

Unit A

Allah Controls the World

Objectives:

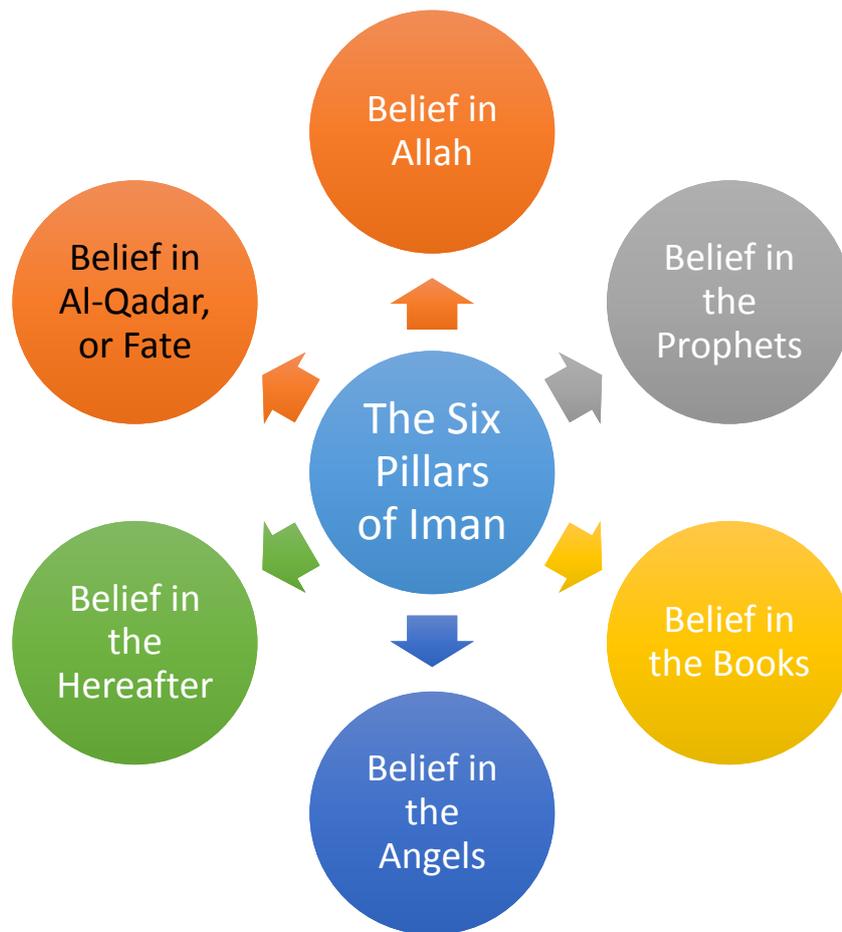
- 1 Understand the concept of Al-Qadar in Islam.
- 2 Internalize that nothing happens in the universe without Allah's permission and knowledge.
- 3 Understand that man has free will to choose good or evil actions.

Vocabulary:

Al-Qadar (Divine fate)	القدر
Al-'Ilm (The knowledge)	العلم
Al Kitabah (Written destiny)	الكتابة
Al Mashee'ah (Divine will)	المشيئة
Khalq (The creation)	الخلق

The Belief In Al-Qadar

As you learned in your elementary years, there are six pillars of Iman (faith). These pillars are to believe in Allah, His angels, His messengers. His books, the Day of Judgment, and to believe in Al-Qadar (divine fate).



The universe is Allah’s property and nothing happens in His kingdom without His knowledge and permission. The Arabic term for Divine fate or destiny is Al-Qadar.

Everything in the world has a predetermined and set course. The destiny of every element of creation and the outcome of every situation, whether major or minor, is already known to Allah.

The original meaning of the word Al-Qadar is “exact measure” or amount. The Arabic verb “yuqaddir” means, among other things, to measure or decide the quantity, quality, or position of something before you actually make it.

There are many references to Al-Qadar in the Qur’an. Allah says:

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ ۝٤٩

Verily, We have created all things with Qadar. (54:49, Surat al-Qamar)

وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ بِقَدَرٍ مُّقَدَّرٍ ۝٢

He has created everything, and has measured it exactly according to its due measure.

(25:2 Surat Al-Furqaan)



Say: “Nothing shall ever happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is our Lord and Protector. And in Allah let the believers put their trust.” (9:51, Surat At-Tawbah)

Scholars have defined Al_qadar as “that (which) Allah has ordained and permitted, both good and evil, before creating His creation, and that all what has happened and will happen are through Allah’s knowledge and will.”

Scholars of Islam also say that there are four aspects of Al-Qadar that help us understand how Al-Qadar happens in our world:

- 1 Al-'Ilm Divine knowledge: Allah first knows what will happen.
- 2 Al-Kitabah Written Destiny: The angels write what will happen.
- 3 Al-Mash'eeh Divine will: Allah wills and permits what is written to happen when its time comes.
- 4 Al-khalq Creation: Allah creates and makes his will happen in the real world.

