



NEW MUSLIM GUIDE

PREPARED BY
ENLIGHTENMENT INTO ISLAM CENTER
WOMEN'S COMMITTEE
REVIVAL OF ISLAMIC HERITAGE SOCIETY

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Enlightenment into Islam Center
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CHAPTER 1

CREED

1. Grades of Islam
2. Belief in Allaah
3. Tawheed (Monotheism)
4. The Testimony of Faith
5. Worship
6. The Nullifiers of Tawheed
7. Matters which diminish Tawheed.
8. Bearing witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah

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THE GRADES OF ISLAM

The true and final religion which Allaah (Azza wa Jall) sent Prophet Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) to convey to humanity is Islam. After the Message of Prophet Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), Allaah (Azza wa Jall) will not accept from anyone except Islam, as He All-Mighty says in Surat Aal-'Imran (interpretation of the meaning):

“If anyone desires a religion other than Islam (submission to Allaah), never will it be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter, He will be in the ranks of those who have lost (i.e. all spiritual good).” (3:85)

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“By Him in Whose hand is the life of Muhammad, he who amongst the community of Jews or Christians hears about me, but does not affirm his belief in that with which I have been sent, and dies in this state (of disbelief), he shall be but one of the denizens of Hell-Fire.” [Saheeh Muslim]

Islam consists of three grades:

- 1- Islam
- 2- Eman (Faith)
- 3- Ihsan (Excellency in doing worship)

These three grades encompass the whole religion. If any term of them is mentioned alone then it means the whole religion. If mentioned together, then each conveys a different meaning.

FIRST: ISLAM

When we mention the term “Islam” then it might imply one of two meanings:

One: When this term is mentioned alone then it means the whole of religion, its basis and its branches, its creed as well as its actions. Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Al-Ma'idah (interpretation of the meaning):

**“This day have I perfected your religion for you,
completed My favor upon you, and have chosen
for you Islam as your religion.”** (5:3)

This verse indicates that when the term “Islam” is mentioned alone, it means the whole religion of Islam.

Two: When the term “Islam” is mentioned alongside the term “Faith” (Eman), then it refers to all the outward actions and sayings of worship.

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Al-Hujuraat (interpretation of the meaning):

**“The Bedouins say: 'We believe.' Say: 'You believe not
but you only say, We have surrendered (in Islam),
for Faith has not yet entered your hearts.'”** (49:14)

The outward acts of worship are many. Among them are the five pillars of worship, Jihaad (striving for the cause of Allaah) and enjoying good and forbidding evil, etc.

THE PILLARS OF ISLAM:

The Messenger of Allaah (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“Islam is built on five pillars.” [Saheeh Muslim]

1) Ash-Shahaadah

[i.e. the confession or the declaration of faith] which must be recited by anyone embracing Islam.

Ash-Shahaadah means to say, with a firm belief in heart and mind, the following:

“Ash-hadu an Laa ilaaha illa Allaah”

(I bear witness that there is no true god deserves to be worshipped except Allaah)

“Wa Ash-hadu Anna Muhammadan Rasool-Allaah”

(And I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah)

This Shahaadah expresses a Muslim’s firm acknowledgment and belief in Allaah’s existence and Oneness and that there is none to be worshipped but Allaah, and that He (Ta’ala) must be worshipped only according to the teachings of His Messenger Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam).

Also, this Shahaadah expresses a Muslim’s firm belief that Muhammad is Allaah’s Messenger, and that the Book, Al-Qur’an is the Word of Allaah, and that his Sunnah (Prophetic Traditions) form an integrated and comprehensive system to guide man’s life to the right path.

2) Prayer (Salaat)

“Salaat” is the name of the obligatory prayers which are performed five times a day, and they are a direct link between the worshipper and Allaah. These five prayers contain verses from the Qur’an, which are said in Arabic, the language of the revelation, but personal supplication can be offered in one’s own language.

The five prayers are¹:

1. The Fajr (dawn) prayer: consists of two Raka'at (units). Its time starts just after dawn and ends at sunrise.
2. The Dhuhr (noon) prayer: consists of four Raka'at. Its time starts just after the sun moves down from its zenith and ends at its midpoint between zenith and sunset.

¹ For a complete explanation on how to make ablution and pray, please refer to our other book: “The Book of Purification and Prayer for beginners”

3. 'Asr (late afternoon) prayer: consists of four Raka'at. Its time starts after the end of Dhuhr prayer and ends at sunset.
4. Al-Maghrib (sunset) prayer; consists of three Raka'at. Its time starts just after sunset.
5. 'Isha (evening) prayer: consists of four Raka'at. Its time starts when twilight (sun's redness) disappears, and ends at midnight.²

Prayers however must be preceded by ablution which is washing the hands, face, the forearms, and wiping over the head, and washing the feet.

Prayer is one of the greatest pillars of Islam. It is the first act of worship about which man shall be asked on the day of Judgment. If it is accepted by Allaah, then the rest of man's good deeds are accepted too.

3) The Alms (Zakaat)

It literally means 'purification', indicating that such a payment makes the rest of the Muslim's wealth pure.

In Islamic law, it means paying a certain percentage of one's savings every lunar year, which is to be given to the poor, the needy and other specified classes of people defined by the Qur'an. So, if one has, for that period, an amount of money equal to the value of 85 grams of pure gold or money, then this person must pay 2.5%.

Zakaat is paid to the poor and the needy Muslims, to the wayfarers, to propagate Islam or fighting for Islam, to help new Muslims, or encourage non-Muslims to embrace Islam, and to those who are burdened with debts and are unable to pay them.

Why do we pay Zakaat?

1. To show devotion to Allaah Who commanded us to do so. Also, He informed us that He loves the charitable.
2. To be grateful to Allaah Who provided us with wealth and helped us to earn an income.
3. To alleviate the suffering of the needy.
4. To help in the betterment of the Muslim society.
5. To participate in propagating Islam in the whole world.

² Midnight: Calculate the time between sunset and the break of true dawn (when Fajr begins) then divide it in half; that halfway point is the end of the time for praying 'Isha.

6. To cure ourselves of selfishness and greed.
7. To make ourselves masters of our property, not slaves of it.

4) Fasting (Sawm)

To be observed during the month of Ramadan (the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar). It begins at daybreak (dawn) and ends at sunset. Eating, drinking and sexual relations with one's spouse are forbidden during fasting.

Besides health benefits which one gains through fasting, it is an act of worship which helps one who observes it to attain piety, humbleness, and share feelings of the deprived and hungry in the community.

5) Pilgrimage (Hajj)

Pilgrimage to Makkah, prescribed for those Muslims who are in good health and can financially afford the trip, once in a lifetime.

The Hajj rites take place during the Islamic lunar month of Dhul-Hijjah which is the last month in the Islamic lunar year.

SECOND: FAITH (EMAN)

Faith, when mentioned alongside Islam, means the “inner beliefs.”

There are six articles of Faith in Islam:

1. Belief in the Oneness of Allaah, our Lord and the Lord of all the seen and unseen worlds.³

2. Belief in the Angels.

Allaah (Ta’ala) has created angels to worship Him, praise Him, carry out His commands, and to be His messengers to His human Prophets.

Allaah has tasked them to carry out numerous duties:

One of the angels is Gabriel who used to bring down revelation to our Prophet Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam).

Another angel is Michael who oversees rain-fall.

A third one is the angel of Death, who is in charge of taking the souls of people whose death is due and others.

Angels are Allaah’s obedient servants and are honored by Allaah (Azza wa Jall); hence, we honor them and speak of them respectfully. But we worship none of them, nor do we take them as gods besides Allaah, or take them as Allaah’s sons or daughters. We worship only Allaah Who created them in His wonderful creation.

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Al-Anbiya (interpretation of the meaning):

“And they say: 'The Most Beneficent (Allaah) has begotten a son (or children).’ Glory to Him! They (those whom they call children of Allaah i.e. the angels, Jesus son of Mary, Ezra, etc.) are but honored slaves. They speak not until He has spoken, and they act on His Command. He knows what is before them, and what is behind them, and they cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased. And they stand in awe for fear of Him.” (21:26-28)

³ See section “Some Beautiful Names of Allaah”.

3. Belief in Allaah's Scriptures:

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) sent books down to His Messengers, in order to proclaim them to mankind, and these books contain the Words of Allaah.

They were free from any imperfection or errors at the time of their revelation.

Among them are:

- The Scripture of Ibraheem (Abraham) ('Alayhis-Salaam)
- Taurat (Torah) revealed to Moosa (Moses) ('Alayhis-Salaam)
- Az-Zabour (Pslams) revealed to Dawoud (David) ('Alayhis-Salaam)
- Al-Injiil (Gospel) revealed to Isa (Jesus) ('Alayhis-Salaam)
- And Al-Qur'an revealed to Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)

All the scriptures that preceded the Qur'an have been tampered with or distorted by their people, while the Qur'an is protected by Allaah from change or tampering. Whatever in those books differ from the Qur'an is corrupted or abrogated.

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Al-Ma'idah (interpretation of the meaning):

"And We have sent down to you [O Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)] the Book (this Qur'an) in truth, confirming the Scripture that came before it and Mohayminan (trustworthy in highness and a witness) over it (old Scriptures)[i.e. testifies the Truth that is therein and falsifies the falsehood that is added therein]." (5:48)

If the source of all revelations is one, then it is logical to think that there should be no contradiction between them; they are sent with the same order (command), which is to worship One God, Allaah (Azza wa Jall).

