needed for an event to be qualified as miraculous. This opening activity sets up the foundation for the remainder of this lesson which will explore physical miracles specific to the Prophet ﷺ, and how the miracles help to evaluate and confirm Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ claim to prophethood. The main purpose of section one is to provide a bird's eye view; the remainder of the lesson delves into details of certain proofs of prophethood (e.g., miracles).

Prophetic miracles
an extraordinary proof for an extraordinary claim

1 Possible	2 Purposeful	3 Proven
Miracles are a phenomenon wherein God breaks the observable patterns of the universe	Paths to guidance are diverse: miracles can inspire people towards faith	A chain of reliable transmissions must exist before attributing an action like a miracle to the Prophet ﷺ

Section 2 • Slides 8 - 12 | Understanding the criteria needed confirm the authenticity of a prophetic miracle

Slide 8 / Prophetic miracles: an extraordinary proof for an extraordinary claim

1. Proceed to **slide eight** and draw student attention to the three-pronged diagram. Tell students that there are “three P’s,” or important points, to remember about the nature of physical miracles.
2. Next, expand on these three prongs:
 - a. Possible: Miracles are a phenomenon wherein God breaks the observable patterns of the universe.
 - b. Purposeful: Miracles provide diverse paths to guidance and can inspire people towards faith.
 - c. Proven: A chain of reliable transmissions must exist before attributing an action like a miracle to the Prophet ﷺ.

3. Tell students that the following slides will provide a deeper explanation of each of the three prongs to provide a complete definition and exploration of a true miracle.

Miracles are possible

Mujiza: linguistic definition
Disabler: those who witness it are “disabled” from producing the like

Mujiza: technical definition
Phenomenon: miracles that originate from the Creator and occur in the hands of prophets by His permission

Slide 9 / Miracles are possible: a linguistic and technical definition of mujiza

1. Proceed to **slide nine** and introduce the term *mujiza* to students. Use the following to define the term:
 - a. Linguistic definition: **disabler**; those who witness it are “disabled” from producing the like. The word *mujiza* finds its roots in the word ‘ajaza (عَجَزَ), which means “weak and incapable.” Students may also recognize this root in the Arabic word for a weak and elderly person, ‘ajooz (عَجُوزٌ).
 - b. Technical definition: **phenomenon**; miracles that originate from the Creator and occur at the hands of the prophets by His permission.
2. Expand on this term by explaining that a *mujiza* is the suspension of a universally acceptable phenomenon with observable regularities. For example, gravity on Earth is considered a universally observable pattern. Breaking away from this pattern would consist of a person being suspended in the sky without any physical support or instrument, thereby classifying it as a miracle or *mujiza*.
3. Connect back to the opening activity. Use the example of the moon splitting compared to a human walking on the moon and explain the following:
 - a. When the moon was split by the Prophet ﷺ, with God’s permission, the event broke away from observable regularities and could not be replicated by any other human. On the other hand, a human walking on the moon required scientific research and discoveries for the event to occur. It is something that can be replicated and does not “disable” its witnesses from producing or acting in a similar way. Most importantly, the event of walking on the moon takes place within the laws of nature and not outside of it, such as the splitting of the moon.

Teacher's note

If further elaboration is needed on the term *mu'jiza*, you may use document **2.1 Mu'jiza misconceptions** for clarification.

4. Lastly, conclude the conversation on this slide by explaining that miracles are only possible for God and the ones He enables to perform them. For example, if God commands His prophet to throw down his staff and allows it to transform into a snake to bewilder the “magicians,” it is easy and possible for Him to do so. God has the ability to break universally observable and accepted patterns because He is the Creator of all things. These observable regularities are not independent of God, but rather a part of God’s actions.

5. Explain to students that as possible and easy as it is for God to create gravity, it is equally as easy for Him to suspend gravity to establish that someone is speaking on His behalf. A miracle is appreciated for what it is: God acting through His prophets in order to achieve a specific purpose. 



Miracles are purposeful

فَأَقْرَبْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ أَنْ يُبَيِّنُوا عِنْدَهُمْ فَأَقْرَبْنَا فَلَوْنَاهُ بِسُلْطَنِنَا مُبِينٍ
“...They argued, ‘You are no more than humans like us...so bring us some compelling proof.’”

فَأَقْرَبْنَا لَهُمْ إِنْ لَّعْنَةً إِلَّا نَجَّمَ وَنَكِّرَ اللَّهَ يُبَيِّنُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَمَا كَانَ لَنَا أَنْ تَأْتِيَنَا
“Their messengers said to them, ‘We are indeed only humans like you, but God favors whoever He chooses from His servants. We cannot bring you any proof unless God permits it...’”

[Surat Ibrahim, 14:10-11]

Slide 10 / Miracles are purposeful

1. Proceed to **slide ten** and read aloud the verses [Surat Ibrahim, 14:10-11] along with the translation on the slide.  14:10-11

2. Read aloud the first verse displayed on the slide (... “so bring us some compelling proof”) and explain that in many places in the Qur'an, God highlights the manner in which disbelievers argued with the prophets sent to them. They believed prophets were equal to them because they were both human beings. However, the second verse displayed on the slide points out that while they are both human beings, prophets have been favored by God to deliver His message and produce miracles as He wills. The first verse provides a clear reason or purpose behind why God provided prophets with miracles: to serve as compelling proof for those who question the validity of a prophet.

3. Continue by explaining the ultimate purpose of these miracles: that is, to substantiate a prophet's claim to prophethood and strengthen the conviction of his followers who bear witness to his message. The purpose of a miracle is not the miraculous act in and of itself, such as splitting the moon or sea in half, but to further convince those who believe that such prophets are indeed speaking on behalf of God. A miracle also helps to differentiate between those who falsely claim to be prophets and true prophets. Only true prophets can perform miracles, by the permission of God, that “disable” others from producing the like of what they witnessed.

4. Explain that throughout history, God enabled His prophets to perform miracles that spoke to the cultural sensibilities of the society at the time and were undeniable by those who witnessed them. For example, God sent Prophet Musa to a society interested in sorcery and illusions and enabled him to perform miracles related to transfiguration (e.g., his staff transforming into a snake). This miracle spoke to the people of the society because they realized it was beyond an illusion, rendering them disabled in recreating such a feat.

5. Conclude the discussion by stating that while one purpose of miracles is to guide people to faith and further corroborate their conviction, the other is to prove and differentiate a true prophet from a false one.

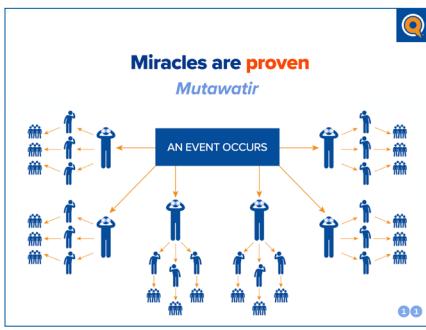
6. The students may be thinking at this point, “Even if we recognize the purpose and possibility of a miracle, how can we determine that they



قَالَتْ لَهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ إِنَّنَّا نَحْنُ إِلَّا بَنَّرُ مُتَلْكُمْ وَلَكُنَّ اللَّهُ
يُمْكِنُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَمَا كَانَ لَنَا أَنْ تَأْتِيَنَا
بِسُلْطَنٍ إِلَّا يَأْذِنُ اللَّهُ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَثْمُ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مُّتَلْكُمْ
تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَصْدُوْنَا عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُءَ آبَاؤُنَا فَلَوْنَاهُ
بِسُلْطَنٍ مُّبِينٍ

“Their messengers said to them, ‘We are indeed only humans like you but God favors whoever He chooses from His servants. We cannot bring you any proof unless God permits it. They argued, ‘You are no more than humans like us...so bring us some compelling proof.’”

[Surat Ibrahim, 14:10-11]



Teacher's note

While many of the Prophetic miracles are *mutawatir* reports, it is important to note here that there are some miracles that are not considered *mutawatir*. This does not necessarily mean that they did not occur, but that they do not have the same level of certainty as miracles that are confirmed through a *mutawatir* report.

actually took place?" In the final prong "proven," students will understand how the miracles of prophets are known to us with certainty through the process of *tawatur*.