Let us learn in some details of the above aspects of Al-Qadar:

1. AL-'Ilm

Knowledge - A Muslim believes that Allah has full knowledge of everything in the universe, whether major or minor. This amazing knowledge encompasses all the actions of Allah and the actions of all His creation. Allah says:

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ فِي كِتَابٍ
 إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

Didn't you know that Allah knows all that is in the heaven and the earth? Surely, this is in a book; surely, this is easy to Allah. [22:70] Surat Al-Hajj

2. Kitabah

Written Destiny – A Muslim believes that Allah recorded everything in a Book that was kept with Him in Heavens. This Book is called “Al-Lawh’-ul-Mah’foodh,” The Preserved Book. Allah says in Surat-ul-An’aam,

وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبُرِّ
وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظِلْمَةٍ
الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٥٩﴾

And with Him are the keys of (all that is hidden), none knows them but He. And He knows whatever there is in (or on) the earth and in the sea; not a leaf falls, but he knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth nor anything fresh or dry, but is written in a Clear Record. [6:59]

Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-‘Aas said that he heard Prophet Muhammad say, “Allah recorded the measurement of all matter pertaining to Creation fifty thousand years before He created the Heavens and Earth.” [Reported by Imam Muslim]

3. Mashee’ah

Divine Will – Mashee’ah is the belief that nothing, whether related to Allah’s actions or actions taken by His slaves, can happen without His permission. Allah says in the Qur’an:

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ

And your Lord creates whatsoever He wills and chooses. [28:68] Surat Al-Qasas

هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٦﴾

He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases. [3:6] Surat Aali ‘imran

4. Al-Khalq

The Creation – The final aspect of Al-Qadar is the belief that Allah is the sole creator of all creation and that He endowed us with our attributes and all our actions. Allah says in the Qur’an:



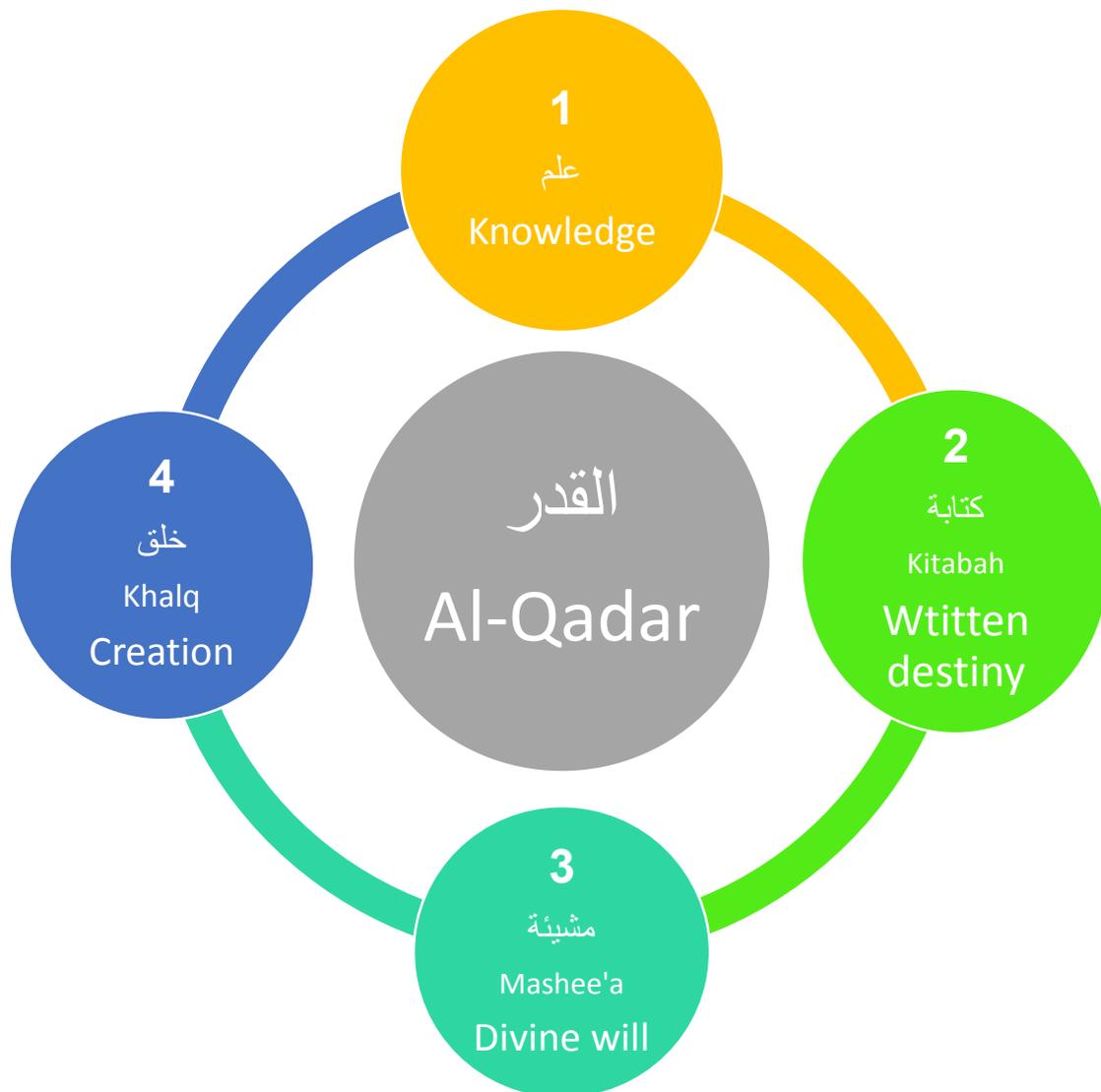
Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the Guardian over all things. [39:62] Surat Az-Zumar