4. Belief in Allaah's Messengers

We believe that Allaah (Azza wa Jall) chose from among mankind, Prophets and Messengers to send His Revelation to. He sent them Laws and commanded them to convey the Message of Allaah to their people.

There were a number of Messengers known for their firm stand and endurance in struggling for the cause of Allaah. They are the five most prominent and steadfast, namely:

Nuh (Noah), Ibraheem (Abraham), Moosa (Moses), 'Isa (Jesus) and Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam). They were all noble humans and slaves of Allaah.

Every Prophet or Messenger before Prophet Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was sent to his own people, but Prophet Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was sent to all mankind.

As Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Al-A'raaf (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say [O Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)], O Mankind! Verily I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allaah.” (7: 158)

Also in Surat Al-Anbiya' (interpretation of the meaning):

“And We have sent you [O Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)] not but as a Mercy for the A'alameen (Mankind, Jinn and all that exists).” (21:107)

Note:

Embracing Islam does not mean to disbelieve in Moosa (Moses) or 'Isa (Jesus) or any other Prophet. Islam teaches us how to believe correctly in all the Prophets of Allaah.

None of Allaah's Messengers or Prophets claimed to be a god or part-god. The creed of the Oneness of Allaah was the focal point of the messages with which all Prophets and Messengers were sent to mankind, beginning with Adam and ending with Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon them all.

5. Belief in the Last Day (The Day of Resurrection)

We believe that there will be another life after this life. Allaah (Azza wa Jall) has pre-decreed a term for the life of each creature, and a term for the life of this whole world.

When the determined term of this world comes to an end, Allaah (Azza wa Jall) will command the angel "Israfeel" to blow the trumpet and all mankind and all other creatures will die.

Then the angel will blow the trumpet again, and behold, all the people who died since the time of Adam will stand up out of their graves (be resurrected) and stand before the Lord of the Worlds to be questioned about their deeds in this world.

Those who believed in Allaah, followed the Messengers and did good deeds (commanded by Allaah) will go to Paradise (Jannah). In Paradise, they will enjoy eternal bliss.

But those who disbelieved in the Oneness of Allaah, rejected the Messengers and disobeyed Allaah's commands, will go into Hell. In Hell-Fire, they will be in continuous eternal punishment.

6. Belief in Pre-destination

Allaah has created everything in accordance with His decree, predestinations, will and in due proportion.

His determination of the nature of things was established fifty thousand years before He created the Heavens and the earth.

Nothing occurs or takes place within the Heavens or the earth but with His Knowledge and by His order.

To believe in predestination, whether good or bad, does not contradict man's responsibility and free will. Man is free in his choices, which is why he is responsible for his deeds both in this life and in the Hereafter.

Imagine that you are travelling alone on a road which, at a certain point, divides into two. The first road is uneven, rocky and full of thorny bushes and hidden dangers. It is also steep and hard-going. However, the authorities have put up a notice at the beginning of the track which reads: "Even though this road may initially seem difficult, it will eventually lead you to your destination."

As for the second road, it is well-paved. Both sides are lovely with fruit trees and flowers, and there are plenty of cafes and places of entertainment on either side. The traveler on this road will find everything he needs to satisfy him. But the notice at the beginning of this road warns: "This is a dangerous and destructive road. It leads to a ravine and certain death."

Which of the two paths would you choose to take?

This example illustrates the comparison between Heaven and Hell. The way to Hell is full of pleasures enjoyed by the human heart, as well as unlimited freedom of action. The path to Paradise is certainly no bed of roses, one has to face many hardships and probably some suffering.

Will you choose to enjoy short-lived pleasure followed by unremitting pain, or a brief and temporary period of difficulties, followed by eternal bliss and joy in the Hereafter?

Thus, Allaah has shown the two paths before us, and He has created the faculty within us to enable us to distinguish between the two, so that everyone, regardless of his or her educational background, has the ability to discriminate between good and evil.

This means that, in the same way as when we do something good we feel a sense of relief because we have a clear conscience, we equally feel upset when we do something wrong.

This faculty is not only restricted to human beings; animals have it too. For example, if you throw a piece of meat to a cat it will eat it in front of you in a perfectly relaxed way. But if it snatches the meat from you secretly, it will run off to a corner and gobble it up on its own so that you will not see and take the meat back.

From this example, we can learn that in the first instance the cat's conscience is clear because it feels the meat has been given to it, whereas in the second example its reaction shows instinctively that it has acted aggressively. In other words, the cat has distinguished between right and wrong, what is lawful and what is prohibited.

This is the interpretation of the verse in Surat Al-Balad, which says:

“And shown him the two ways (good and evil)?” (90:10)

Allaah has appointed men to preach and guide mankind to the path of Paradise. They are the Prophets. The path of Hell also has those who lure men to it, they are Allaah's adversaries.

He (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Al-Isra' (interpretation of the meaning):

“Whoever goes right, then he goes right only for the benefit of his own self. And whoever goes astray, then he goes astray to his own loss. No one laden with burdens can bear another’s burden.” (17:15)

THIRD: IHSAN

It is to perfect inner and outer deeds [for the sake of Allaah (Azza wa Jall) alone].

It has two levels:

The first and higher level (Witness level):

It is to worship Allaah as if you are looking at Him with your heart. This high level of worship comes when faith grows inside the heart of a believer to the extent that the unseen becomes as seen.

Whoever worships Allaah with the feeling that Allaah is so near to him, as if he sees Allaah, this will entail reverence, exaltation for Allaah (Azza wa Jall).

The second level (Sincerity level):

It is to worship Allaah (Azza wa Jall) knowing and feeling that Allaah is watching, and is near to him. When a servant of Allaah feels and acts according to this feeling, then he will be sincere to Allaah because this feeling will prevent him from looking at people and waiting for their praise. So, he neither falls into major “Shirk”, nor minor “Shirk”⁴.

Evidences for these two levels are in the Hadeeth when Gabriel asked the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) about Ihsan, so he (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“To worship Allaah as if you see Him, for even if you can’t see Him, know that indeed, He sees you.” [Al-Bukhari]

⁴ The term “Shirk” in Arabic means polytheism.

BELIEF IN ALLAAH

A. WHO IS ALLAAH (AZZA WA JALL)?

Allaah is the proper name applied to the only True God who exists necessarily by Himself, comprising all the excellent Divine Names and Attributes of perfection.

Allaah is the Arabic name for God, which is used by both Arab Muslims and Arab Christians alike.

We believe that:

Allaah is One and Unique; He has no partner or equal. Allaah Says in Surat Al-Anbiya' (interpretation of the meaning):

“Had there been therein (in the heavens and the earth) gods besides Allaah, then verily both would have been ruined.” (21:22)

No son (or offspring or children) did Allaah (Azza wa Jall) beget, nor is there any god along with Him. Allaah says in Surat Al-Mu'minun (interpretation of the meaning):

“[If there had been many gods], behold, each god would have taken away what he had created, and some would have tried to overcome others! Glorified be Allaah above all that they attribute to Him!” (23:91)

So, every creature bears witness to His Oneness. He is our Lord and the Lord of mankind, Allaah the Supreme, is the Creator of everything. All

other than Him are created, and therefore, share nothing with Allaah. Even Angels and Prophets [among them are Jesus and Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)] are merely created servants submitting to Him.

Allaah has a free Will in the disposal of all affairs. He has created us out of nothing and made us in the best form.

Allaah's Essence does not resemble other essences. He says in Surat Ash-Shura (interpretation of the meaning):

“There is nothing like unto Him” (42:11)

He is the Only One, Indivisible, Unique Being.

He is Allaah without Whom no affairs are accomplished.

He is not inherent in anything, nor is anything inherent in Him. He neither begets nor is He begotten.

All creatures stand in need of Him, but He stands in need of none. He has given us all graces and bounties; hence we are not permitted to worship or submit to any other than Him (be it an Angel or a chosen Prophet).

Allaah is Omnipotent (Able to do all things), Omniscient (All-Knowing), Whose Knowledge comprehends in the most perfect manner, all things hidden or manifested. He knows the fraud of the eyes, and what the breasts conceal.

Allaah is the Most Merciful, Whose unbounded Mercy encompasses everything. He is far removed from injustice and tyranny.

Allaah has committed to Himself that “My Mercy overcomes My Anger”.

There is no one to share His domain, nor does He take aid or support from His creatures.

He is the God of the worlds. Yet, He is nearer to man than his own jugular vein. So, whenever a believer who is in need or distress calls on Him, He responds.

B. SOME BEAUTIFUL NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES OF ALLAAH (AZZA WA JALL)

Allaah (Azza wa Jall)

Allaah, the All-Mighty, says in Surat Al-Baqarah (interpretation of the meaning):

“Allaah! Laa ilaaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He).” (2:255)

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) is the One Who deserves to be worshipped alone with love and magnification. To Him belongs the Perfect Attributes; all other deities are false deities. And this Name comprises God-ship, which cannot be given to any other than Him.

This beautiful Name (Allaah), is our Lord’s specific Name. It is not permissible to name anyone by this name except Allaah the All-Mighty. This is the greatest of Allaah’s Names and has been repeated in the Qur’an 2602 times.

Al-Ilaah (the God)

Allaah, the All-Mighty, says in Surat Al-An’aam (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say, Indeed He is but One God.” (6:19)

Allaah is the One Who is worshipped. So, it is compulsory that all acts of worship, such as invocation, offering sacrifice, etc. be performed only for the sake of Allaah and none else.