Slide 11 / Miracles are proven: defining mutawatir

1. Proceed to [slide eleven](#) and explain that the last component of the Prophet's ﷺ miracles is that many of them are proven through an uncontestable chain of reliable transmissions. This chain of transmission is known as *mutawatir*.
2. Use the image depicted on the slide to explain that most of our knowledge is not obtained by direct experience using our five senses. Rather, most of our knowledge comes from reports of others. Most of those living today, for example, did not experience World War I directly. Yet we know for certain that such a war did indeed take place. How do we know this without having observed it ourselves, and how can we be so sure? The concept of *mutawatir* explains how this works. Refer to the following example to help expand on this term:
 - a. You are at the masjid and a person comes a few minutes later informing you that there is a major accident on the freeway. While the person informing you is not known to make things up, you have not observed it yourself so you cannot know for sure whether this report is true. Now, say several other people arrive at the masjid as well, all of them traveling on the same freeway in different cars and perhaps from different directions, and they also mention to you the freeway accident. You still have not witnessed the accident yourself but with every new report coming from different eye witnesses, your confidence grows in the veracity of the report. There simply are so many people corroborating the same information that you can believe with certainty that the event definitely occurred, although you have not directly witnessed it yourself.
 3. Explain to students that in the case of historical events (such as World War I), it is not simply a matter of eye witnesses informing others, but generations of people receiving the news and then transmitting it to others. Miracles are known to us in the same fashion through *tawatur*. After the occurrence of a miracle, there are a multitude of people receiving and transmitting the details of the event. We know the information is true because there are so many people reporting the same (or very similar) information, generation after generation. It is simply not possible that they all could conspire to fabricate the information.
 4. Conclude this discussion by clarifying to students that although not all prophetic miracles are known through *mutawatir* chains, the general phenomenon of miracles (such as some of the ones that will be explored later in this lesson) are *mutawatir*. The presence of multiple *mutawatir* miracles of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ lends itself as evidence for the veracity of other miracles that are not *mutawatir* but are known through sound reports. For example, if the Prophet ﷺ is said to have undoubtedly narrated the Qur'an, split the moon, and spoken to trees, then other miracles of the Prophet, even those that are not known through *mutawatir* chains, have a high likelihood of also being true.

5. Conclude this slide by reminding students of the opening activity and the two questions posed at the beginning of the lesson: what is required of an event to qualify it as a true miracle? Why don't our extraordinary scientific, medical, and technological achievements qualify as true miracles? Explain to students that to verify miracles performed by a true prophet, the miracles must be possible, purposeful, and proven rendering them irreproducible (i.e., incapable of being replicated in the same exact fashion). Have students recall the opening activity and emphasize that although modern-day marvels such as walking on the moon are impressive, they are not miraculous in nature since they are replicable and work within the established observable patterns of the universe. For these reasons, they would also not prove prophethood.

6. After explaining that miracles are possible, purposeful, and proven, explain to students that not all miracles of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ were of the same nature. Explain to students that the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ miracles can be categorized into two main groups: literary and physical. In the remainder of the lesson, students will explore specific examples of the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ physical miracles.



Slide 12 / Miracles of the Prophet ﷺ

1. Inform students that they will now learn more about miracles specific to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.
2. Explain that miracles of the Prophet ﷺ fall into two categories: literary and physical. To help students understand the distinction, provide them with the following commentary:
 - a. Literary miracle: The Qur'an is considered the greatest miracle of the Prophet ﷺ in literary form. This miracle is considered timeless because it is a permanent, ongoing miracle for all generations to come and remains accessible to us today.
 - b. Physical miracle: Unlike the timeless nature of the miraculous Qur'an, physical miracles are limited to a specific time and space. A physical miracle is a break from patterns of the physical universe. These were miracles performed by prophets by the permission of God, and were relevant to their societal circumstances. These miracles are no longer accessible to us because we did not witness them firsthand; therefore, they are only known to us through testimony and revelation.
3. Inform students that this lesson will explore the second category of physical miracles. This, in turn, will lead to an appreciation of them, despite not having experienced them firsthand. For a deep exploration of the miraculous nature of the Qur'an, please refer to our unit titled "Qur'an: The Living Literary Miracle."
4. Next, tell students that the upcoming section will help them understand how the miracles specific to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ support his claim to prophethood.



Teacher takeaway

The purpose of this section is to have students explore the definition of a miracle (*mu'jiza*) and to properly assess if something truly is a miracle. While the message, character, and accomplishments of the Prophet ﷺ all vouch for his claim to prophethood, the power of miracles in strengthening our conviction should not be underestimated. The purpose in breaking down a prophetic miracle to be possible, purposeful, and proven is to help students differentiate true, physical miracles over false ones. By having students gain a thorough understanding of *mu'jiza* in this section, they will be able to explore some of the most authentically transmitted miracles from the life of the Prophet ﷺ in the upcoming section.

Teacher's note

The purpose of this slide is to use one of the Prophet's miracles (The weeping tree) as a model for how students will complete their upcoming group activity. Once the video has played, the class will have an opportunity to see an example of a completed infographic, as well as how their infographic will be assessed (rubric).

Section 3 • Slides 13 - 16 | Group activity on physical miracles specific to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Slide 13 / The weeping tree: an example of a prophetic miracle (video)

1. Proceed to **slide thirteen**. Before playing the video, inform students that they will explore one example of a prophetic miracle as a whole class before breaking into groups for a project.
2. As students are watching the video, ask them to consider the question on the slide: how does this example of a prophetic miracle verify the claim of prophethood? Let students know that this question will be discussed in detail after the video.
3. Next, play the video embedded on the slide (full video clip: 1 minute 22 seconds).
4. Call on a few students to briefly summarize the miracle of the weeping tree. Once a few students have had a chance to summarize this miracle, draw their attention back to the question on the slide: how does this example of a prophetic miracle verify the claim of a true prophet?
5. Give the students 5 minutes to try to answer this question with the three prongs in mind. Then, explain that, in this lesson, we determined that the miracles performed by a true prophet “disable” those that witness the miracles firsthand, rendering them incapable of producing the like. In this example, the act of speaking to a tree or comforting it is not one that can be replicated. The weeping tree is just one prophetic miracle that helps support Muhammad's ﷺ claim to prophethood.
6. Inform students that they will complete a project to demonstrate their understanding of miracles specific to the Prophet ﷺ and how such miracles prove his claim to prophethood.

Slides 14 - 18 / Infographic project: a complete example for students

1. Proceed to **slide fourteen** and inform students that the following slides will walk them through an example of the infographic project they will be completing in groups.
2. Remind students to keep in mind the following question as they go through this example: How does this example of a prophetic miracle verify the claim of a true prophet? Tell students that this question will be answered by looking at various components of the miracle. These components include:

Infographic project
an example

Summary | To meet the needs of his growing audience, the Prophet ﷺ sat on a palm trunk. When he ﷺ began using his new pupit, sounds of weeping emerged from the tree trunk and shook the mosque. The Prophet ﷺ went over to comfort the trunk, hugging it until it was quiet.

How does this example of a prophetic miracle verify the claim of a true prophet?

Infographic project
an example

Summary | To meet the needs of his growing audience, the Prophet ﷺ constructed a pulpit in place of leaves on a palm trunk. When he ﷺ began using his new pupit, sounds of weeping emerged from the tree trunk and shook the mosque. The Prophet ﷺ went over to comfort the trunk, hugging it until it was quiet.

Vocabulary Connection | This is an example of a *mu'jiza* because a tree trunk cannot become alive, sensitive, and emotional. It occurred by the will and permission of God. God did not grant the likes of this miracle to any other prophet.

How does this example of a prophetic miracle verify the claim of a true prophet?

Infographic project
an example

Summary | To meet the needs of his growing audience, the Prophet ﷺ constructed a pulpit in place of leaves on a palm trunk. When he ﷺ began using his new pupit, sounds of weeping emerged from the tree trunk and shook the mosque. The Prophet ﷺ went over to comfort the trunk, hugging it until it was quiet.

Vocabulary Connection | This is an example of a *mu'jiza* because a tree trunk cannot become alive, sensitive, and emotional. It occurred by the will and permission of God. God did not grant the likes of this miracle to any other prophet.

Vocabulary Connection | This event is confirmed through multiple chains. It is a *mutawatir* event.

How does this example of a prophetic miracle verify the claim of a true prophet?

Infographic project
an example

Summary | To meet the needs of his growing audience, the Prophet ﷺ sat on a palm trunk. When he ﷺ began using his new pupit, sounds of weeping emerged from the tree trunk and shook the mosque. The Prophet ﷺ went over to comfort the trunk, hugging it until it was quiet.

Purpose | An inanimate object was distressed at being far from the Prophet ﷺ. God moved the tree to be near him, supporting his claim to being a true prophet because no other human has ever "distressed" those that witnessed what was transpiring in front of them.

Vocabulary Connection | This is an example of a *mu'jiza* because a tree trunk cannot become alive, sensitive, and emotional. It occurred by the will and permission of God. God did not grant the likes of this miracle to any other prophet.

Vocabulary Connection | This event is confirmed through multiple chains. It is a *mutawatir* event.

How does this example of a prophetic miracle verify the claim of a true prophet?