Also, Prophet Ibraheem said to his people, as mentioned in the Qur'an,



"And Allah has created you and what you make." [37:96] Surat As-Saffaat

Aspects of Al-Qadar



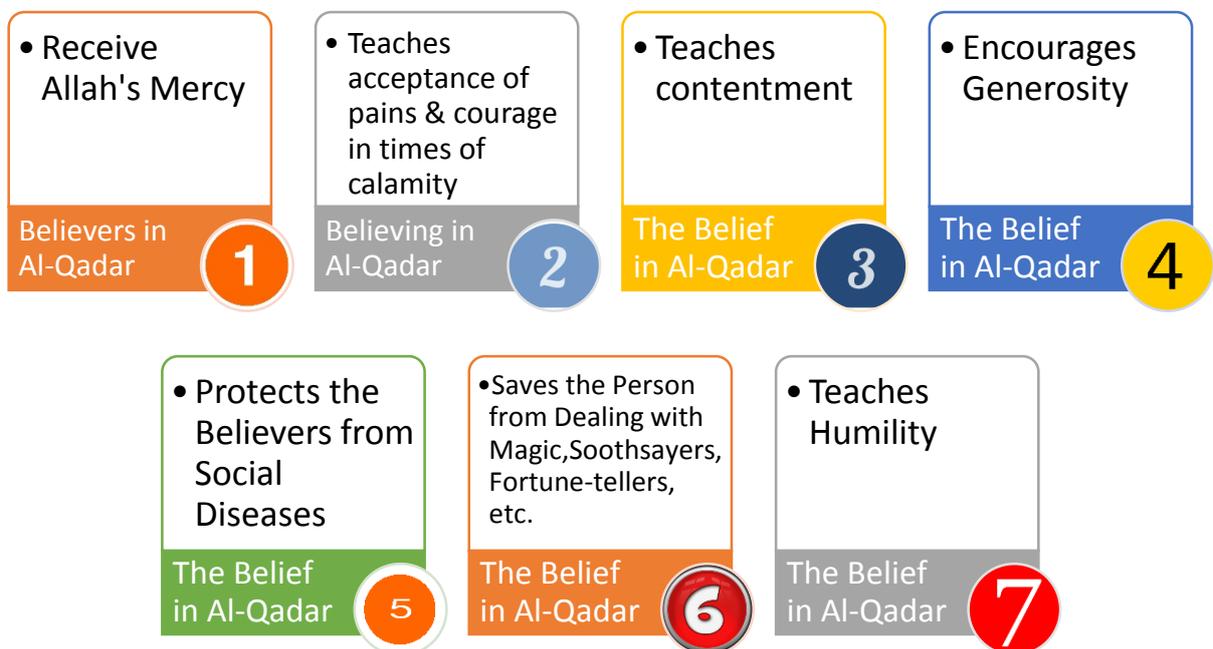
Do we have free will?

Some people think that since Allah controls our lives and decides everything that happens in the world, we do not have free will or any control over our actions. This is far from the truth. The belief in Al-Qadar does not mean that we are passive individuals who have no part to play in our lives. Al-Qadar does not prevent a person from exercising free will to choose a course of action.

Allah does not force people to do anything. He only encourages His servants to do the good and avoid the bad. It is entirely up to the individual as to whether he or she chooses to obey or disobey. Allah gave man free will to choose his actions, whether good or evil.

The Benefits of the belief in al-Qadar

There are many great benefits of the belief in Al-Qadar that one cannot count. These benefits have profound effects on man's personality and behaviour. Here are some important benefits of the belief in Al-Qadar.



Study Questions

- 1) What is Al-Qadar?
- 2) What are the main aspects of Al-Qadar? Define each of them.
- 3) Does man have free will to choose good or evil actions? Support your answer with an ayah and logical evidence.
- 4) Outline at least five benefits of the belief in Al-Qadar.
- 5) How does believing in Al-Qadar makes a person to be generous?
- 6) How does believing in Al-Qadar protects a person from social diseases?

Extra info:

Two groups fell into misguidance with regard to Al-Qadar:

1. Al-Jabriyyah – This group claimed that the person is forced to do whatever he does and that he has no power or will of his own.

2. Al-Qadariyyah – They claimed that the person has a will and power independent of Allah's Will and Power.