Ar-Rabb (the Lord of all the Worlds)

Allaah, the All-Mighty, says in Surat Al-Faatihah (interpretation of the meaning):

“All praises and thanks be to Allaah, the Lord of the ‘Aalameen (mankind, jinn and all that exists).” (1:2)

(Ar-Rabb) “The Lord” is the Guardian, the Lord of the Worlds that He has

created. He is the One Who bestows upon them His countless blessings. He is the Sovereign of everything that exists, the obeyed Master Who controls and commands all. He sustains all the worlds. He is independent of all, but all are dependent on Him. Ar-Rabb nurtures the faithful believers and guides them to His path. He grants everyone the means and opportunities for development. Muslims (indeed, all humans) must accept Allaah as their Lord.

Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“He who says, 'I am pleased with Allaah as my Lord, and Islam as my religion and Muhammad as my Prophet,' will surely enter Paradise.” [Sunan Abu Dawoud]

Ar-Rahmaan, Ar-Raheem (the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful)

Allaah, the All-Mighty, says in Surat Al-Baqarah (interpretation of the meaning):

“And your Ilaah (God) is One Ilaah (God – Allaah), Laa ilaaha illa Huwa (there is none who has the right to be worshipped but He), the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.” (2:163)

Both these Names are derived from Ar-Rahmah (kindness and mercy), but in Ar-Rahmaan, kindness is the more intensive adjective. The difference between the two is that Ar-Rahmaan is the One Whose mercy has encompassed everything, while Ar-Raheem is the One Who grants His mercy to whomever He wills.

All that we enjoy of blessings (security, good health, wealth, children, food and drink, etc.) is the result of this mercy. Ar-Rahmaan grants His blessings to all people, regardless of whether they are believers, hypocrites, or polytheists. Ar-Raheem grants His mercy in the Hereafter only to the believers – the Monotheists. Therefore, he who is desirous of Allaah's blessings in the Hereafter must believe in His Oneness, and obey His last Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam).

Al-Malik (the Sovereign, the King), Al-Maalik (the Master and Owner), Al-Maleek (the Owner of Majesty and Honor)

Allaah, the All-Mighty, says in Surat Al-Mu'minin (interpretation of the meaning):

“So Exalted be Allaah, the True King: Laa ilaaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Lord of the Supreme Throne!” (23:116)

In another verse, Allaah, the All-Mighty, says in Surat Aal-'Imraan (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say [O Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)]: 'O Allaah! Possessor of the Kingdom...’” (3:26)

In another verse, He says in Surat Al-Qamar (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, The Muttaqun (pious), will be in the midst of Gardens and Rivers, In a seat of truth (i.e. Paradise), near the Omnipotent King (Allaah, the All-Blessed, the Most High, the Owner of Majesty and Honor).” (54:55)

Allaah, the All-Mighty, is the Sovereign of everything that exists (He owns everything in the universe). He has sole and complete ruling in His kingdom. He is the One Who directs all the affairs of creation, commands, and recompenses. To Him belongs the whole of creation; all of it is subservient to, owned by, and in continuous need of Him. Nothing moves or stops except with His Knowledge and Will. His Sovereignty will be evident to all on the Day of Judgment.

As-Samee' (the All-Hearing)

Allaah, the All-Mighty, says in Surat Al-Ma'idah (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say (O Muhammad) to mankind: 'How do you worship besides Allaah something which has no power either to harm or benefit you? But it is Allaah Who is the All-Hearer, All Knower’.” (5:76)

Allaah, the All-Mighty, hears everything; He hears all sounds in the universe, regardless of whether they were uttered publicly or secretly. Nothing audible escapes His hearing - even if it is said at the same time. He hears and comprehends all languages. He hears the invocations of those who invoke Him.

He answers the prayers of the distressed ones, relieves their distresses, and removes all evil. Therefore, His slaves must be aware that Allaah is hearing them, and they should not say anything sinful, such as lying, cursing, or making fun of others (especially mocking the pious people). Also, His slaves must pray to Him with sincerity.

Al-Baseer (the All-Seer)

Allaah, the All-Mighty, says in Surat Ghaafir (interpretation of the meaning):

“And Allaah Judges with Truth, while those to whom they invoke besides Him cannot judge anything. Certainly, Allaah! He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.” (40:20)

Al-Baseer is He Whose Sight encompasses everything in the heavens and on the earth; His Sight covers the entire universe. He can see everything hidden below the seven layers of the earth, and above the seven heavens. He witnesses the actions of His slaves and nothing is concealed from Him. Therefore, His slaves must be aware of Him watching them, and be shy of committing sins.

As-Salaam (the One Free from all defects)

Allaah, the All-Mighty, says in Surat Al-Hashr (interpretation of the meaning):

“The King, the Holy, the One Free from all defects.” (59:23)

As-Salaam means the One Who is far removed from any imperfection or defect in His Essence, Attributes, Actions, Decree, and Shari’ah. In fact, His Shari’ah is perfect, full of wisdom, mercy, benefit, and justice. As-Salaam is the One Who does not subject His creation to injustice.

As-Salaam also carries the meaning that He will send His greetings to His slaves in Paradise. As Allaah, the All-Mighty, says in Surat Ya-Seen (interpretation of the meaning):

“(It will be said): Salaamun (peace be on you) - A Word from the Lord (Allaah), Most Merciful.” (36:58)

Al-'Adheem (the Most Great)

Allaah, the All-Mighty, says in Surat Al-Haaqqah (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, he used not to believe in Allaah, the Most Great.” (69:33)

Allaah, the All-Mighty, is the Most Great in His Essence, Names, Attributes, and Actions. His greatness exceeds all limits of human understanding, so that comprehension of His Essential Being is inconceivable. He is the One Who deserves to be glorified by His slaves with their hearts and tongues (continuously), and they should not object to His commands and laws. No creature is able to praise and glorify Him as He deserves. Had His slaves known the grandeur of their Lord, they would have neither committed sins in His presence nor made fun of His shari'ah laws.

Al-'Aliy, Al-'Alaa, Al-Muta'aal (the Most High)

Allaah, the All-Mighty, says in Surat Ghaafir (interpretation of the meaning):

“So the judgment is only with Allaah, the Most High, the Most Great.” (40:12)

Also, Allaah, the All-Mighty, says in Surat Al-'Ila (interpretation of the meaning):

“Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High.” (87:1)

In another verse, Allaah says in Surat Ar-Ra'd (interpretation of the meaning):

“All-Knower of the Unseen and the seen, the Most Great, the Most High.” (13:9)

The meaning of these Names is that: Allaah is the Most High; He is the Most High in His essence, as He is above all creation (rising over the Throne); He is the Most High in His Attributes and Status; no one is like Him. He is the Most High in His dominance and power over all of His creation. He is High above what those who are astray say, that "Allaah is everywhere."

Al-Hayy (the Ever-Living)

Allaah, the ALL-Mighty, says in Surat Aal-'Imran (interpretation of the meaning):

“Allaah! Laa ilaaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Ever-Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists.” (3:2)

Al-Hayy is the One Who owns eternal existence and life. He did not become alive after death and is not subject to death after life; He is far above that.

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TAWHEED

The word “Tawheed” means to believe in the existence of Allaah (Azza wa Jall), to single Him out with all acts of Lordship such as Creating, Sustaining, Healing, Ownership, Power, Authority etc., and to single Him out in all kinds of worship such as praying, fasting, vowing, loving, fearing etc. And to believe that Allaah (Azza wa Jall) has Perfect Attributes and Glorious Names.

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) created humans with the natural instinct of believing in Him alone. This is called “Fitrah” (natural disposition).

Man is born a believer, believing in the existence of Allaah, and that there is no god (ilaaah in Arabic) except Allaah (Azza wa Jall), no lord (Rabb in Arabic) except Him. If he (man) is left with his natural disposition, he would grow up as a “Muwahhid” (Monotheist) believing in One God, i.e. Allaah (Azza wa Jall).

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“Every child is born on “Al-Fitrah” (true faith of Islamic Monotheism i.e. to worship none but Allaah alone) but his parents convert him to Judaism, Christianity, or Magianism.”

[Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

Adam ('Alayhis-Salaam) and his offspring at his time were monotheists. His offspring continued to be monotheists until the time of Nuh

(Alayhis-Salaam) . At Prophet Nuh's time, "Shaytaan" (Satan) made fair-seeming to the people, to worship idols with Allaah in polytheism so they fell into Satan's trap.

The Three Kinds of Tawheed:

1) TAWHEED AR-RUBOOBIYAH (ONENESS OF LORDSHIP)

It comprises the following aspects: -

- a. Belief in the existence of Allaah (Azza wa Jall)
- b. Confession with the heart and tongue that Allaah (Azza wa Jall) is the Creator of everything, its Owner and Provider. He is the One Who gives life and causes death. He is the One Who benefits and harms. He is the Only One Who responds to the invocation. In Whose Hand is all the matters, in Whose Hand is all the good. He Who is Able to do anything, Who decrees all the matters and disposes the affairs of everything without having a partner associated with Him in all that.

Evidences of Allaah's Lordship:

There are many evidences in the Qur'an and Sunnah that prove the Lordship of Allaah (Azza wa Jall). Every verse that has the Glorious Name "Rabb" or mentions one of the characteristics of the Lordship such as Creation, Provision, Kingship, Ownership, Disposing the affairs and so forth, is from the evidences for the "Ruboobiyah" (Lordship).

"All praises and thanks be to Allaah, the Lord of the 'Aalameen (Mankind, Angels, and all the that exists)" (1:2)

"Surely, His is the Creation and Commandment." (7:54)

"Say: 'In whose Hand is the sovereignty for everything?'" (23:88)

Allaah ordered His slaves to look considerably and contemplate in the verses, and in Allaah's clear signs in the upper creation and the lower ones, that signify His Lordship.