Infographic project
a group activity

- Moon splitting
- Night journey
- Increased food
- Increased water supply
- Instantly answered prayers

- A **summary** of the miracle
 - A vocabulary connection back to the term ***mu'jiza***
 - The **purpose** of why God enabled the Prophet ﷺ to perform this miracle
 - A **visual** that is creative and eye-catching
3. Proceed to **slide fifteen** and begin modeling the infographic activity for students. The first component is to provide a summary of the event. Read aloud the summary provided for students, and once again point out the “disabling” factors of the miracle. These include the fact that the tree was weeping similar to the way a child might weep, and the way in which the Prophet ﷺ comforted the tree.
4. Next, proceed to **slide sixteen** and make a connection back to the term ***mu'jiza***. Read aloud the information in the box, and remind students that earlier in this lesson they learned that a *mu'jiza* from a true prophet “disabled” the one witnessing it, and the weeping tree met this criteria.
5. Continue this discussion by proceeding to **slide seventeen** and explaining the role of *mutawatir*. The weeping tree is considered a *mutawatir* event because it is reported through multiple chains of narration. As a result, this event is undeniable because of the reliable information received from those that witnessed it.
6. Lastly, proceed to **slide eighteen** to show the completed infographic, which points out the purpose of a *mu'jiza* like the weeping tree. While there are different purposes of God enabling a *mu'jiza* like this, the purpose in our case is to support the claim of a true prophet. Read aloud the purpose for students.
7. Remain on slide eighteen and highlight once more the different required components of this assignment: summary, vocabulary connection, purpose, and a visual. Connect back to the question on the slide, and highlight how the completed infographic and its varying components help verify the claim of a true prophet.
8. Inform students that they will complete an infographic similar to the one they just viewed using a different miracle of the Prophet ﷺ that will be assigned to their group.

Slides 19 - 21 / Infographic project: a group activity

- Proceed to **slide nineteen** and inform students that each group will be assigned one of the five physical miracles listed below:
 - The miracle of the moon splitting
 - The miracle of the night journey (*al-Isra wal-Mi'raj*)
 - The miracle of the increased water supply
 - The miracle of the increased food supply
 - The miracle of the instantly answered prayers

2. Set students up for the activity before explaining the criteria to be successful. Have students form five groups (3-4 students for each group, depending on your class size), and then assign one miracle (from the list above and on the slide) to each group.

3. Once each group is situated somewhere in class, ask one member from each group to stand up and grab the required materials:

a. **2.2 “Prophetic miracles”** (each group will be assigned one of the five miracles; each member of the group will need a copy of the miracle article and the correlating question sheet)

b. **2.3 “Infographic requirements”**

c. One small poster 

d. One set of coloring utensils

4. Once students are situated with their materials and group, proceed to **slide twenty** to go over the infographic requirements. Students can follow along using **2.3 “Infographic requirements.”** Make a connection back to the weeping tree example students explored, and point out that the criteria is the same as what was shown in the example:

a. A visual: their visual should be creative and eye-catching

b. Vocabulary connection: 1) details that render their miracle a *mu'jiza*; 2) a connection to *mutawatir* 3) a summary; 4) the purpose of the miracle

c. A reflection: this component entails answering the guided questions with their groups on **2.3**

5. Proceed to **slide twenty-one** so students have a clear understanding of what needs to be completed with their groups. Set an online timer for twenty minutes so that students can complete the activity. Project the timer to help students track their progress.

6. Once groups are finished designing their infographic, ask one member from each group to present their group's infographic to the rest of the class.

7. After all groups have shared, ask students to submit their infographic posters, their individual reflection sheets (**2.2 “Prophetic miracles”**) and **2.3 “Infographic requirements”**.

Consolidation (5 min)

Slide 22 / The miracles of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ: an overview

1. Proceed to **slide twenty-two** and briefly read through the list of the miracles covered in this lesson. Then, click on the link at the bottom of the slide: “an infographic by Yaqeen Institute.”

2. Spend the last few minutes of class briefly scrolling through the infographic created on the physical miracles of the Prophet ﷺ and ask some students to share their thoughts on the infographic. What did they find significant in their exploration of miracles as a mind-based proof for prophethood?

3. Conclude this lesson by explaining that while miracles are sufficient proof, not everyone who witnessed *mu'jizat* accepted the prophets who performed them. Many, however, accepted Muhammad's ﷺ claim to prophethood after witnessing his beautiful character.

Teacher's note

If students have access to electronic devices, you may choose to have them complete the infographic digitally, similar to the example shown on slide eighteen.

Infographic Requirements			
Category	Expectation	Points	Comments
Visual	Students created a visual consequence that reflects the assigned miracle. It is creative, eye-catching, and accurate.	___/10	
Information	Students incorporated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a summary of the assigned miracle • specific supporting details that render the miracle a <i>mu'jiza</i> • a connection to the term <i>mutawatir</i> • the purpose of the miracle 	___/30	
Reflection	Students attach handout 2.2 “Physical Miracles,” which was done in complete silence. This allows students to reflect on their understanding how a miraculous event can verify the claim to prophethood.	___/10	

Infographic project
a group activity

- Form a group of 3-4 people.
- Grab a handout for each member of the group.
- Learn about your group's assigned miracle and use the guiding questions on 2.2 to begin recording information for your infographic.
- Create an informational poster about the Prophet's ﷺ miracle that your group was assigned. Be prepared to share with the class.
- Refer to the instruction sheet for rubric requirements.

Moon Splitting | Night Journey | Increased Water Supply
Increased Food Supply | Instantly Answered Prayers

The Miracles of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ
an overview



- Moon splitting
- Night journey
- Increased food and water supply
- Instantly answered prayers

an infographic by Yaqeen Institute

name: _____ date: _____

Mu'jiza misconceptions

teacher reference

As you instruct students on the nature of miracles, reference the information below to dispel common misconceptions on their occurrences.

Misconception no. 1: "Prophets control how and when miracles occur." This is incorrect. God chooses the miracles He gifts to His prophets.

Misconception no. 2: "Miracles reflect the 'divine' power of the prophets." This is incorrect. Prophets do not possess divine qualities, as they are humans like ourselves. Whatever miracles they perform are in the absolute control/will of God alone.

Misconception no. 3: "Miracles leave behind signs of their occurrence." As we have seen above, miracles can have many purposes. There is nothing inherent in them that requires traces to be left behind. As mentioned before, the Qur'an is the only miracle that is directly accessible at any point in time after its revelation.

Misconception no. 4: "Miracles are not scientifically possible." Both Muslims and non-Muslims have argued against this assertion. The underlying problem with this assertion is that the person making this claim holds science to be the arbiter of truth. There is nothing inherent in science that precludes the possibility of miracles. Just as the universe began by the command of God, and its laws run as ordered by God, miracles can sometimes occur outside the bounds of normality. Miracles are often an expression of the Divine reality, just as God evidenced His existence and messengerhood through the telltale signs of nature. He evidenced His omnipotence and the integrity of His messengers through occasionally breaching these same laws. Miracles can, therefore, simply be exceptions to the predominant natural order—contrary to it, but not contradicting it.

Misconception no. 5: "Miracles are a form of magic." This is incorrect. Miracles are when God suspends ordinary properties of the universe to make a supernatural experience for humans to witness. They are impossible to replicate, and no amount of human magic can create their effect. Magic usually involves illusions by which, if some variables and parameters are closely examined and changed, the same effect is not produced. Miracles, in contrast, change the nature of a thing and not merely its appearance. (See, for example, the difference between the magic of magicians vs. the miracles of Jesus in Surah Taubah, 20: 55-72).

21 - Mu'jiza misconceptions teacher reference

name: _____ date: _____

Prophetic miracles

➊ the moon splitting

- ➊ With your group, read the description below about the miracle of the moon splitting.
- ➋ Use what you learn to discuss the follow-up questions and record your individual response below each question.
- ➌ On your poster, create an infographic illustrating the moon-splitting. Refer to the rubric on the project's expectations.

"The Hour has come near, and the moon has split [in two]. And if they see any miracle, they turn away and say, 'Passive magic.' And they denied and followed their desires—and every matter will be settled" (Qur'an 54:3).

In an attempt to stump him, disbelievers from the Quraish clan demanded an undeniable sign from the Prophet ﷺ, which led to Allah splitting the moon before their eyes. The Prophet ﷺ then said, "Behold." The baffled crowd said that Muhammad must have cast a spell on them, but he responded, "No, it is Allah." They descended from the mountain and traveled from surrounding areas if they saw what they did. They went back facing out to question those beyond the city of Mecca, and they too confirmed having seen the exact same phenomenon. Afterward, the disbelievers were so taken aback that because nobody could deny seeing the moon split, they were forced to deny their own eyes.

