Midterm Exam Study Guide Nasirat ul Ahmadiyya USA

(Quarter 6 July - Sept & Quarter 7 Oct - Dec)

Source Text: *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam* by Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, The Promised Messiah and Mahdi (as)

Study Guide 7-9

Introduction of Our Studies:

In Quarters 6 and 7, we study a very special book written by Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as), the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. He wrote this brilliant essay in Urdu for a huge religious event called the Conference of Great Religions, held in Lahore in December 1896. Scholars of many different religions came together to talk about their faiths based on their holy books.

Before his paper was read out, the Promised Messiah (as) received a wonderful revelation from Allah:

"God is with you, and God stands where you stand."

He was told that his essay would be declared supreme and victorious over all other papers. When it was read to thousands of people, even newspaper reporters who were not Ahmadi Muslims were amazed and wrote that it was the only speech worth mentioning because it completely answered every question with deep wisdom and light from the Holy Quran.

This study guide explores three big questions:

1. *How do we grow physically, morally, and spiritually?*
2. *What happens after death?*
3. *What is the true purpose of our life on Earth?*

Section 1: The Three Springs of Human Actions (Question 1)

The Holy Quran teaches us that all human actions, feelings, and behaviors flow from three separate sources or "springs" inside us. Just like water can come from a muddy puddle, a clean stream, or a pure mountain spring, our inner self changes as we grow closer to Allah.

1. Nafse Ammara (The Self That Incites to Evil — Surah Yusuf 12:54)

- What it is: This is our natural, animal-like state when we are first born.
- How it behaves: It pushes us to follow our basic physical urges without thinking about right or wrong. These include wanting to eat, drink, sleep, and getting angry or provoked when things don't go our way.
- The Animal Connection: If a person only listens to these natural desires and refuses to use reason or rules, they act just like animals. They care only about themselves and their own comfort.

2. Nafse Lawwamah (The Reproving Self — Surah Al-Qiyamah 75:3)

- What it is: This is our moral state and the waking up of our conscience.
- How it behaves: "Lawwamah" means the self that scolds or "reproves". Whenever we do something wrong, lose our temper, or hurt someone, this inner voice scolds us and makes us feel very sorry and guilty.
- The Child Analogy: At this stage, a person truly wants to be good and practice lovely morals, but they are still spiritually weak like a young child learning to walk. They sometimes stumble and fall into mistakes, but afterward, they feel deep regret and want to do better.

3. Nafse Mutmainnah (The Soul at Rest — Surah Al-Fajr 89:28-31)

- What it is: This is the beginning of our true spiritual state.
- How it behaves: This is when a person's soul is completely filled with divine power and finds true peace, comfort, and happiness only in Allah.
- The Rushing Water Analogy: The Promised Messiah (as) explains that the soul flows toward God just like water rushing down a mountain with great force, because there is nothing blocking its path.
- Heaven on Earth: A person at this stage receives a sweet taste of paradise even while they are still living in this world. They are nourished by their love for God.

How Body and Mind Connect

Our physical actions and our inner feelings are deeply connected. What we do with our bodies changes our hearts:

- When we bow down in physical prostration (*sajdah*) during prayer, it creates true humility in our hearts.
- When we stand proudly with our neck raised and chest pushed forward, it creates arrogance and vanity.
- Even our diet matters! Eating certain foods affects our courage and temperament. Therefore, Allah tells us in the Holy Quran to eat and drink moderately so our health and morals stay strong.

Section 2: The State of Man After Death (Question 2)

Many people wonder what happens when a person dies. The Promised Messiah (as) explains that death is not a totally strange or brand-new state.

- **The Afterlife is a Mirror:**

    - Death acts like a mirror that makes the hidden conditions, beliefs, and actions of our earthly life completely visible. If we fill our hearts with love for God and good deeds, they will shine brightly. If we fill our hearts with greed and evil, that darkness will become clear.
- **The Dream Analogy:**
    - Think about what happens when we sleep and have a dream. If our physical body is getting a fever, our mind might dream of fire and burning. In the exact same way, the next life takes the hidden state of our soul and turns it into clear, physical realities.
- **Barzakh (The Intermediate State):**
    - This is the waiting period between our earthly life and the Day of Resurrection. Active worldly earning stops here, and every soul is given a temporary spiritual body made from the light or darkness of their own deeds.