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Adh-Dhariyaat (interpretation of the meaning):

“And in the earth, are signs for those who have faith with certainty. And also in your own selves. Will you not then see?” (51:20-21)

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says that on earth are signs that indicate His Greatness and Ability in creating different kinds of plants, animals, mountains, deserts, oceans, rivers, besides what He (Azza wa Jall) has created in the humans which all indicate His “Ruboobiyah” (Lordship).

“Tahweed Ar-Ruboobiyah” (Oneness of Lordship) was acknowledged and confessed with by most of the creation in the past and present. No one denied it except a few like Pharaoh and his people who denied the existence of Allaah and proclaimed that Pharaoh was himself a god! As Allaah (Ta’ala) says in Surat An-Naml (interpretation of the meaning):

“And they belied them (those Ayat) wrongfully and arrogantly, though their ownselves were convinced thereof [i.e. those (Ayat) are from Allaah, and Moosa (Moses) is the Messenger of Allaah in truth, but they disliked to obey Moosa (Moses), and hated to believe in his Message of Monotheism].” (27:14)

The communists and atheists also deny the Lordship of Allaah (Azza wa Jall) in present time.

Bear in mind that this kind of “Tawheed” is not enough to make one a Muslim. The early Arab pagans at the time of the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) were confessing this kind of “Tawheed”, as Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Az-Zukhruf (interpretation of the meaning):

“And if you ask them: 'who created them?' They will surely say: Allaah.” (43:87)

“And indeed if you ask them: 'Who has created the heavens and the earth?' They will surely say: 'The All-Mighty, the All-Knower created them!’ [43:9]

But despite their confession of Allaah’s “Ruboobiyah” (Lordship), this did not benefit them, nor did it make them Muslims. Why? Because they associated partners with Allaah in worship, i.e. they did not worship Allaah alone and did not single Him out in all acts of worship. This was done by directing some acts of worship like seeking help, invocations and sacrifice towards their false gods such as idols, angels, etc.

Believing in Allaah’s Lordship entails worshipping Him Alone i.e. “Tawheed Al-Uloohiyah”.

Believing in the Oneness of Allaah’s Lordship “Tawheed Ar-Ruboobiyah” requires that all kinds of worship be devoted to Him alone.

Since there is no other god who creates, sustains, owns, gives and takes in any part of the universe but Allaah (Azza wa Jall), then no one in the heavens or on earth deserves to be worshipped but Him (Azza wa Jall).

Whoever confesses that Allaah is His Creator, Who has created him from nothing and that He (Allaah) is his Owner, Provider, Bestower, Who bestows upon him different kinds of blessings which the slave fails to enumerate or count, and confesses that Allaah (Azza wa Jall) is the Disposer of all his affairs, then this requires the slave to thank Allaah (Azza wa Jall) for all that, by worshipping Him, obeying His Commands, abstaining from the prohibitions and avoid committing “Shirk” (i.e. ascribe a partner with Allaah in worship.)

2) TAWHEED AL-ULOOHIYAH (ONENESS OF WORSHIP):

Meaning: It is to single Allaah out alone in worship.

It is for the sake of this kind of “Tawheed” that Allaah (Azza wa Jall) created mankind and Jinn as Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Adh-Dhaariyaat (interpretation of the meaning):

“And I (Allaah) created not the Jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).” (51:56)

But despite the importance of this kind of “Tawheed”, most of the creation

denied it! They denied that Allaah Alone deserves to be worshipped without associates, therefore they worshipped others with Him.⁵

3) TAWHEED AL-ASMA' WAS SIFAAT (ALLAAH'S NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES):

It is to confirm that:

Allaah, the One free of all imperfections and the Most High, is singled out with whatever Names and Attributes He affirmed for Himself in His Book (Qur'an), or upon the tongue of His Messenger; and this includes affirming whatever He affirmed for Himself, and denying whatever He has denied from Himself, without changing or distorting their meanings, without denying or divesting Allaah of His Attributes, without delving into how they are, and without declaring Allaah to be like the creation.

⁵ This kind of "Tawheed" will be explained in the following two topics:

First: "Shahaadat" "Laa ilaaha illa Allaah" (The Testimony that there is no god worthy of worship but Allaah).

Second: "Ebadah" (Worship); Its meaning, types, conditions and pillars.

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THE TESTIMONY THAT THERE IS NO GOD WORTHY OF WORSHIP BUT ALLAAH, “SHAHAADAH” “LAA ILAAHA ILLA ALLAAH”

Meaning:

The testimony means: “No god is worthy of worship except Allaah.” I.e. no one deserves to be worshiped except Allaah (Ta’ala). So, it is not permissible to pray, vow, or slaughter a sacrificial animal except for Allaah’s Sake. All acts of worship should be dedicated only to Allaah (Ta’ala).

“Laa” means: (There is no)

“Ilaaha” means: (God), the worshipped and obeyed One, Whom all the hearts love, venerate, exalt, submit to, and fear.

“Illa-Allaah” means: (Except Allaah).

“Allaah” is the Greatest Name of Allaah that indicates the Holy Essence of the Lord.

Its Pillars:

It contains 2 pillars:

1. Negation: To negate divinity from all others besides Allaah (Azza wa Jall). This is signified by the word: “La Ilaaha”. It negates that anyone or anything deserves to be worshipped, except Allaah.

2. Affirmation: To affirm Divinity to Allaah Alone. This is signified by the word “Illa Allaah”. It affirms that Allaah alone deserves to be worshipped without associates because He alone is The Creator, The Owner, The Disposer of all the affairs. Therefore, it is the duty of all creation to single Him out in worship in gratitude for His great blessings on them.

VIRTUES OF THE TESTIMONY OF FAITH:

- The foundation of the call of all the Messengers of Allaah

“And We did not send any Messenger before you [O Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu ’alayhi wa sallam)] but We inspired him (saying):

Laa ilaaha illa Ana [none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allaah)], so worship Me (Alone and none else).^(21:25)

- The way to attain security and guidance

“It is those who believe (in the Oneness of Allaah and worship none but Him Alone) and confuse not their belief with Dhulm (wrong i.e. by worshipping others besides Allaah), for them (only) there is security and they are the guided.”^(6:82)

- The most trustworthy handhold

”There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in Taaghut (evil) and believes in Allaah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allaah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.”^(2:256)

- The eternal word that Abraham left as his legacy

“And he made it [i.e. Laa ilaaha illa-Allaah (none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah Alone)] a Word lasting among his offspring (True Monotheism), that they may turn back (i.e. to repent to Allaah or receive admonition).” (43:28)

- The way to attain forgiveness

Allaah’s Messenger (Salla-Allaahu ’alayhi wa sallam) said:

“Allaah the Most High said: ‘O son of Adam! If you were to come to Me with sins filling the earth, then you meet Me without associating anything with Me, I would come to you with its (the earth) fill of forgiveness.’ [At-Tirmidhi]

- Nothing prevents it from reaching Allaah

Abu Hurairah (Radia-Allaahu ’anhu) narrated that the Messenger of Allaah (Salla-Allaahu ’alayhi wa sallam) said

“No worshipper has ever said: ‘None has the right to be worshipped but Allaah (Laa ilaaha illa Allaah)’ sincerely, except that the gates of heaven are opened for it, until it reaches to the Throne, so long as he avoids the major sins.” [At-Tirmidhi]

- The greatest cause of relief from the afflictions and distress of this world and the Hereafter

“And (remember) Dhan-Nun (Jonah), when he went off in anger, and imagined that We shall not punish him (i.e. the calamities which had befallen him)! But he cried through the darkness (saying): Laa ilaaha illa Anta [none has the right to be worshipped but You (O Allaah)], Glorified (and Exalted) are You [above all that (evil) they associate with You]. Truly, I have been of the wrong-doers.” (21:87)

Thus, Allaah forgives the monotheist but He will not forgive the polytheist. We do not say that none of the Muslims will enter the Fire. Indeed many of them may enter it and be punished according to their sins, but then they will come out of it because of their "Tawheed" (Monotheism)."

- With it Intercession is obtained

Allaah Alone owns the intercession. He says (Interpretation of the meaning):

"Say: 'To Allaah belongs all intercession. His is the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth, then to Him you shall be brought back.'" (39:44)

- It is the word of protection
- It is the greatest pillar of religion
- It is the pathway to win Paradise and to escape Hell

THE CONDITIONS OF THE TESTIMONY OF FAITH:

Many texts from the Qur'an and Sunnah indicate that this great testimony has seven conditions, which are:

1- Knowledge

To know the meaning of this testimony and what it indicates, and to know that no one deserves the worship except Allaah (Azza wa Jall). Allaah says in Surat Muhammad (Interpretation of the meaning):

“So know (O Muhammad) that none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah.” (47:19)

2- Certainty that negates the doubts

One should have firm belief in what this word implies; none deserves to be worshipped but the One True God; Allaah. It is very important to understand that in the matter of faith, only knowledge with certainty is accepted. No doubts or hesitations are allowed in believing in Allaah. Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says (interpretation of the meaning) effectively:

“Only those are the believers who have believed in Allaah and His Messenger, and afterward doubt not, but strive with their wealth and their lives for the Cause of Allaah. Those are the truthful.” (49:15)

This verse indicates that one who has no firm belief in this testimony, or is doubtful or hesitant about it, then the testimony of faith won't benefit him.