Alongside showcasing many reports of the moon-splitting, Ibn Kathir (d. 1373) brings a key aspect of this incident to our attention: "When the moon split, it remained in the sky; rather, it cleaved into two. This was a clear miracle, and no one can deny it. It was the first miracle to be revealed to hover behind Mount Hirā, setting the mountain between itself and its counterpart, as described by the companion Abdullah ibn Masud who reports witnessing this himself."

Definitions to Keep In Mind:

➊ **Mutawatir:** in the science of hadith authentication, *mutawatir* is the strongest class of hadith, narrated by a large number of reliable narrators at each stage of transmission

➋ **Mu'jiza:** a supernatural event; an event that occurs in defiance of the laws of nature of the universe at the hands of our Prophet ﷺ, by the will of Allah, lending support to his ﷺ prophethood

22 - Prophetic miracles

name: _____ date: _____

Infographic requirements

Directions: The purpose of this activity is to explore a few of the miracles from the life of the Prophet ﷺ and how the components needed to support the miracle and verify the claim to prove a true prophet. Use the expectations listed on the table below to ensure you and your group are meeting the assignment requirements.

Name: _____ Assigned miracle: _____

Category	Expectation	Points	Comments
Visual	Students create a visual representation that reflects the assigned miracle. It is creative, eye-catching, and accurate.	/10	
Information	Students incorporate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➊ a summary of the assigned miracle ➋ specific supporting details that render it a mu'jiza ➌ the term <i>mu'jiza</i> ➍ the term <i>mutawatir</i> ➎ the purpose of the miracle 	/30	
Reflection	Students attach handout 2.3 "Physical Miracles," which was done in complete sentences and contains evidence that proves that the assigned miraculous event can verify the claim to prophethood.	/10	

23 - Infographic requirements

Lesson plan 2

Verifying prophethood: the Prophet's ﷺ miracles

Stage 3: Assessments

Formative assessment, 2.2

1. You may informally assess the first objective using the class discussion on slide thirteen. Students will first watch a video about the incident of the weeping tree, a *mutawatir* report in which several companions heard the trunk of a date-palm tree emit a loud, moaning sound upon seeing the Prophet ﷺ abandon it as his pulpit after the construction of a new one. Students will then respond to the follow-up question, "How does this example of a prophetic miracle verify the claim of a true prophet?" Their responses will indicate whether or not they recognize the importance of physical miracles as a mind-based proof of prophethood.

2. The infographic activity (**2.2 "Prophetic miracles"**) may be used to directly assess all of the lesson's objectives. Students will submit an infographic about one specific physical miracle of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ with the following information:

- a. Their summary of a physical miracle performed by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ (objective three).
- b. Their understanding of the miracle's purpose, or the reason for which it occurred by the will of God (objective two).
- c. Their argument for how the event of this miracle supports Prophet Muhammad ﷺ's claim to prophethood (objective one and three).
- d. Their understanding of the term *mu'jiza* and how the physical miracle they learned about renders its audience disabled from reproducing its like (objective two).

3. You may assess the first objective one last time on slide twenty-two: "What did they find significant in their exploration of miracles as a mind-based proof for prophethood?" As students share their final reflections to this question, gauge whether students have grown in their recognition of the importance of physical miracles.

Summative assessment 2.3

The final presentation and poster of students' infographics functions as a summative assessment for this lesson. You may use **2.3 "Infographic requirements"** to evaluate student projects.



Instructions and activities

Lesson 1

Lesson 2

**Lesson 3 • Meeting
Muhammad ﷺ: the
Prophet's character**



Essential questions

What are some key qualities of the Prophet ﷺ that make him worthy of emulation?

How can we carry out the Prophet's ﷺ legacy?



Key vocabulary

Sunnah

the Prophet ﷺ's words, deeds, and inner and outer states of being

Seerah

the Prophet ﷺ's historical biography, events in his life, etc.

Shama'il

the perfect physical, moral, and spiritual descriptions of the Prophet ﷺ

Character traits

valued aspects of a person's behavior; description of how someone acts in certain situations, or what kind of person they are

Prophetic responsibility

learning about the character and accomplishments of the Prophet ﷺ, in order to embody those characteristics

Lesson plan 3

Meeting Muhammad ﷺ: the Prophet's character

Stage 1: Big ideas and desired results

Lesson overview

Physical miracles are an amazing sight to behold and produce an immediate effect on the observer. Although physical miracles are sufficient to prove the claim of prophethood from a cognitive perspective, mind-based proofs alone are not enough to forge a deep, personal connection with the Prophet ﷺ. In fact, for many Muslims, the most miraculous sign of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was not that he suspended the laws of nature by God's leave, but that his character traits and accomplishments were unparalleled.

This lesson focuses on introducing students to the extraordinary character traits of the Prophet ﷺ. His spirit of generosity, patience, forbearance, and love and concern for his community are remarkable in their own right. His character constitutes a pathway to and evidence of his prophethood. By highlighting several aspects of his character, this lesson seeks to nurture an affective conviction in his message, and to inspire students to emulate and connect with the Prophet ﷺ.

Learning objectives

Toward the completion of this lesson, students should be able to:

- ① Recognize the character traits of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as a proof of his prophethood. (*cognitive*)
- ② Appreciate the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ beautiful character as a cause for emulation and love. (*affective*)

Stage 2: Learning plan

Total time: 90 min

Lesson plan outline

- Section 1, **slides 1-7**: Introducing the need to develop a personal connection with the Prophet Muhammad
- Section 2, **slides 8-13**: “Meeting Muhammad” character traits activity
- Section 3, **slides 14-18**: Having students consider the Prophet’s legacy and their own contribution to it

Supplies/equipment

- Lesson plan 3 presentation
- Computer/Projector/WiFi/Speakers; AND
 - Computer lab and/or multiple laptops; OR
 - Devices for reading QR codes (e.g., smartphones)
- Student notebooks/writing utensils
- One copy of handout **3.1 “QR codes”**
- Copies of handout **3.2 “Meeting Muhammad”** for each student
- Copies of **3.3 “Loving Muhammad”** for each student

Opening activity (15 min)

Section 1 • Slides 1-7 | Introducing the need to develop a personal connection with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Slide 1 / Recap and connect

1. Begin by opening the lesson plan three presentation and proceeding to **slide one**. Read aloud the question on the slide:

“Physical miracles are sufficient to prove Muhammad ﷺ’s claim to prophethood in our minds, but are they enough to convince our hearts to follow him?”
2. Instruct students to keep this question in mind for the next few slides and to hold onto their answers.
3. Remind students that in the previous lesson, they began exploring and understanding the mind-based proofs of prophethood through the exploration of physical miracles.
4. In this lesson, they will be introduced to a different “type” of proof that we will refer to as heart-based proofs. Heart-based proofs do not simply appeal to our minds, but they incline us to believe in Muhammad’s ﷺ prophethood in a more personal way by learning about his character.

Slides 2 - 5 / Turn & Talk: a knock on your door

1. Proceed to **slide two** and ask students to imagine the following scenario: “You are sitting with your family one night and hear a knock on your door. You go to open it and it is the Prophet ﷺ.”
2. Move on to **slide three** and have students discuss the scenario using the following questions as a guide:
 - a. Do you think the Prophet ﷺ would want to meet you?
 - b. What would your first interaction look like?
 - c. Describe how you and your family would feel.

The slide features a blue header with the number 1 and the text 'Mind-based: physical miracles'. Below it is a blue header with the number 2 and the text 'Heart-based: his character'. A large orange arrow points downwards from the top text area to the bottom text area. The background is white with some decorative elements.

The slide features a blue header with the text 'Turn & Talk'. Below it is a blue header with the text 'Imagine... There is a knock on your door and it's the Prophet ﷺ'. To the left of the text is a photograph of a green arched doorway with a blue door, set against a wall covered in ivy. The background is white with some decorative elements.

The slide features a blue header with the text 'Turn & Talk: a knock at your door'. Below it is a list of three numbered questions:

- ① Do you think the Prophet ﷺ would want to meet you?
- ② What would your first interaction look like?
- ③ Describe how you and your family would feel.

The background is white with some decorative elements.

Turn & Talk: a knock at your door



Physical miracles may convince our minds, but the **excellent character** of the Prophet ﷺ is what convinces our **hearts**.

Reflect: following in his ﷺ footsteps

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

"Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have a **good example** for one who hopes for Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much."
[Surat al-Ahzab, 33:21]



لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

"Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example for one who hopes for Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much."
[Surat al-Ahzab, 33:21]

Reflect: following in his ﷺ footsteps

Sunnah: his words, actions, and inner and outer states of being

Seerah: his biography, historical events in his life, etc.

