

Mock # 8 (Islamic Studies)

Ans # 2

Outline

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Basic Concepts of Akhrat
 - a) Destruction of the world
 - b) Resurrection of All Humans
 - c) Day of Judgement
 - d) Reward and Punishment
- 3) Life After Death : A Rational Review
- 4) Impacts of the doctrine
 - a) On Individuals
 - i) Dissemination of Hope
 - ii) A will to struggle
 - iii) An aim to strive for perfection
 - iv) Strengthening of Tauheed.
 - b) On Society
 - i) Instills Unity
 - ii) Eliminates Injustice
 - iii) Roots out Corruption
- 5) Conclusion

1) Introduction

The belief on the day of judgement and reward or punishment after death is one of the five basic beliefs of Islam. This belief lays the core structure of Islamic System. In order to be a true believer, affirming this concept is trivial. But it is not merely a closed concept that one can acknowledge verbally; this concept augments the belief in Allah and His Prophets, His books and His angel.

The concept of Akhrot not only helps individuals in making sense of the world, it also assists the larger society in living in peace, harmony and side-stepping every moral sin that can disrupt the social fabric of the society.

2) Basic Concept of Akhrot:

The arabic word "Akhrot" stands for the 'the last' or 'the end'. In the context of Islam, it means the end of the time on Earth for everything and everyone that has ever existed in this Universe.

Allah (SWT) has clearly mentioned the signs and manifestations of this day at several instances in Qur'an. In Surah Qayyamah, the concept of Resurrection is mentioned.

While in Surah Zilzaal, Allah (SWT) explains the signs of the Day of Judgement and Process of Accountability.

The concept of Akhrat (Life Hereafter) has several sub-concepts - A clear understanding of the entire concept, mandates their individual understanding.

In the book 'Towards Understanding Islam', Sayyid Abul'Ala Maududi has mentioned the following concepts pertaining to Akhrat:-

a) Destruction of the World:

This basic ingredient of Akhrat means that everything will be annihilated by the will of Allah (SWT). The word used for this day is "Qiyamah".

b) Resurrection of All Humans:

The next event will be the resurrection of all beings. They will rise and march towards

The court for their final judgement -
The word used for it is *Haṣhr*: Resurrection.

c) Day of Judgement

The day of Judgement will decide the fate of everyone based on the weight of their good and bad deeds. This is the day on which the virtuous will be rewarded and sinners punished.

d) Reward and Punishment

This concept is based on the idea of Heaven and Hell. This will be the end result of what the man has been doing in his life on Earth - The cumulative result of his actions will land him in Heaven or Hell.

3) Life After Death: A Rational Review

A rational analysis of the entire idea demands that we evaluate the truth behind this concept - This is mostly done by the atheists who want to base their beliefs on solid scientific foundation -

- i) This Western atheist ideology propounds that since the idea of life after death has no scientific basis, it is not to be believed as truth.
- ii) The ideology of some Eastern religions,

propound the idea of multiple lives. Those who are virtuous ~~are~~ in previous life are born as high-ranking humans while the sinners are re-born as animals. But their own ideology is a cause of confusions for them as they have no proof to back their belief.

iii) Lastly, the idea that all of the Prophets including Prophet Muhammad (SAW) have propagated is that of Akhrot. Hinduism and Buddhism may be antagonizing Islamic concept rigidly but Modern Scientific Research has itself provided several concepts that negate their beliefs and prove that Islamic Ideology of Akhrot holds ground.

Decades of research in Cosmology has proved that creation and destruction of new planets and stars is a continuous phenomena. This means that the death of the Universe and creation of a new, higher Cosmos won't be an impossibility.

Moreover, if scientific research has so far failed to gather the evidence of life after death, it doesn't

mean that the phenomena doesn't exist at all. The God who has the power to grant life for once can certainly do that again.