3- Acceptance which is the opposite of rejection

To accept with tongue and heart all what this testimony implies, and believe that it is truth and just. Allaah says about the polytheists in Surat As-Saffaat (interpretation of the meaning):

“Truly, when it was said to them, 'Laa ilaaha illa-Allaah' (none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah) they puffed themselves up with pride (i.e. denied it). And they said: 'Are we going to abandon our gods for the sake of a mad poet!'" (37:35-36)

Whoever refuses part of what this testimony indicates, either out of envy or pride or for other reasons, then he will not benefit from merely saying it.

So, if for example, he refuses to submit to Allaah's Islamic laws out of pride, then he is not a Muslim. Similarly, the one who doesn't accept the fact that the religions of the polytheists who worship idols and graves, or the religions of the Jews, or Christians who worship Jesus, are false religions, and instead says that these religions are correct, then he did not accept what this testimony implies and is therefore not a Muslim.

4- Submission that negates abandonment

One should submit and act upon what this testimony entails of worshipping Allaah (Azza wa Jall) Alone.

Allaah says in Surat Luqman (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whoever submits his face (himself) to Allaah (i.e. follows Allaah's religion of Islamic Monotheism, worships Allaah Alone with sincere faith) while he is a Muhsin [good-doer i.e. performs good deeds totally for Allaah's sake without any show-off or to gain praise or fame, and he does them in accordance with the Sunnah of Allaah's Messenger Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), then he has grasped the most trustworthy hand hold [Ilaa ilaaha illa-Allaah]. And to Allaah return all matters for decision.” (31:22)

“Submits his face” means to follow Allaah's religion with complete sincerity. Whoever says this word and knows its meaning but doesn't carry out its rights and fulfil its requirements; (of worshipping Allaah Alone and acting upon the Islamic law), and he doesn't follow except what suits his desires or acts upon only what benefits him of worldly gain, then he does not benefit by merely saying this word.

5- Truthfulness that negates lying

It means, to say this testimony truthfully from one's heart. His words should comply with what is established in his heart.

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Al-'Ankabut (interpretation of the meaning):

“Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: ‘We believe’, and will not be tested? And We indeed tested those who were before them. And Allaah will certainly make (it) known (the truth of) those who are true, and will certainly make (it) known (the falsehood of) those who are liars, (although Allaah knows all that before putting them to test).” (29:2-3)

Therefore, uttering this word by the hypocrites does not benefit them, because their hearts deny its implications. They say it out of hypocrisy and lie.

6- Sincerity that negates Polytheism (Shirk)

It is a must to purify one’s deeds from all kind of polytheism (Shirk) by having pure intention.

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Az-Zumar (interpretation of the meaning):

“So worship Allaah (Alone) by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allaah’s Sake only, (and not to show-off, and not to set up rivals with Him in worship).” (39:2)

Therefore, whoever associates others with Allaah in any act of worship, then this word will not benefit him.

7- Love

Muslims should love this testimony and love what it implies and love its people who act upon it and who abide by its conditions and hate what negates it.

Allaah says in Surat Al-Baqarah (interpretation of the meaning):

“And of mankind are some who take (for worship) others besides Allaah as rivals (to Allaah). They love them as they love Allaah. But those who believe, love Allaah more (than anything else).” (2:165)

Whoever says “Laa ilaaha illa-Allaah” but hates what it implies of worshipping Allaah Alone without associates, then he is not a Muslim.

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WORSHIP

DEFINITION:

In the Arabic language, ('Ebadah) “worship” means: to tame, subjugate, subdue. Thus, worship encompasses humility and humbleness to the Creator All-Mighty.

It encompasses all that Allaah (Azza wa Jall) loves and is pleased with of inward and outward utterances and actions.

KINDS OF WORSHIP:

First: Exclusive acts of worship

Which include the actions and statements that are legislated in the Islamic law and the evidences had come to indicate the prohibition of dedicating them to other than Allaah (Azza wa Jall). These include:

- **Acts of worship performed by the heart:**

a) Statements of the heart (i.e. its belief): To believe that there is no Lord except Allaah and none deserves to be worshipped except Him, and to believe in all His Glorious Names and Attributes. Also, to believe in the Angels, the Books (Scriptures), the Messengers, the Day of Judgment, and the Decree, the good and the bad of it.

b) Actions of the heart: Such as sincerity, love for Allaah (Azza wa Jall), hope for His reward, fear of Allaah's punishment, putting trust in Him, showing patience when acting upon His commands, and other acts of worship of the heart.

- **Acts of worship performed by the tongue:**

Such as uttering the word of Tawheed, reciting the Qur'an, remembering Allaah, teaching others the religious knowledge, calling others to Islam, etc.

- **Acts of worship performed by the limbs:**

Such as performing prayers (Salaat), prostration, fasting, performing Hajj, Jihaad and seeking religious knowledge.

- **Financial acts of worship:**

Such as giving Zakaat, charity, slaughtering the sacrificial animal, etc.

Second: Deeds and statements that are not legislated as acts of worship

These are *not* considered acts of worship by Islamic law, but are turned into acts of worship with good righteous intention such as:

- Doing obligatory and recommendable acts: such as spending on one's self, wife and children, paying the loan, marriage loaning, giving gifts, dutifulness to parents, entertaining the guests. If the Muslim does these acts seeking the Countenance of His Lord, then these acts will become acts of worship for which he will be rewarded.
- Abstaining from prohibitions seeking the Countenance of Allaah (Ta'ala) such as abandoning "Usury" (Riba), theft, cheating etc. If the Muslim refrains from these matters (sins) seeking the reward of Allaah, fearing His punishment, and obeying His Commands, then this will be considered an act of worship.
- Performing the allowable matters seeking the reward and the pleasure of Allaah (Ta'ala) such as sleeping, eating, trading etc. These matters are basically allowable, but if the Muslim intends by them to gain strength to perform the worship, then they will be considered as acts of worship for

which he will be rewarded.

This indicates that worship includes all the life of a worshipper, and encompasses the whole religion. And it also indicates the importance of worship.

It is because of this worship, that man and Jinn were created, as Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Adh-Dhaariyaat (interpretation of the meaning):

**“And I (Allaah) created not the Jinns and humans
except they should worship Me (Alone).”** ^(51:56)

Conditions of worship:

Worship of Allaah (Azza wa Jall) is not accepted until it meets two conditions:

1. Sincerity (Ikhlas)

It means: To seek the pleasure of Allaah (Azza wa Jall) and none else, whenever one performs an act of worship.

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Al-Bayyinah (interpretation of the meaning):

**“And they were commanded not, but that they should worship
Allaah, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from
ascribing partners to Him), and perform As-Salaat (Iqaamat-
as-Salaat) and give Zakaat: and that is the right religion.”** ^[98:5]

Whoever performs an act of worship with the intention of seeking other than Allaah’s Countenance, Pleasure or Reward, such as to seek the praise of people or worldly gain, or imitating others or seeking nearness to someone or some people, then it will not be accepted from him, and he will not be rewarded for it. And if he performs an act of worship with the intention of seeking Allaah’s Countenance, but his intentions are blemished with showing off then his deed will be nullified.

2) To be in compliance with the laws of Allaah (Azza wa Jall).

To perform the worship in its stated time and stated description which

has been set in the Qur'an and Sunnah [traditions of the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)]. So, he should not add to his worship an act or statement which is not quoted in the Qur'an or Sunnah. Also, one should not perform the worship except in its stated time nor should he worship Allaah with a worship that is not mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Accordingly, one should not worship Allaah except with what is legislated by the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam).

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THE NULLIFIERS OF TAWHEED

These are matters which if they are found or done by the worshipper, then he will be out of the fold of Islam totally, and he will be considered a disbeliever or apostate from Islam.

MATTERS WHICH NULLIFY ONE’S ISLAM⁶

First: “Shirk” in worship

Definition: To ascribe a partner with Allaah in His Lordship “Ruboobiyah” or His Divinity and Worship “Uloohiyah”, or His Names and Attributes.

Verdict:

“Shirk” (polytheism) is the greatest sin by which Allaah is disobeyed, and it is greater than major sins.

It is the greatest sin and wrong doing, because polytheism is to divert the rights of Allaah, which is worship, to other than Him, or to attribute one of His creation with one of Allaah’s Attributes which is particular to Allaah (such as creating, providing with sustenance, healing, guiding, etc.)

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat Luqman (interpretation of the meaning):

⁶ (By Shaikh Ibn Baaz):

“Verily! Joining others in worship with Allaah is a great Dhulm (wrong) indeed.” (31:13)

Therefore the “Islamic laws” (Shari’ah) set great punishments subsequent upon it.

Allaah (Ta’ala) says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, Allaah forgives not (the sin of) setting up partners (in worship) with Him, but He forgives whom He wills, sins other than that,” (4:116)

And

“Verily, whosoever sets up partners (in worship) with Allaah, then Allaah has forbidden Paradise to him, and the Fire will be his abode. And for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.” (5:72)

These are matters such as calling upon the dead, seeking their support and slaughtering animals for them or in their name, such as those who slaughter for Jinn or at people’s graves.

Second: Making intermediaries between a person and Allaah

People ask them to intercede on their behalf with Allaah. This includes supplicating to such "intermediaries" and putting one’s trust in them. Whoever does any of these has become a disbeliever by the consensus of the Muslim scholars.

Third: Not considering those who associate partners with Allaah in worship as disbelievers, doubting their disbelief, or considering their faith as correct

Fourth: Believing that there is guidance which is better or more suitable than the guidance with which the Prophet (salla Allaahu ’alayhi wa sallam) came with

Or believing that any other legislation is superior to Allaah’s religion, such as those who favor man-made legislation over Islamic legislation and use these man-made legislations to rule with. This also includes

believing that man-made legislation is better than Islam, or that they are equivalent, or that one may use them as a basis for ruling.