Shama'il: his perfect moral, physical, and spiritual descriptions

The Prophet ﷺ was not only the **medium** of the message—he **was the message**.

3. Go to **slide four** and play the embedded video, where interviewees are asked to imagine the same scenario.

4. After playing the video, ask students the following questions:

- "Why did the people in the video—despite not seeing any physical miracles of the Prophet ﷺ—react the way they did?"
- Revisit the question from slide one and pose it once again: "Miracles are sufficient to prove Muhammad ﷺ's claim to prophethood in our minds, but are they enough to convince our hearts to follow him?"

5. Call on some students to give their answers.

Guided student response: The people in the video were not reacting to seeing a miracle performed by the Prophet ﷺ, but instead to a personal connection they have with him. This means that while miracles are important to support the claim of prophethood, they are not always sufficient on their own to convince people to believe in him. Many people at the time of the prophet witnessed his miracles and still did not believe. On the other hand, many people (including those in the video) have believed in him without witnessing his miracles.

6. After some students have shared their answers, move onto **slide five** and read the statement aloud: "**The physical miracles of the Prophet ﷺ may convince our minds, but the excellent character of the Prophet ﷺ is what convinces our hearts.**"

7. Refer students back to the video and point out that the Prophet's unique, beautiful, and amazing character captivated the hearts of those around him, and continues to have the same effect today on those who know him.

Learning activity (70 min)

Slides 6 - 7 / Reflect: following in his footsteps

1. Proceed to **slide six** and call on a student to read aloud the verse and its translation [Surat al-Ahzab, 33:21].

33:21

2. Remind students that this verse tells us that believing in the prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ isn't enough. We must take him as the best example to follow, as much as we are capable.

3. Following the Prophet in an effort to become like him is at the core of Islam.

4. Because of the importance of following the Prophet ﷺ, a number of sciences and disciplines have emerged to preserve everything the Prophet did, said, and taught. Ask students: "Can you think of any aspects of Islamic sciences that help preserve knowledge about the Prophet ﷺ? What do they mean?"

Guided student response: "Sunnah" refers to the Prophet ﷺ's words and deeds; the "hadith" is the collection of his words, recorded verbatim.

5. Go to **slide seven** and explain the difference between the following terms:

- Sunnah:** the Prophet ﷺ's words, deeds, and inner and outer states of being

- b. *Seerah*: his historical biography and chronology of major events in his life.
- c. *Shama'il*: the perfect physical, moral, and spiritual descriptions of the Prophet ﷺ

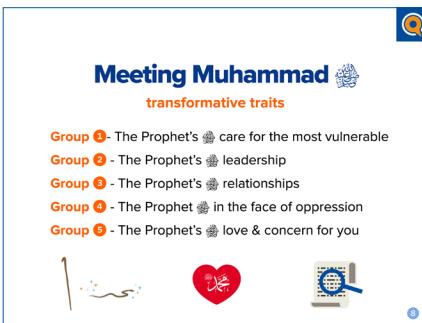
Elaborate on these terms by explaining the following points: “There are many parts of the traditional Islamic sciences that preserve some aspect of the Prophet ﷺ’s teachings. However, following the Prophet goes beyond knowing his words, his deeds, and pure historical facts about his life. Following the Prophet ﷺ entails understanding who he was, his character, and his states of being. In other words, the proof of the Prophet’s ﷺ message is not only through his amazing miracles, but also lies in who he was, the way he lived, and how he embodied that message: ‘He was not only the medium of the message; he was the message’.”

Teacher takeaway

In this section, students are invited to imagine meeting the Prophet ﷺ and developing a personal relationship with him. Students are also introduced to a broader definition of “Sunnah” that includes his inward character, which the next section explores.

Section 2 • Slides 8 - 13 | “Meeting Muhammad” character traits activity

Slides 8 - 13 / Meeting Muhammad ﷺ: transformative traits



Meeting Muhammad ﷺ
transformative traits

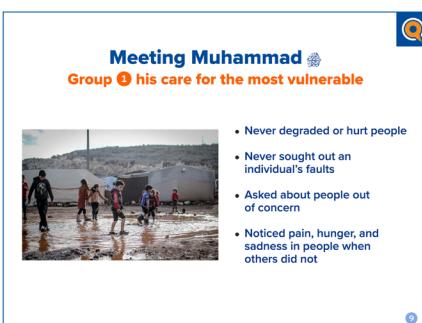
Group 1 - The Prophet's ﷺ care for the most vulnerable
Group 2 - The Prophet's ﷺ leadership
Group 3 - The Prophet's ﷺ relationships
Group 4 - The Prophet ﷺ in the face of oppression
Group 5 - The Prophet's ﷺ love & concern for you

Icons: A person with a heart, a magnifying glass over a heart, and a small figure walking.

Teacher's note

To prepare ahead for this lesson, print out one copy of **3.1 “QR codes.”** Print copies of **3.2 “Meeting Muhammad”** for each student. Set up each station with a laptop, smartphone, or other device set to play the respective video.

Alternatively, ensure that there is at least one student in each group with a smartphone to scan the QR code containing the link to each video. If the use of technology is difficult, each group will be provided with notes that contain the main points presented in each video on handout **3.1**.



Meeting Muhammad ﷺ
Group 1 his care for the most vulnerable



- Never degraded or hurt people
- Never sought out an individual's faults
- Asked about people out of concern
- Noticed pain, hunger, and sadness in people when others did not

1. Proceed to **slide eight** and inform students that they will now engage in an activity to get to know the Prophet ﷺ on a deeper level. In this activity, they will see what it was about him that appealed to the hearts of all those around him and all those who have come to know of him long after he passed away.
2. Next, divide the class into five groups. Assign each group a number from 1-5.
3. Pass out handout **3.1 “QR codes”** to each group based on their assigned number. Instruct students that they have ten minutes to watch the video by scanning the QR code on the handout and to answer the reflection questions. They may refer to the video notes included if they have trouble playing the video. Once complete, inform students that each group will give a five minute presentation of the trait highlighted in their video to the rest of the class. Remind students to use the questions and video notes on their handout **(3.1)** to ensure that they do not miss any important points while presenting.
4. Pass out handout **3.2 “Meeting Muhammad”** to each student and instruct the class to take notes as each group presents.
5. As you go through the following slides, you may use the prompts provided to frame the discussion around what it is that allowed the companions to connect with the Prophet ﷺ when they met and interacted with him. The prompts are also meant to allow students to form an emotional attachment to the Prophet ﷺ and imagine what it would be like to be around someone in their lives now that embodies these prophetic traits. Use the points on the slide to fill in any knowledge gaps and to reflect on how and why the companions had so much love for the Prophet ﷺ.
6. Begin with **slide nine** and read the following prompt: “Have you ever been in a situation where you felt invisible? Or when something was bothering or upsetting you, and you needed help but didn't know who you could turn to?”

Meeting Muhammad ﷺ
Group ❷ his leadership in times of hardship



- Dug in the trenches during battle
- Placed two stones on his stomach to stop hunger
- Courageous
- Fought on the front lines
- Reminded his companions of Allah

Meeting Muhammad ﷺ
Group ❸ his relationships with those around him



- Made everyone feel like he was their best friend
- Gave loving and sincere advice
- Received and gave gifts in return
- Smiled warmly at all his companions

Meeting Muhammad ﷺ
Group ❹ in the face of injustice



- Provided support to anyone who had a righteous cause
- Stood up for animals
- Was a voice for the voiceless

Meeting Muhammad ﷺ
Group ❺ his love and care for you



- He cried for his ummah
- He would spend the entire night making du'a for us
- The du'a that brought Aisha so much joy

a. Next, allow students from group #1 to present by using the questions on their handout (3.1) to guide their presentation.

7. Proceed to **slide ten** and read the following prompt: “Think of a popular leader, figure, or head of state. How often does the commander of an army fight in the frontlines with the newest recruits? Do we usually see the CEO of a company working next to the interns? Is it typical to see a celebrity roll up their sleeves to do the ‘dirty work’ of the crew?”

a. Next, allow students from group #2 to present by using the questions on their handout (3.1) to guide their presentation.

8. Transition to **slide eleven** and read the following prompt: “Think of the number one person in your life who makes you feel more special than anyone else. Someone who, when you walk into the room, their face lights up when they see you. Maybe it’s a parent, a sibling, a teacher, or a best friend. Are they the same with everyone? Can you imagine someone who makes every single person they meet—from their closest family member to the cashier at the grocery store—feel this way?”

a. Next, allow students from group #3 to present by using the questions on their handout (3.1) to guide their presentation.