Section 3: The Object of Man's Life (Question 3)

What is the true reason we are here on Earth? People chase wealth, power, and fun, but none of these give lasting happiness.

- **Our True Purpose:**
    - According to Surah Ad-Dhariyat (51:57) in the Holy Quran, the sole purpose for which human beings were created is the worship and understanding of God, and complete devotion to Him.
- **Finding Our True Beloved:**
    - Just as a newborn baby is naturally drawn to its mother for peace, warmth, and comfort, human souls are created with an inner attraction toward their Creator. True happiness cannot be found in material things; it can only be found by turning entirely to Allah through complete surrender (*Islam*) and sincere prayer.

Midterm Exam Study Guide 10-12 Nasirat ul Ahmadiyya

USA

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4. *How do we grow physically, morally, and spiritually?*
5. *What happens after death?*
6. *What is the true purpose of our life on Earth?*

Section 1: Physical, Moral, and Spiritual States of Man (Question 1)

The Holy Quran explains that human behaviors and traits develop through three inner sources, or "springs":

1. The Three Stages of the Self

- **Nafse Ammara (The Self That Incites to Evil — Surah 12:54):** This is our raw human nature before it is guided by reason, rules, or morality. It pushes us toward anger, selfishness, and basic physical hunger, acting much like an animal.
- **Nafse Lawwamah (The Reproving Self — Surah 75:3):** This is our conscience waking up. It acts like an inner voice that scolds us when we do wrong, making us want to be good. However, like a young child learning right from wrong, it is spiritually weak and sometimes stumbles, leading to deep regret.
- **Nafse Mutmainnah (The Soul at Rest — Surah 89:28-31):** This is the highest spiritual level. The soul is freed from bad habits, builds an unbreakable bond with God, feels total peace, and experiences a taste of heavenly happiness right here in this world and the hereafter.

2. How Body and Mind Connect

Your physical body and your soul are deeply linked together. What you do physically affects your inner feelings. For example, physical actions like prostrating (*sajdah*) in prayer help build true humility in your heart, while your posture and diet can influence your mood and character. Furthermore, eating wholesome food keeps the body healthy, while forbidden items like pork (swine) or carrion carry foulness that negatively impacts the soul.

3. Natural Impulses (*Khalq*) vs. True Morals (*Khulq*)

Being born with natural tendencies (like an infant crying or an animal showing gentleness) is just a basic biological trait (*Khalq*). Animals and infants have these too. They only turn into true moral qualities (*Khulq*) when you use your brain, self-control, and good judgment to apply them at the right time and right place. For instance, a child sharing a toy because they were told to, or an animal acting gentle, is not practicing a "moral" until they understand and choose it using reason.

Section 2: The State of Man After Death (Question 2)

The Afterlife is a Mirror:

- Death does not drop you into a random, confusing place. Instead, it completely reveals the true character, beliefs, and actions you kept inside your heart during your earthly life.

The Dream Connection:

- Think of how dreams work. If your body is getting a fever, your mind might dream of fire. The next life works on the exact same principle, turning the hidden state of your soul into clear, visible realities.

Three Levels of Realizing the Truth:

1. *Knowing by Reason (Ilm-ul-Yaqin):* Figuring out a truth logically (like knowing there is fire because you see smoke).
2. *Knowing by Sight (Ain-ul-Yaqin):* Actually seeing the reality with your own eyes. (like seeing the actually fire)

3. *Knowing by Experience (Haqq-ul-Yaqin):* Directly living through or entering reality. (like you touch it the fire and you feel the heat of the fire)

Barzakh (The Intermediate State):

- This is the waiting period between death and Day of Judgment. Active worldly earning stops here, and souls are given a temporary spiritual body made from the light or darkness of their earthly deeds.