It includes believing that Islamic legislation is not suitable for the twenty-first century, or believing that Islamic legislation is the reason behind the weakness and backwardness of the Muslims, or limiting Islamic legislation to only govern the relationship between man and his Lord and not his other worldly affairs.

Moreover, this category includes those who consider that some Islamic penal-laws are unsuitable for our time, such as cutting the hands of thieves or stoning adulterers.

Likewise, believing that one can refer to man-made legislation for commercial or business transactions renders one a disbeliever, because such a person by conviction deems lawful what Allaah has ruled as unlawful. An example of this is those people who set rules for those who use usury in banking.

Fifth: Hating anything which the Prophet (salla Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) commanded even if one performs it

Allaah (Ta'ala) says (interpretation of the meaning):

“But those who disbelieve (in the Oneness of Allaah-Islamic Monotheism), for them is destruction, and (Allaah) will make their deeds vain. That is because they hate that which Allaah has sent down (Qur'an).” (47:9)

Sixth: Joking at or making fun of any part of Islam, its rewards or its punishments

Allaah (Ta'ala) says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say: 'Was it at Allaah and His Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and His Messenger that you were mocking? Make no excuse; you disbelieved after you had believed.’” (9: 65-66)

Seventh: Practicing magic

Allaah (Ta'ala) says (interpretation of the meaning):

“...but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, 'We are for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)'.” (2:102)

Eighth: Supporting the disbelievers against the believers.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And if any amongst you takes them (as supporters), then surely, he is one of them. Verily, Allaah guides not those people who are the Dhaalimun (polytheists and wrongdoers and unjust).” (5:51)

Ninth: Believing that people are free to abandon the Islamic legislation which was brought to us by Prophet Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter, he will be one of the losers.” (3: 85)

Tenth: Shunning the religion of Allaah by refusing to learn or practice it

Allaah (Ta'ala) says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Who does more wrong than he who is reminded of the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of his Lord, then turns aside therefrom. Verily, We shall exact retribution from the Mujrimoon (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners).” (32: 22)

There is no excuse for committing any of the above mentioned nullifications, regardless of whether one did it seriously, jokingly or fearfully, unless one was forced to say or do any of them. A believer must be careful not to commit any of them, so as not to be deserving of the punishment of Allaah.

-7-

MATTERS WHICH DIMINISH THE TAWHEED

A) MEANS THAT LEAD TO MAJOR “SHIRK” (POLYTHEISM)

Major “Shirk” is one of the greatest sins that man disobeyed Allaah with. Therefore, Allaah (Ta’ala) and His Messenger (Salla-Allaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) forbade every action and utterance that leads man to fall into it.

Allaah’s Messenger (Salla-Allaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) was keen to guide his Ummah (nation, followers) and to keep it safe from every means to its destruction, as Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in Surat At-Tawbah (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, there has come unto you a Messenger (Muhammad Salla-Allaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) from amongst yourselves (i.e. whom you know well). It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He [Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam)] is anxious over you (to be rightly guided, to repent to Allaah, and beg Him to pardon and forgive your sins, in order that you may enter Paradise and be saved from the punishment of the Hell-fire), for the believers [he (Salla-Allaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam)] is full of pity, kind, and merciful.” (9:128)

Abu Dhar (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu) used to say:

“There is nothing brings you close to Paradise or keeps you far from Hellfire, but he [the Prophet Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)] had clarified to you.” [At-Tabaraani]

Al-Bukhari and Muslim reported a Hadeeth that the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“My example and the example of the people is that of a man who kindled a fire and when it lighted what was around it, moths and other insects started falling into the fire. The man tried (his best) to prevent them (from falling into the fire) but they over powered him and rushed into it.” The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) added, “Now, similarly, I take hold of the knots at your waist (belts) to prevent you from falling into the fire, but you insist on falling into it.”

Exaggerating the rank of the righteous people (by elevating them above the rank that Allaah has given them.)

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“Beware of extremity, (or exaggeration), for nothing destroyed the people (nations) before you except the exaggeration (in religion).” [Ahmad]

It is affirmed that the first and the greatest means that led children of Adam to commit polytheism (major Shirk), was exaggeration in praising the righteous people.

It is reported by Al-Bukhari that Ibn Abbaas (Radia-Allaahu 'anhuma) narrated: “These idols which were among the people of “Nuh” (Noah), wound up among the Arabs afterwards. These idols were all named after righteous men from the people of “Nuh”. Then when these men died, Shaytaan (Satan) inspired his (Nuh’s) people to erect statues in honor of them at their gathering places where they used to come and sit, and to name these statues after these men. So, they did this (as Shaytaan suggested), but these statues were not worshipped until after those people

(the ones who built them) had died and the knowledge was lost. Then, those statues were later worshipped.” [Fath-al-Bari]

Types of forbidden exaggeration in righteous people which leads to “Shirk” (polytheism):

- **Excessively praising them:**

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) warned against exaggeration in praising him, saying:

“Do not unduly praise me like the Christians exaggerated over Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary). Verily, I am only a servant, so say, Allaah’s servant and His Messenger.”

[Reported by Al-Bukhari]

- **Making images of the righteous people (Awliya’a):**

The first “Shirk” happened among the children of Adam because of exaggeration and being extreme in glorifying righteous people by making images and statues in their gatherings.

Undoubtedly, making images for the “Ulama” (scholars) and the prominent righteous people, is one of the greatest means to make the ignorant ones fall into “Shirk” by erecting statues in their gatherings, especially in places of worship.

- **Seeking blessings from them.**

Elevating their graves, plastering them, putting light, building structures and rooms over them, building a Masjid over them and worshipping Allaah at them. This could be either major “Shirk” or minor “Shirk” according to their ruling.

Many Ahadeeth, have been quoted which emphasize the prohibition of such matters (or acts) such as:

Jundub ibn 'Abdullaah (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu) narrated: “I heard the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) saying five days before he died:

‘Verily, those who were before you used to take the graves of

their Prophets and righteous people as Masaajid, and I forbid you to do so’. [Muslim]

Ibn 'Abbaas (Radia-Allaahu 'anhuma) narrated a Hadeeth that he attributed to the Messenger of Allaah (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) saying:

“Do not pray facing a grave nor pray over a grave.”

B) MINOR “SHIRK” (POLYTHEISM):

Definition:

It is every kind of “Shirk” which did not reach to the rank of major “Shirk”.

Alternatively: minor “Shirk” is every statement or action with heart or limbs that leads the slave to ascribe partners or rivals to Allaah (Azza wa Jall), and this association does not bring the slave out of the fold of Islam.

Its verdict:

It is one of the greatest sins, just below the nullifiers of Islam.

This kind of “Shirk” however, may magnify to an extent that leads the person to major “Shirk”, which brings one out of the fold of Islam. Therefore, the person who is committing this kind of “Shirk” is in great danger.

This kind of “Shirk” may nullify the rewards of good deeds, such as “showing off“, which is to do good deeds in order to gain people’s praise, or to seek worldly gain by his good deeds.

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says: 'I am the One Who is most free from want of partners. He who does a thing for the sake of someone else besides Me, I discard him and his polytheism.’”

[Muslim]

EXAMPLES OF MINOR “SHIRK”:

1- Showing off (Riyaa’)

Means to show one’s good deeds to others or perfect it for their sake, or to appear in front of them in a praiseworthy appearance for the sake of gaining their praise, and to be honored by them.

2- Reliance on Means

According to Islamic terminology, the means are matters which man does to attain what he wants to get, or to repel from him what he is afraid from (a fearful matter) in this world or in the Hereafter.

Examples of worldly means; working to get money, going to the doctor to heal from sickness (by medicine, operation etc).

Examples for means in the matters of the Hereafter; performing acts of worship hoping to get the reward from Allaah (Ta’ala)

It is incumbent upon the Muslim to use the legal means that have benefits affirmed in the Shari’ah law or affirmed by correct experiments

The legal means are either:

- a. By the Islamic law such as “honey”. Allaah (Ta’ala) says in Surat An-Nahl (interpretation of the meaning):

“Wherein is healing for men.” (16:69)

Reciting the Qur’an is a healing too, Allaah says in Surat Al-Isra’a (interpretation of the meaning):

“And we send down of the Qur’an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe (in Islamic monotheism).” (17:82)

- b. Universal laws that Allaah created in the universe. Such as to experiment with certain things or medicines on certain sickness or pain and prove it to be beneficial. However, its effect must be apparent and direct.

What should the attitude of the Muslim be when using the means?

One should be using the legal means while putting his trust in Allaah and believing that this matter is just a means which has no effect or impact except with the will of Allaah. If Allaah wills, one will benefit from the means and if He wills not, then He may nullify the effect of this means.

3-Belief in Omens

According to the Islamic terminology, it means to be pessimistic with a seen or heard matter or both. E.g. a man is intending to do a certain matter. Then he sees or hears something which he dislikes, and this leads him to abandon what he was intending to do.

Also, using lots⁷ to decide on matters in the future is not allowed.

4- Wearing or hanging “amulets” (Tameemah)

Basically, it is a bead which the Arabs used to hang on the children to protect them from evil eye.

Generally, it is everything that is hung on the children, or the sick or the animals for the sake of repelling harm or removing it, whether it is leather, pearl, words of remembrance “Adhkar”, or words for protection. It may also be in the form of some shapes like the head of an animal, or a gazelle, or a horseshoe, or black shreds of paper, or charms in the form of an eye, or words of glorification in a particular shape.