9. Continue to **slide twelve** and read the following prompt: “When you picture a ‘social justice warrior,’ what images come to mind? Can you think of an activist or ‘reformer’ who was not only concerned with their chosen cause, but stood up to every single act of oppression and injustice, no matter how small or different from their ‘main’ mission?”

a. Next, allow students from group #4 to present by using the questions on their handout (3.1) to guide their presentation.

10. Proceed to **slide thirteen** and read the following prompt: “Imagine meeting someone for the first time and finding out that, to them, you are their brother or sister, they have more care and concern for you than your own parents, and they think about you every day. Imagine finding out that more than 1400 years before you were born, they were thinking about you, worried about your welfare, and in every prayer would make du'a for you...”

a. Next, allow students from group #5 to present by using the questions on their handout (3.1) to guide their presentation.

Teacher takeaway

In this section, students have an opportunity to explore the traits that exemplify the Prophet’s ﷺ beautiful character and state. Although he was human, he perfected the message in every way and modeled for us a practical way of applying the prophetic traits in our lives. When asked about his character in private, his wife, Aisha ﷺ, described him as having the character of the Qur'an. Throughout the activity, students are encouraged to visualize what it would be like to be in the presence of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. They can imagine what it would be like to see him, host him in their homes, pray behind him, and ultimately have him as a teacher and friend. His character captivated hearts and served as a heart-based proof of his prophethood.

What is one word that describes the trait that stood out to you the most?



The natural inclination to admire and emulate him confirms in our hearts that he is a true prophet. His character is a heart-based proof of prophethood.

Turn & Talk:
Longing for the Prophet ﷺ

Dr. Omar Suleiman

Do you think the Prophet ﷺ would want to meet **you**?
What would you say to him ﷺ?

Section 3 • Slides 14 - 18 | Having students consider the Prophet's legacy and their own contribution to it

Slides 14-16 / Muhammad ﷺ: a heart-based proof

- Proceed to **slide fourteen** and pose the question on the slide: "After exploring his character, what is one word that describes the trait that stood out to you most?" Call on many students to quickly state their word aloud before the whole class.
- Then, transition to the word cloud on **slide fifteen**. Give students a moment to glance at the many words describing the Prophet's beautiful character. Then, ask students to complete a turn and talk with an elbow partner using the question displayed on the slide: "How does Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ embodiment of these exceptional traits prove that he was a prophet? Make your case."
- After a few minutes, call on a few students to share their responses. Below is a sample student response. Be sure all students understand this concluding point before proceeding to the next slide.

Guided student response: The Prophet ﷺ exemplified these beautiful character traits consistently throughout his life and to everyone regardless of who they were. Everyone, from the people closest to him to his most vocal enemies and opponents, all agreed on the excellence of his character. To combine all of these exceptional traits in a single person, who consistently exhibited these traits with everyone he came into contact with, is itself a proof of prophethood.

- Transition to **slide sixteen** and read the text on the slide: "The natural inclination to admire and emulate the Prophet ﷺ confirms in our hearts that he is a true prophet. In other words, his character is a heart-based proof of prophethood." Use the following concluding remarks:
 - Tell students that his character is what appealed to the hearts of those around him, and continues to appeal even to us as we study his life over a millennium later.
 - Inform students that in the next section, we will explore how we can come closer to the Prophet ﷺ and emulate these impeccable traits.

Slide 17 / Turn & Talk: longing to Meet Muhammad ﷺ

- Proceed to **slide fifteen** and play the final video: "Longing for His Presence."
- Have students turn to their elbow partners and discuss the following: Imagine you made it to the *hawd* (lake or large cistern on the day of judgment). The Prophet ﷺ is standing there, smiling and waiting to greet you.
 - Do you think he ﷺ would want to meet you?
 - What would you say to him ﷺ?
- Call on a few students to share their answers with the class.
 - Sample student response:* The more I learn about the love and mercy the Prophet ﷺ had for his *ummah* and the way he ﷺ treated everyone

Continuing his legacy
emulating his character

إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ

"Indeed, your enemy is the one cut off"
[Surat al-Kawthar, 108:3]

How can we partake in Allah's promise to His messenger that he will not be cut off?



إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ

"Indeed, your enemy is the one cut off"
[Surat al-Kawthar, 108:3]

around him, the more I feel that, yes, he would definitely want to meet me no matter what state I think I am in. The more I aim to become like him and work to embody his traits, the closer I will be to him ﷺ and amongst those he wants to meet. As for what I would say to him ﷺ on that day, I think I would thank him for his *du'a* and care for us and for being the best example a person could have.

Slides 18 - 20 / Continuing the legacy: emulating his character

- Proceed to **slide eighteen** and ask for a volunteer to read aloud the verse and its translation [Surat al-Kawthar, 108:3].
- Outline the following points:
 - The context of the verse: it was revealed to comfort the Prophet ﷺ after he was criticized for lacking a male descendant and, therefore, someone to continue his message.
 - Linguistically, the word "al-abtar" refers to the animal whose tail is cut off. At the time of Muhammad's prophethood, he had many critics and enemies who sought nothing more than to delegitimize him and undermine his message. One of the enemies of Islam, al-'As ibn Wa'il called the Prophet ﷺ "al-abtar" (cut off), advising others to "leave him, for he is a man who is cut off (*abtar*), having no descendants. When he dies, he will not be remembered." Al-'As ibn Wa'il felt that Muhammad's traits, accomplishments, and message would be buried with his death since he ﷺ did not leave behind any male descendants to carry his legacy for future generations.
 - The last verse in Surat al-Kawthar is a rebuke and response to al-'As ibn Wa'il whereby Allah declares, "It is surely the one who hates you who has been cut off."
- Explain that the verse is giving comfort and hope to the Prophet ﷺ that, while he did not have male descendants, his followers will be many, and his legacy will never be cut off. In fact, his message will be carried far and wide, and preserved from one generation to the next until the end of time.
- Read aloud the question on the slide: "How can we partake in Allah's promise to His messenger that he will not be cut off?" Call on a few students to share their responses:

Sample student response: While it's true that the Prophet did not have male descendants to continue his hereditary lineage, all the Muslims in his *ummah* are his spiritual followers and descendants. His traits, accomplishments, and message are a responsibility for us all to uphold. By carrying on his legacy, it's as if we are responding to Ibn Wa'il that indeed the Prophet is not cut off; rather, his timeless message will live on our works.

- Next, on **slide nineteen**, play the embedded videos.
- Move to **slide twenty** and pose the following questions to students:
 - How is the person in each video following some of the traits of our Prophet ﷺ?
 - How are the man and woman in this video carrying out a **prophetic responsibility**?

Continuing his legacy
emulating his character

DAWN SAIFI: I want to reach out to you so much. I just wanted to know that you're okay.

The slaying rattled the Muslim community, who wondered if it was a hate crime.

How are these individuals embodying some of the traits of our Prophet ﷺ?

Continuing his legacy:
emulating his character



By following the Prophet's ﷺ character, how are the individuals in the videos carrying out a **prophetic responsibility**?

Sample student response: The people in these videos are embodying the Prophet ﷺ's forgiveness in the face of so much harm and pain. They are carrying his legacy forward because, despite being in a very difficult situation, they put the Prophet's message of mercy above their personal feelings of hurt and grief. And they spread his message by telling the people in the courtroom, proudly and openly, that Islam is what inspired their decision to forgive.

7. Explain the term “prophetic responsibility” to students: the act of learning about the character and accomplishments of the Prophet ﷺ, and implementing those characteristics in our personal lives.
8. Remind students that forgiving someone who wronged you is not mandatory in Islam. The people in the video would have been well within their rights to demand compensation for what they went through, according to Islamic law. But they chose to go above and beyond that. They wanted not only to be Muslims who followed the sacred law (shari’ah) that was revealed to the Prophet, but to follow and emulate the prophetic characteristics of his heart, which was always ready to forgive.

Teacher takeaway

This section shows students that longing to be like the Prophet ﷺ is itself a form of worship and a way of following him. In fact, striving to emulate him is the best way of following him because it is what brings us closest to him, as those with the best character are the closest to the Prophet ﷺ in the hereafter. By sharing videos of people who forgave those who hurt them and thinking of times in their own life when they emulated a prophetic character trait, students may begin to envision how they can become more like the Prophet ﷺ.

Consolidation

Slide 21 / Exit ticket



Personal reflection

1 Which traits of the Prophet ﷺ do you relate to the most or already embody?

2 Which prophetic trait would you like to emulate as part of continuing his legacy?



Teacher’s note

Consider making “Our Legacy” into an ongoing activity for the rest of the day or week. You may reserve a spot on the wall or bulletin board for the “Legacy Wall.” Allow students to add to their posts and read their classmates’ responses as they continue to think about this theme.