Section 3: The Object of Man's Life and How to Reach It (Question 3)

- **Our True Purpose:**
    - According to Surah Ad-Dhariyat (51:57) in the Holy Quran, humans were created for one main goal: to know God, worship Him, and stay completely devoted to Him.
- **How to Reach This Goal:**
    - You cannot reach this spiritual state just by relying on human philosophy or trying to figure everything out on your own. You reach it through complete surrender to God (*Islam*), leaving behind worldly worship, and offering sincere, regular prayers like those taught in Surah Al-Fatihah.

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7. *How do we grow physically, morally, and spiritually?*
8. *What happens after death?*
9. *What is the true purpose of our life on Earth?*

Section 1: The Three Stages of the Human Self (Question 1)

The Holy Quran outlines how human actions, desires, and psychological states evolve through three main evolutionary levels or "springs":

1. Nafse Ammara (The Self That Incites to Evil — Surah 12:54)

- This represents our basic biological and animal-like drive. It instigates survival instincts, hunger, sleep, and aggression. Because these natural appetites possess no built-in moral boundaries, they inevitably clash with higher divine laws unless disciplined by reason.

2. Nafse Lawwamah (The Reproving Self — Surah 75:3)

- This is the voice of the awakened conscience. At this stage, young adults recognize right from wrong, experience acute guilt when they stumble, and deeply desire righteousness. However, because spiritual stamina is still developing, individuals occasionally slip back into old habits, immediately feeling remorse and seeking repentance.

3. Nafse Mutmainnah (The Soul at Rest — Surah 89:28-31)

- This is the pinnacle of spiritual evolution. The soul overcomes internal discord, aligns completely with the Divine will, finds total inner serenity, and experiences a foretaste of heavenly bliss in earthly life and the hereafter.

The Connection Between Body, Soul, and Maturity

- **The Mind-Body Link:**
  - Physical actions deeply impact the spiritual state. Discipline in posture, cleanliness, and diet directly affects mental clarity and spiritual humility.
- **The Forty-Year Milestone:**
  - Just as a human fetus undergoes critical developmental milestones in the womb over specific timeframes, spiritual awakening mirrors natural laws. Youth is often clouded by ignorance and carnal passions. As a person approaches the age of forty, physical vitality naturally wanes, worldly illusions fade, and the spirit of truth often awakens—which is why many prophets, including the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw), were commissioned in their fortieth year.
- **Khalq vs. Khulq:**
  - Inborn biological traits (*Khalq*) such as gentleness or bravery are shared with animals.
  - They only mature into true moral virtues (*Khulq*) through the process of **Islah** (self-correction and spiritual reform), when they are consciously guided by reason, self-control, proper timing, and proper place.

Section 2: The State of Man After Death (Question 2)

The Afterlife as an Awakening:

- Death does not plunge a soul into a strange, unrelated universe. Instead, it serves as an awakening that unveils the hidden beliefs, character traits, and spiritual habits cultivated inside the heart during mortal life.

The Dream Analogy:

- Just as physical illness (such as a rising fever) translates into vivid dreams of fire, the afterlife gives objective, tangible form to the invisible condition of the soul.

Barzakh and Continuous Elevation:

- In the intermediate realm (*Barzakh*), active worldly earning ceases, and souls are assigned a temporary spiritual vehicle fashioned from the light or darkness of their earthly deeds.
  Furthermore, spiritual growth does not freeze in the hereafter; souls continue ascending closer to God forever through continuous spiritual elevation (*Istighfar*).

Section 3: The Object of Life and How to Reach It (Question 3)

Our True Purpose:

- According to Surah Ad-Dhariyat (51:57), humanity was created for a singular ultimate objective: *Ma'rifat* (the profound recognition and understanding of God) and *Ibadat* (His worship). While animals easily surpass human beings in physical survival mechanisms, human faculties are uniquely structured to commune with the Infinite.

How to Achieve It:

- Attaining God cannot be achieved through independent human philosophy or rational guesswork. It requires complete submission (*Islam*), maintaining the "Middle Path" (balancing emotions to avoid destructive extremes), and engaging in sincere, continuous prayer through the guidance of Surah Al-Fatihah.