4) Impact of the doctrine:

The impacts of the doctrine of Akhiraat are both individual and collective. The belief instill unity, hope and will to struggle and to refrain from the distractions of this world.

a) On Individuals,

Impacts of Akhiraat on an individual are as follows:-

i) Dissemination of Hope:

This is one of the most important impact. This is because the world is a place for trials and sufferings. It is also a world where the physical law reigns supreme which means that the wrongdoers don't always get punished and the virtuous don't always get rewarded. However, the idea of Heaven creates a hope for those who are suffering that their trials will end and they will get rewarded soon.

ii) A Will to Struggle

This is another important impact on the individual level. The idea of the life hereafter

allows an individual to understand that the world is not an end in itself; it is just a test that they are going through transiently. Quranic verse 13:29 delivers his idea clearly:-

"Those who believe and act righteously, joy is for them and a blissful home to return to."

iii) An aim to strive for Perfection
Believing in the idea of Akhiraat also makes an individual strive for being a perfect version of themselves. It tells them that they have been given the chance to improve themselves till their death so that they can be awarded on the day of judgement.

Verses like "For us are our deeds, for you yours", instill a spirit of individual effort for betterment.

iv) Strengthening of Tauheed
Akhiraat is not an isolated belief, it stands in conjunction to other beliefs particularly the ideology of Tauheed (Oneness of Allah). Firmly

believing the veracity of Akhrot means that one also believes that Allah alone is the power to do, undo and redo everything that is present in this universe.

b) On Society

Impacts of Akhrot on the larger society are as follows:

i) Instills Unity

A society is a congregation of individuals and its balance resides on their individual actions. In a society where every member has firm belief in the Day of Judgement and strives to avoid ill deeds, ultimately leads to a society that is harmonious & unified. Such a society has no clash of ideas, ideologies, goals and means to achieve those goals because everyone is striving for a better afterlife.

ii) Eliminates Injustice

Elimination of injustice is another effect of belief in Akhrot. A society with firm belief in betterment of Afterlife strives to root out inequality, injustice and division. This effect is basically an extension of individual effort to establish good and diminishes vices.

iii) Roots out Corruption

The Quranic injunction "Cling firmly by means of God's rope and don't be divided" calls people (believers) to stay united against all the evil forces that try to corrupt the hearts and minds of the people.

It is human nature to look for quick gains and rewards and so corrupt practices seem like the most easy way to achieve those rewards. However, the belief in Akhrot keeps corrupt practices from developing in the societal institutions.

5) Conclusion :-

Like every other belief and concept of Islam, the belief of Akhrot serves a larger purpose for not only the individuals but also for the collective society.

It is this belief which helps people understand the greater epistemological realities of their existence and help them withstand the trials and sufferings of the world :-

"Whoever comes with a good deed, for him there shall be the like of it tenfold, while anyone who comes with an ill-deed, he shall be required with only one like it, and they shall not be treated unjustly."
(Al-Qur'an)

Ans # 3

Outline

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Character Building : Importance
- 3) Character Building in the light of teachings of Islam
 - a) Character Building through Qur'an
 - b) Character Building by Prophet (SAW)
 - c) Efforts by Pious Caliphs
- 4) How it transforms society?
 - a) Builds a just society
 - b) Eradicates moral evils
 - c) Eradicates inequality and discrimination

- d) creates unity
 - e) Protects animals and environment
- 5) Conclusion

1) Introduction :-

One of the distinguishing features of Islam from other religions of the world is its emphasis on the character building of its followers. M. Abass in his book Key Features of Islam says that Islam's emphasis on the social and moral factors of human life is its distinguishing trait.

2) Character Building: Importance

Character literally means "characteristics or qualities that are unique to a person, or an entity".

Islam, unlike several other religions of the world, is not just an amalgam of blind faith and ideas. It is a complete code of life which lays complete groundwork for all aspects of human life.

In order to cater to the moral needs of the individuals and to create a harmonious society, it has placed special emphasis on the character-building of true believers.