1. Proceed to **slide seventeen** and pass out one post-it note to each student. Read aloud the exit ticket questions:
 - a. “Which traits of the Prophet ﷺ resonate with your own character? In other words, which traits are you already emulating?”
 - b. “Which prophetic trait would you like to emulate as part of continuing his legacy?”
2. Give students a few minutes to answer these questions on their individual post-it note. Before turning it in, call on a few students to come up and post their legacy on a designated area of the wall called “Our Legacy.” Read some of their responses out to the class. On their way out, the remaining students can add their post-it notes to the legacy wall. 
3. At the end of class, pass out **3.3 “Loving Muhammad ﷺ: spreading his message”** to students and inform them that it will be their cumulative assessment for the entire unit. Instruct students to follow along through part one of the assessment as you read the directions.

Read the following instructions to students: “After learning about the mind-based proofs (miracles) and the heart-based proofs (character traits) of Muhammad’s ﷺ prophethood, it’s time to consider how you would share your newfound knowledge, love, and appreciation with others. In this assignment, you will be given an opportunity to present the proofs of Muhammad’s ﷺ prophethood, using a creative medium of your choice, to someone hearing about him for the first time.”

name: _____	date: _____
<h1>QR codes Meeting Muhammad</h1>	
<h2>Group ④ his care for the most vulnerable</h2>	
<p>Directions: Scan the QR code below and watch the video as a group. Once completed, discuss and record the responses to the questions. Prepare to present your responses and a summary of your assigned trait to the whole class.</p>	
<p>If you are unable to watch the video, you may refer to the notes provided below to learn more about how the Prophet ﷺ embodied his assigned trait. Read the text together and then answer the questions. Prepare to present your responses and a summary of your assigned trait to the whole class.</p>	
QR code	Video notes
	<p>Some people spend their entire lives trying to come to terms with injustices they've experienced. This causes them to ask many questions, such as: "Why was I treated this way?" or "Is there any way to make up for what happened to me?" Some people, on the other hand, will accept the suffering they've experienced and instead aspire to become a source of healing for the pain of others. This was the case for our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.</p> <p>The Prophet ﷺ understood every form of hardship, inseparably, ranging from physical suffering to emotional and spiritual suffering, mental and physical harm. Because of his experiences, he was too familiar with every type of pain and vulnerability. As a result, unlike others who often failed to notice, he always responded with compassion and empathy.</p> <p>Abu Hurayra mentioned that, on one occasion, his state of hunger was so intense that it would cause him to faint. To alleviate the pain, he would tie stones to his feet. He was in this state for a period of time, and was a source of the Ahl al-Sunnah's pride. Because of his strong sense of dignity, he was too ashamed to ask anyone for help or sustenance.</p> <p>When several companions visited by Abu Hurayra tried to get them attention by asking him for food, however, he would respond with a smile of humor. It seemed he never noticed that a person needed food. But then the Prophet ﷺ walked him and asked his state. He looked at Abu Hurayra and said, "O Abu Hurayra! You have been given a gift that instilled a sense of ease and comfort in Abu Hurayra's heart by using a shortened version of his name." The Prophet ﷺ then said, "Follow me."</p>

Lesson plan 3

Meeting Muhammad ﷺ: the Prophet's character

Stage 3: Assessments

Formative assessment 3.1, 3.2

To formatively assess the first objective, listen to students' responses to the question on slide fifteen. The question goes, "How does Prophet Muhammad's  embodiment of these exceptional traits prove that he was a prophet? Make your case." Their ability to articulate a coherent argument for the prophet's impeccable character as a heart-based proof, similar to the one in the guided student response demonstrates that they met the first objective.

Activity **3.1 “QR codes”** assesses students on the second objective. In the third reflection question, students are asked to share their appreciation of a particular prophetic trait and how it may inspire them to emulate the Prophet ﷺ.

Activity **3.2 “Meeting Muhammad ﷺ”** may also be used to assess students on the second objective. Students take turns presenting the unique character traits of the Prophet ﷺ in order to deepen their knowledge of the Prophet ﷺ’s impeccable character. Exposing students to a wide range of beautiful traits may increase their desire to emulate him.

The exit ticket on slide seventeen assesses student understanding of the second objective by asking students to choose the prophetic trait that resonates with them most—one they would like to emulate and commit to—and then post it on the “Legacy Wall.”

Loving Muhammad spreading his message

Directions:

After learning about the nine-based proofs presented in the last lesson, prove (character traits) of Muhammad (s) as you understand it. It's time to consider how you would share your new/old knowledge, love, and respect with others. In this assignment, you will be given an opportunity to present the proofs of Muhammad's (s) prophethood using a creative medium of your choice to someone hearing about him for the first time.

Step 1 Read

When the Muslims were being persecuted in Mecca, the Prophet ﷺ sent a group of them to Abyssinia to appeal to the just Christian ruler, al-Najashi, to grant the Muslims asylum. The spokesperson of the Abyssinian kingdom, Abraha, was influenced by what Jafar ibn Abi Talib, in his speech, Jafar, said on behalf of those who sought refuge in Abyssinia. It included the description of the Prophet ﷺ, why his message was necessary, and the impact it had on the believers' minds and hearts. In the end, it convinced al-Najashi, who later secretly converted to Islam, to grant the Muslims asylum. Below is a translation of Jafar's poem:

O King! We were plunged in the depth of ignorance and barbarism; we adored idols, we lived in unchastity, we ate the dead bodies, and we spoke abominations. We disregarded every feeling of humanity, and the duties of hospitality and neighborhood were neglected. [Paragraph 1]

We knew no law but that of the strong when Allah raised among us a man of whose birth, truthfulness, purity and purity we were aware. He called to the Oneness of Allah, and taught us not to associate anything with Him. [Paragraph 2]

He forbade us the worship of idols and he enjoined us to speak truth, to be faithful to our trusts, to be merciful and to regard the rights of the neighbors and kith and kin. He forbade us to speak evil of others or to eat the substance of orphans. He ordered us to flee from the vices, and to abstain from sins; to offer prayers, to render alms, and to observe fast. We have believed in him, and accepted his teachings and his injunctions to worship Allah, and not to associate anything with Him, and we have allowed what He has allowed, and prohibited what He has prohibited. [Paragraph 3]

For this reason, our people have risen against us. They persecuted us in order to make us forsake the worship of Allah and return to the worship of idols and other abominations. They have tortured and injured us, until finding no safety among them; we have come to your country, and hope you will protect us from oppression.

[Source: Mughniyyah Ahmad 21992]

Summative assessment 3.3

For **3.3 “Loving Muhammad ﷺ”** students read the speech of Ja’far ibn Abi Talib to the Christian King al-Najashi and apply various components of his message to a modern platform. Students should include elements from previous lessons in their project. This activity assesses objectives from all three lessons.



Additional readings

References

References and resources

Quranic references

Lesson plan 1

أَيْخُسْبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى

Does humankind think that they will be left [on this Earth] roaming at will?
[75:36]

مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِنْ يَتَبَعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى الْأَنْفُسُ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِنْ رَبِّهِمُ الْهُدَىٰ

...These people merely follow speculation and the whims of their nafs, even though guidance has come to them from their Lord. [53:23]

وَمَا مَنَعَ النَّاسَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا إِذْ جَاءَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَبْعَثَ اللَّهُ بَشَرًا رَسُولًا * قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَلِئَةٌ كَمَا يَشْوُنُ مُطْمَئِنَّنَاتِنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَلْسَنَاءِ مَلَكًا رَسُولًا

And what prevented people from believing when the guidance came to them except that they said, "Has Allah sent a human messenger?" Say, "If there were upon the earth angels walking securely, We would have sent down to them from heaven an angel [as a] messenger." [17:94-5]

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ وَلَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا مَلَكًا لَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ نَمَّ لَا يُنْظَرُونَ * وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ مَلَكًا لَجَعَلْنَاهُ رَجُلًا
وَلَلَّبَسْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَا يَلْبِسُونَ

And they say, "Why was there not an angel sent down to him [i.e., the Prophet]?" But if We had sent down an angel, the matter would have been decided; then they would not be reprieved. And if We had made him [the messenger] an angel, We would have made him [appear as] a man, and We would have covered them with that in which they cover themselves. [6:8-9]

Lesson plan 2

قَالُوا إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مُنْلُنَا تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَصُدُّونَا عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ ءابَاؤُنَا فَأُتُونَا بِسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ

...they argued, "You are no more than humans like us...so bring us some compelling proof."