All of these are different kinds of “Tameemah”. Another form of “Tameemah” is wearing a silver ring for seeking the “Barakah” (blessing), or wearing rings with specific stones believing that they protect from the Jinn. Also wearing or hanging strings with a specific name (like Muhammad) tied in it for the sake of remedy.

The verdict concerning “Tameemah”:

All kinds of “Tameemah” are forbidden and considered “Shirk” according to the statement of the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam):

“Verily, “Ruqaa” (spells), Tamae’im (plural of Tameemah) and “Tiwalah” (a kind of spells used to force someone to love or hate another) are Shirk”. [Ahmad]

⁷ one of a set of objects such as straws, stones, or pieces of paper that are randomly selected as part of a decision-making process

He (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) also said:

“Whoever hangs a “Tameemah” then he has committed Shirk.”

[Ahmad]

It is considered “Shirk” because the person believes that other than Allaah can heal, or that these things have an effect in the healing, so he asked other than Allaah (Ta’ala) to drive away the harm, although no one is able to drive away the evil except Allaah (Azza wa Jall).

Tameemah is considered major “Shirk” if the person who uses it believes that it benefits by itself without the will of Allaah (Azza wa Jall).

And it is considered minor “Shirk” if the person believes that Allaah is the One Who benefits and helps, but his heart is still attached to the “Tameemah” in repelling evil.

It is also not allowed to hang them for beauty or decoration, even if the person has no intention of seeking their benefit. That’s because by doing so, one resembles those who commit minor “Shirk”.

Different kind of amulets that are considered "Shirk " in Islam



-8-

BEARING WITNESS THAT
MUHAMMAD IS THE MESSENGER
OF ALLAAH

In this section the meaning of "Muhammad Rasool Allaah, (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)" is explained.

As Muslims, we testify that Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is Allaah's Messenger i.e. that none has the right to be followed in worshipping Allaah but Prophet Muhammad as he is the last of the Messengers.

As Allaah (Ta'ala) says in Surat Al-Ahzaab (interpretation of the meaning):

“Muhammad is not the father of any man among you but he is the Messenger of Allaah and the last (end) of the Prophets and Allaah is Ever All-Aware of everything” (33:40)

“And whatsoever the Messenger Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) gives you, take it and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain from it.” (59:7)

And Allaah (Ta'ala) says in Surat Aal-'Imran (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say [O Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)] to mankind: 'if you (really) love Allaah, then follow me'.” (3:31)

As for those other than Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), their statements are to be taken or rejected depending on whether these are in accordance with Allaah's Book i.e. the Qur'an or with the Sunnah (legal ways, orders, acts of worship, statements, etc.) of the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) or not.

Adding a new element to the Islamic Law is called innovation (Bida'ah). The Prophet Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“If anyone introduces in our matter something which does not belong to it, it will be rejected.” [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

The narration in Muslim says: ***“If anybody introduces a practice***

which is not authenticated by me, it is to be rejected."

Also, he (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Beware of innovations in religious matters as every innovation in religion is heresy and every heresy is in the fire." [Sunan an-Nasa'i]

Therefore, The second sacred source besides the Qur'an is the Sunnah, the practice and example of the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam). A Hadeeth (narration) is a reliably transmitted report of what the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said, did or approved.

Belief in the Sunnah is a fundamental part of the Islamic faith.

Some examples of the Prophet's sayings:

"Allaah has no Mercy on one who has no mercy for others."

"None of you truly believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself."

"Who eats his fill while his neighbor is hungry is not a true believer."

"The powerful person is not who knocks the other down, but he who controls himself in a fit of anger."

"Allaah does not judge according to your bodies and appearances but He looks into your hearts and into your deeds."

The Divine Inspiration has stopped with the death of the Prophet Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) but his Sunnah teachings is very well preserved.

CHAPTER 2

BIOGRAPHY OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SALLA-ALLAAHU 'ALAYHI WA SALLAM)

1. His Birth
2. His Youth
3. His Marriage
4. Prophethood
5. Challenges
6. Migration
7. New Era
8. Emissaries Entertained in Madinah
9. Conquest of Makkah
10. Farewell Pilgrimage
11. His Death
12. A guidance to follow

MUHAMMAD

(SALLA-ALLAAHU 'ALAYHI WA SALLAM)

HIS BIRTH

Prophet Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was born in Makkah, Arabia, on Monday, 12 Rabi' Al-Awwal (2 August C.E). His mother, Aaminah was the daughter of Wahab ibn 'Abdu Manaf of the Zahrah family. His father, 'Abdullaah, was the son of 'Abdul-Muttalib. His genealogy has been traced to the noble house of Isma'eel ('Alayhis-Salaam) the son of Abraham [Ibraheem ('Alayhis-Salaam)] in about the fortieth lineage.

Muhammad's father died before his birth and his mother died when he was about six years old leaving him an orphan.

In accordance with the tradition of noble families of Makkah, he was taken by a foster mother, Halimah, to her village where he lived for a few years. During these years, he was taken to Makkah several times to visit his mother. After the death of his mother, he was placed under the custody of his grandfather, 'Abdul-Muttalib. When the grandfather died, he was under the care of his uncle, Abu Talib. By this time, he used to

look after sheep around Makkah and used to accompany his uncle on trade journeys to Syria.

HIS YOUTH

He lived a very simple life and hated vanity and pride. He was compassionate to the poor, widows and orphans, and shared their sufferings by helping them. He avoided all vices, which were commonly practiced among young people, such as gambling, drinking wine, vulgarity and others. He was well-known as “As-Sadiq” (the truthful) and “Al-Amin” (the trustworthy). He was always trusted as a mediator between two conflicting parties in his homeland, Makkah.

HIS MARRIAGE

When he was about 25 years old, his uncle urged him to work with the caravan which belonged to a wealthy widow named Khadijah. He accepted and undertook the journey to Syria. He conducted business with such prudence and sense of duty that he returned with larger profit than usual. Khadijah was so impressed by the honest and attractive personality of Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) that she offered to marry him, which Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) accepted. This marriage was a happy one. They had children. Khadijah was his only wife until she died, at the age of 61.

PROPHETHOOD

Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was born amidst a polytheistic society. He often went to Hira cave in the mountain near Makkah, later known as Jabal An-Nur (the mountain of Light) where he meditated and pondered over the prevailing darkness brought about by ignorance. There he often remained deep in thought in communion with the unseen yet Ever-Living Self-Existing God.

One night, while he was meditating in the Hira cave, the Angel Gabriel came to him. He was perplexed and did not know what to do. He was asked to read. He replied: "I cannot read!" The Angel repeated three times asking Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) to read, but he replied with the same answer. Finally, the Angel said:

(Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists), Has created man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous, Who taught by the pen, has taught man that which he knew not.) ^(96: 1-5)

Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was 40 years old at the time that he received the first revelation. The revelation continued to come to him from time to time over a period of twenty-three years.

These series of revelation were arranged according to the divine guidance given to Prophet Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and later collected in the form of a Mushaf (book) [the Qur'an (which means the read book)]. Most of its verses have clear meaning. Some verses are interpreted in conjunction with other verses and some others were interpreted by the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) himself through his words, actions and agreements which are known as his Sunnah (Traditions).

The Qur'an and the Sunnah together constitute the guidance and way of life for those who submit their life to Allaah (Ta'ala). People who follow this guidance and way of life are guaranteed by Allaah (Ta'ala) to be saved in this world and the Hereafter.

CHALLENGES

When the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) called the people to the way of Allaah (Azza wa Jall), not many people listened to his call. Most of those who did, were either members of his family like Khadijah (Radia-Allaahu 'anha) , Ali (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu), or people from the low-class society like Zayd (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu) and Bilal (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu).

When he intensified his mission (Da'wah: Call to Islam) by publicly announcing the religion he preached, he won more followers but at the same time had to face many challenges from the nobles and leaders who found their positions being threatened and jeopardized. They stood together, under the pretext of defending the religion of their ancestors, to fight the new religion.

The morale of the few people who embraced Islam was heightened when a small group of the respected people of Makkah joined the religion.

Some of the notables among them were 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan, Az-Zubair ibn Al-'Awwam, 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn 'Awf, Talhah ibn 'Ubaydullaah, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, Arqam ibn Abi Al-Arqam, 'Ubaydullaah ibn Haarith, Sa'id ibn Zayd, 'Amr ibn Nufail, Fatimah (the wife of Nufail), Asma' bint Abu Bakr, 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ud, Ja'far ibn Abi Talib (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu), and many others. Before this group, Abu Bakr (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu) was the first among men to embrace Islam.

As the result of these challenges from the Makkan unbelievers, some Muslims were subjected to torture, persecutions, isolations and boycotts. The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) had to be patient and had to look for the protection of Muslims. He asked Negus, King of Ethiopia to allow Muslims to migrate to his country. Negus welcomed the Muslims emigrants in his territory and refused to hand them over to the Makkan unbeliever rulers.

MIGRATION (HIJRAH)

By the end of the Makkan period, the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) lost two people who were dear to him. They were his most affectionate uncle, Abu Talib, and his faithful and loving wife, Khadijah. After their deaths, the Makkans felt free to do what they wanted to impose on the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and his followers.