3) Character Building in the Light of Teachings of Islam

Through education, Islam has layed an elaborate system to ensure that humans learn the basic attitudes and characteristics that set him apart from non-believers or from other creations of Allah (SWT) -

a) Through Qur'an

At several instances in Qur'an, we find Allah (SWT) teaching the man the basics of a sound moral character -

i) In Surah-Humazaat, we find that backbiting is condemned as an ill-deed

ii) Act in moderation;

In Al-Ayzaaf, moderation is preached
"Eat and Drink; but do not be extravagant"

iii) Sanctity of Life

At several instances, we find that life is precious right and no one is allowed to infringe that right.

iv) Equality of Men and Women

Allah (SWT) mentions Moumineen alongside Moumineat to clarify that there is no distinction between them

b) By Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

The teachings Holy Prophet (PBUH) have been most influential in terms of character building -

His own character is a perfect model to follow -

Elaborating the importance of good character, He said

"The Best among the believers, is the one who is best in character"

We find the farewell Sermon of Holy Prophet (PBUH) as a perfect example of his teachings pertaining to character building - In this sermon, he ended blood revenge and racial discrimination - He also put an end to the idea of nationalism by saying :-

"An Arab is not superior to a non-Arab and a non-Arab is not superior to an Arab - The only basis for superiority is Pioussness (Taquah)."

In the sermon, he also called on men to fulfill the rights of women - In short, this sermon is an impressive example of the importance of character building in Islam.

c) By Pious Caliphs

The lives and actions of four pious caliphs also serves as an important relic when it comes to character building. We find several incidents where the caliphs tried to teach important moral lessons to their companions -

i) Hazrat Abu Bakar (RA):-

When instructing his companions about going to a war, he asked them not to plunder houses, burn cultivated field or harm any women, child or elderly -

ii) Hazrat Umar (RA):-

Following quotes of Hazrat Umar (RA) show his efforts for character building:-

"The one who shows mercy will receive mercy from Allah"

"Do not judge others, for you do not know their struggles and circumstances."

iii) Hazrat Usman (RA):- Instructing his companions on helping the poor, he said:-

"When the poor and needy approach you for help, it is a gift from Allah"

iv) Hazrat Ali (RA) :-

Out of all four Caliph, Hazrat Ali paid the most emphasis on character building - His famous quotes are :-

"Accept apology, even if it is not sincere"

"The worst of our faults is our interest in other people's faults."

4) How it transforms a society?

Character building not only has impact on individual life, it has effect on society as well -

a) Builds a just society

A society where every individual is careful not to infringe the rights of others and is devoted to fulfillment of his/her duties, creates a just society where there is not injustice and everyone gets what he/she is entitled to.

b) Eradicates Moral Evils

Character building creates a society where there is no place for

moral evils - This is a society that committed to establishment of "Amar-Bil-Marcof" and eradication of "Munkir".

c) Ends Inequality and discrimination

A society where character building is given due importance has no inequality or discrimination of any form.

Everyone irrespective of their gender, age, race, class, ethnicity and nationality gets their due right which leads to a harmonious society.

d) Creates Unity

"Cling firmly to the God's rope and do not be divided" (Quran)

This commandment leads to a society that is free of racial, ethnic clashes and discords.

5) Conclusion:-

Islam's emphasis on character building of believers distinguishes it from several other religions. This character building not only creates morality in individuals but also creates a society that is just, harmonious and prosperous.

Ans # 5

Outline

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Extremism and Islamophobia : Meaning
- 3) Extremism is the root cause of Islamophobia
 - a) Roots of Extremism
 - i) Era of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)
 - ii) Era of Caliphs
 - iii) Decades of Crusades
 - iv) Rise of Western Imperialism
 - v) Rise of Jihadist Ideology
 - b) Extremism Leading to Islamophobia
 - i) Extremist Literary Works causing Islamophobia
 - ii) Rise of Right-Wing, Nationalist Parties in the West
 - iii) Extremist terrorism.
- 4) Extremism as a double-edged sword
 - i) The perils of Islamic Extremism
 - ii) Extremism being confused with Fundamentalism
 - iii) Western Extremism is ~~the~~ causing Islamophobia
- 5) Solution : Eradicate Extremist Ideology
- 6) Conclusion