قَالَتْ لَهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ إِنَّنَحْنُ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مُثْلُكُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَمَا كَانَ لَنَا أَنْ تَأْتِيَكُمْ
بِسُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

Their messengers said to them, "We are indeed only humans like you but God favors whoever He chooses from His servants. We cannot bring you any proof unless God permits it..." [14:10-11]

قَالَ بْلَ أَنَّ الْقُوَّا فَإِذَا حِبْلُهُمْ وَعِصِّيُّهُمْ يُخَيِّلُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ سِحْرِهِمْ أَنَّهَا تَسْعَ

...And suddenly their ropes and staffs seemed to him from their magic that they were moving [like snakes]. [20:66]

وَأَلْقِ مَا فِي يَمِينَكَ تَلْقَفْ مَا صَنَعُوا إِنَّمَا صَنَعُوا كَيْدُ سَاحِرٍ وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّاحِرُ حِينَئِ

And throw what is in your right hand; it will swallow up what they have crafted. What they have crafted is but the trick of a magician, and the magician will not succeed wherever he is. [20:69]

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لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَدَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example for him who hopes for Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much. [33:21]

إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْرَ

Indeed, your enemy is the one cut off. [108:3]

وَقِيَ أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِلْسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومُ

The people who pray at night] have in their wealth a right for one who asks and for one who is deprived (out of dignity). [51:19]

Hadith resources

Lesson plan 2

Ibn Masud ﷺ said, “We were once with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on a journey, and our water ran short. He said, “Bring me the remaining water.” The people presented him a vessel containing water, which he then placed his hands inside of and said, “Come get the blessed purification water, and all blessings are from Allah.” I saw the water flowing from between the fingers of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ. Indeed, we used to also hear the food glorifying Allah as it was being eaten [by him].” [Bukhari & Muslim]

Jabir b. Abdullah ﷺ narrated that the people became very thirsty on the Day of Hudaybiyya. There was a small pot containing some water in front of the Prophet ﷺ, and he found the people rushing towards him as he finished performing his ritual ablution using it. He ﷺ asked them, “What has happened?” They said, “We neither have water for ablution nor drinking.” So he ﷺ placed his palm into that pot, and water began flowing upwards from between his fingers like springs. He said, “All those seeking ablution, come forward; the blessing is from Allah.” Jabir said, “We all drank and performed ablution [from that pot], and I did not care how much I drank because I knew it was blessed.” One narrator asked Jabir, “How many were you?” He said, “Even if we had been one hundred thousand, it would have been sufficient for us, but we were fifteen hundred.” Anas b. Malik ﷺ personally narrated several other nearly identical incidents of water pouring forth from between the Prophet’s ﷺ blessed fingers. [Bukhari]

Ibn Abdul-Barr explains, “What the Prophet ﷺ was granted in this inimitable miracle is clearer than the signs of the other prophets, and even the most notable of them, such as what Moses had been granted when he struck the stone with his staff, causing twelve springs to erupt from it. That is because some stones can be found with springs erupting from them, while water emerging from between the fingers of a human being has never been witnessed from anyone but our Prophet.” [Bukhari]

Salama b. al-Akwa' ﷺ narrates, “We once set out on an expedition with Allah's Messenger ﷺ and faced great hardship, and decided to slaughter some of our riding animals [for food]. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordered us to pool our food rations, so we spread a sheet and leather where everyone's rations were collected. I stretched myself to assess how much that was, and it was [only] the area a small goat could sit on. We were fourteen hundred people. We ate to our satisfaction and then filled our bags with provisions. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then said, “Is there any water for performing ablution?” A man came forward with a small container that held very little water, which the Prophet ﷺ emptied into a wider basin. From that amount, all thoroughly performed their ablution. Eight individuals later came and said, “Is there any water left to perform ablution?” Allah's Messenger ﷺ replied, “The ablution water has finished.”” [Muslim]

Anas b. Malik ﷺ reports: Abu Talha said to Um Sulaym, “I have heard the voice of Allah's Messenger ﷺ reflecting weakness, and I could recognize hunger in it. Do you have anything?” She said, “Yes.” She pulled out several wheat loaves, wrapped them in her veil, then tucked them under my arm and wrapped me with the remaining part of the veil. She sent me to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and, upon reaching the mosque, I found people with him. I stood beside them, until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to me, “Did Abu Talha send you?” I said, “Yes.” He said, “With food?” I said, “Yes.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then said to the people, “Let us go.” They took off, and I took off in front of them until I reached Abu Talha and informed him. Abu Talha said, “O Um Sulaym, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has come, accompanied by the people, and we have nothing to feed them.” She said, “Allah and His Messenger know best.” Upon arrival, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “O Um Sulaym, what do you have?” She presented that same bread, which the Prophet ﷺ took and shredded, and then Um Sulaym emptied her jar of shortening (butter) over it as a condiment. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then supplicated over it for however long he wished before saying, “Permit for ten [to enter].” They were permitted entrance and ate to their fill before leaving. Then he said, “Permit for ten.” They too were permitted entrance and ate to their fill before leaving. Then he said, “Permit for ten.” Everyone ate in this fashion, until they all had their fill, and they were seventy or eighty men in total.” [Bukhari]

Anas ﷺ narrates that as the Prophet ﷺ was once delivering a Friday sermon, a man rose up and said, “O Messenger of Allah, the horses and sheep have perished; will you not invoke Allah to bless us with rain?” The Prophet ﷺ proceeded to lift his two hands and supplicated at a time when the sky was as clear as glass. Suddenly, wind blew, driving together the clouds and causing heavy rain. We exited [the mosque] wading through the flowing water till we reached our homes. It kept raining until the following Friday, when the same man—or another man—stood up and said, “O Messenger of

Allah ﷺ, the houses have [almost] collapsed; please ask Allah to withhold the rain!" On that, the Prophet ﷺ smiled and said, "O Allah, [let it rain] around us and not upon us." I looked to the clouds and found them separating into a crown-like formation around Medina. [Bukhari]

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that he once came to the Prophet ﷺ with tears in his eyes, which caused him to ask, "What makes you cry, O Abu Hurayra?" He said, "I have not stopped inviting my mother to Islam but she continues to reject it. Today, I invited her again and heard from her painful words about you. Pray that Allah opens the heart of Abu Hurayra's mother to Islam." The Prophet ﷺ obliged and said, "O Allah, guide the mother of Abu Hurayra."

Abu Hurayra narrates: I left hopeful from the prayer of the Prophet ﷺ and returned home to find the door partially open and could hear water splashing inside. When my mother heard my footsteps, she said, "Stay where you are, O Abu Hurayra." After putting on her clothes, she instructed me to enter. When I entered, she said, "I testify that none is worthy of worship but Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and messenger." I returned to the Prophet ﷺ while weeping with joy, just as an hour earlier I had gone weeping in sadness, and said, "Great news, O Messenger of Allah! Allah has answered your prayer and guided the mother of Abu Hurayra to Islam." He praised Allah and thanked Him, and then I said, "O Messenger of Allah, pray that Allah make my mother and I beloved to His believing slaves, and make them beloved to us." He ﷺ obliged, and there has not been a believing slave who hears of me, or sees me, except that he loves me."

Textual resources

Lesson plan 3

A translation of Jafar's poem: Musnad Ahmad 21992

Multimedia resourcess

Lesson plan 2

The weeping tree: | <https://yaqeeninstitute.org/mohammad-elshinawy/the-weeping-tree-animation/#.XjNi41NKjY1o>

Lesson plan 3

What would you say to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ? | Meeting Muhammad Ramadan Series: | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7kopeGA-tPco>

When No One Else Noticed You | Meeting Muhammad ﷺ Episode 13: | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQXDRRNiK-g&list=PLQ02IYL5pmhHvZ02LKQVeey8H-2XBKMGb&index=16>

With Him In The Trenches | Meeting Muhammad ﷺ Episode 6: | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f10XPLDz8x8&list=PLQ02IYL5pmhHvZ02LKQVeey8H-2XBKMGb&index=9>

When You Thought You Were His Best Friend | Meeting Muhammad ﷺ Episode 11: | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6adaytud-1o&list=PLQ02IYL5pmhHvZ02LKQVeey8H-2XBKMGb&index=14>

When He Saw Oppression | Meeting Muhammad ﷺ Episode 15: | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-G9HEKLDLo&list=PLQ02IYL5pmhHvZ02LKQVeey8H-2XBKMGb&index=18>

When He Would Pray For Us | Meeting Muhammad ﷺ Episode 28: | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o42ml0uiKg&list=PLQ02IYL5pmhHvZ02LKQVeey8H-2XBKMGb&index=31>

Longing for His Presence | Meeting Muhammad ﷺ Episode 30: | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJcXJ6Kz8pw&list=PLQ02IYL5pmhHvZ02LKQVeey8H-2XBKMGb&index=33>

Muslim woman forgives attacker and befriends her sister: | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgfurioMjYc>

Why this father hugged the man who helped kill his son: | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnK_tlAXnB4&feature=emb_title