In Makkah is the Ka'bah (the Holy Mosque- The House of Allaah), which was built by Prophet Ibraheem ('Alayhis-Salaam) centuries before as a holy place to worship Allaah, the One and Only. But in the course of time, the place had been converted by unbelievers to the worship of objects other than Allaah (Ta'ala). People added to it many tradition of their own. They used to visit this place for a few months in a year for pilgrimage. They came from all parts of Arabia, representing various famous tribes. The pilgrimage, despite its religious bearing, constituted for the Arabs a yearly festival where people met and indulged in their cultural activities. The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) took this opportunity to spread Islam.

Among those who were interested in his call, were a group of people from Yathrib (Madinah) in the North of Arabia. They met secretly with the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and a few Muslims from Makkah in a place called 'Aqabah. After becoming Muslims, they took

an oath of allegiance to protect Islam, the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and the Makkan Muslims.

The following year, the group of Muslims from Yathrib came again to Makkah. They met the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) at the same place where they previously met. This time Al-'Abbaas ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib, the Prophet's uncle who was himself not a Muslim yet, was present at the meeting. They invited the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and the Muslims from Makkah to emigrate to Yathrib. They promised to treat them as true brothers and sisters. A long dialogue was held between the Muslims of Yathrib with the Prophet's uncle to make sure that they really wanted to welcome the Makkan Muslims in their town. The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) agreed at the end to migrate to the new land.

Upon knowing that, the Muslims planned to leave Makkah. The Makkan unbelievers tried to stop the immigration but the first group had already migrated to Yathrib. The Makkans had feared that the movement to Yathrib would give the Muslims a new base to spread Islam.

Within two months nearly all the Muslims from Makkah, except the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), Abu Bakr, 'Ali (Radia-Allaahu 'anhum) and a few helpless people had migrated. The Makkans then decided to kill the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam). They made a plan for this purpose, but Allaah (Azza wa Jall) had made another plan! With various tactics and a good planning, the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) finally arrived peacefully in Yathrib, which was later known as Madinatun-Nabi [The city of the Prophet].

NEW ERA

In Madinah, the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was able to work freely in spreading Islam. The followers of Islam increased day after day, but the threat of the Makkans did not stop. A few physical confrontations with the Makkans ensued. Sometimes the battles were won by the Muslims, and sometimes by the Makkans. The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) also engaged in battles with the Byzantine and Persian powers that were jeopardizing the existence of Islam from the north and the east. But confrontation with the Makkans stopped for a while after the treaty of Hudaibiyah had been signed between the Muslims and the unbeliever Makkans.

During the Madinah period, the Muslims also established treaties with the Jews of Madinah and the tribes around the city. The Jews broke the treaty, which led to their expulsion out of the Arabian Peninsula.

In Madinah, the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) succeeded in establishing Islam as a way of life in its true meaning. He was not only giving guidance on purely religious matters such as Salah (prayers), Zakah (almsgiving), Saum (fasting) and Hajj (pilgrimage) and examples in these matters, but also provided Muslims with rules and laws covering social, economic and political fields.

EMISSARIES ENTERTAINED IN MADINAH

It was in Madinah that the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) received envoys and emissaries from various tribes and nationals, asking matters of various sorts, demanding dialogues, negotiations etc. Among the emissaries was an envoy representing the Christian community in Najran (South Arabia). The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) welcomed them, entertained them as honored guests and even allowed them to conduct their religious service in his city.

It was a good occasion to share each other's views on matters of religion. Some members of the envoy were deeply impressed by the treatment they received from the Muslims, thus leading them to embrace Islam.

CONQUEST OF MAKKAH

The treaty of Hudaibiyah gave the Muslims a big opportunity to exemplify the true Islam in personal conduct and in relations with people and communities. But the peace did not stay long due to the attitude of the Makkah tribal chiefs who broke the treaty. Soon the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) marched very quietly to Makkah in the 8th year of the Hijrah (emigration) to Madinah. The Makkans gave no resistance and the whole city surrendered to the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) peacefully. He announced a general amnesty for all his enemies and treated all citizens of the city with generosity. A verse of the Qur'an was revealed on the occasion:

"When comes the Help of Allaah [to you, O Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) against your enemies] and the conquest (of Makkah). And you see that the people enter Allaah's religion (Islam) in crowds. So glorify the Praises of your Lord, and ask for His Forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts the repentance and forgives." (110: 1-3)

After the liberation of Makkah all the remaining hostile tribes in Arabia began to realize the reality of the Islamic faith. People had seen the noble teachings of Islam. Good examples of forgiveness, tolerance, justice, fairness, steadfastness and other qualities as exemplified by the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and his Companions had left an impression in the hearts of hundreds of thousands of people who became Muslims.

FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE

In time, the whole Arabia had become the land of Islam. The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) intended to perform the Hajj (pilgrimage). He announced his intention to the Muslims in Madinah and the surrounding areas and asked them to join him. This was in fact the only Hajj performed by him during his lifetime. On this occasion, he taught those who were present with him and the whole world about the Hajj and the Divine Message that Allaah (Azza wa Jall) had entrusted him to all mankind.

At the last gathering with the Ummah (nation) during the Hajj season, the Hajj of "Wadaa" (Farewell), a sermon was delivered by the Prophet Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) at the valley of Arafat about 81 or 82 days before his death. It contained the very fundamentals of Islam. Seated on his camel, he spoke with a clear tone and asked who heard his speech to convey it to those who were not present there. Among other matters, he (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"O people, lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether, after this year, I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore, listen to what I am saying to you very carefully and take these words to those who could not be present here today."

"O people, just as you regard this month, this day, this city as sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your Rabb [Lord], and that He will indeed reckon your deeds. Allaah has forbidden you to take usury, therefore all interest obligation shall henceforth be waived."

"Beware of Satan, for the safety of your religion. He has lost all hopes that he will be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things."

"O people, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you. If they abide by your right then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in mildness. Do treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers. And it is your right that they do not make friends with anyone of whom you do not approve, as well as never to commit adultery."

"O people, listen to me earnestly, worship Allaah, offer your five daily prayers, fast during the month of Ramadan, and give your wealth in Zakaat. Perform Hajj if you can afford to. You know that every Muslim is the brother of another Muslim. You are all equal. Nobody has superiority over the other except by piety and good deeds."

"Remember, one day you will appear before Allaah (Azza wa Jall) and answer for your deeds. So, beware, do not go astray from the path of righteousness after my death."

"O people, no Prophet or Messenger will come after me and no new faith will be born. Reason well therefore, O people, and understand my words, which I convey to you. I leave behind me two things, the Our'an and my example, the Sunnah, and if you follow these you will never go astray."

"All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again: and perhaps the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly. Be my witness O Allaah that I have conveyed Your Message to Your slaves." [At-Tirmidhi -Muslim - Sunan Abi Dawud - Sunan Ibn Majah]

The importance of this sermon can be seen from the Prophet's perception that this occasion may be the last one during his lifetime. He felt that this was the right time to summarize the principles of Islam to his fellow brothers and sisters.

By the perfection of this religion, it means that there is no need for humanity, and for the Muslims in particular, to look for an alternative way of life. As long as one holds fast to the two things left behind by the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam); the Qur'an and the Sunnah, one will never go astray.

HIS DEATH

About two months after returning from Makkah and Pilgrimage, the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) became ill but he was still able to perform his prayers in the mosque and give directives to his companions. His health was deteriorating day by day. At the last moment, he asked Abu Bakr (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu) to lead the prayers in the mosque. Every member of his family and every companion was worried about his health. It was on Monday, 12th Rabi'Al-Awwal, the year 11 A.H., when he passed away at the age of sixty-three years.

Many people did not believe that he had passed away. They thought that the Messenger of Allaah (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) would live forever. It was Abu Bakr (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu) who had the feeling, since the Farewell Pilgrimage, that the death of the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was near. He convinced the congregation that the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) had actually passed away.

Abu Bakr (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu) said to the congregation that if they worshipped Muhammad, Muhammad had died, and if they worshipped Allaah (Azza wa Jall), He lives forever. Then he recited a verse from the Qur'an:

“Muhammad is no more than a Messenger, and indeed (many) Messengers have passed away before him. If he dies or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels (as disbelievers)? And he who turns back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allaah, and Allaah will give reward to those who are grateful.” (3:144)

A GUIDANCE TO FOLLOW

Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) as a man had already died, but as a Prophet, he left behind him a legacy in the form of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. He stressed the urgent need to hold firmly to these two sources during his farewell speech in the valley of 'Arafat. If people hold fast to them, they will never go astray.

The teachings he left for us if put into practice in their true spirit and proper way will bring a happy life in this world besides the indubitable rewards that will be received by those who believed in them in the life after death. It is difficult to portend that man can be saved in the Hereafter without being saved in this world. The safe way is to follow the way shown to us by the Prophet Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam). When his wife, 'Aishah, was asked by a companion about the Prophet's daily conduct, 'Aishah replied that the conduct of the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was the Qur'an which is the guidance from Allaah and Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was given authority by Allaah (Ta'ala) to interpret it. That is why his conduct was exemplary of human conduct.

The increased interest in Islamic studies by Muslims and non-Muslims supported by the advanced printing technology has begun to open the eyes of the world about the true teachings and intrinsic values of Islam.

CHAPTER THREE

QUR'AN & HADEETH

Some small chapters of the Qur'an

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| 1. Surat Al-Fatihaa | (Chapter 1) |
| 2. Surat Al-Ikhlās | (Chapter 112) |
| 3. Surat Al-Falaq | (Chapter 113) |
| 4. Surat An-Nas | (Chapter 114) |

Hadeeth:

1. Regarding Intentions
2. Introducing innovation in Islam
3. Being cautious of suspicious acts
4. Good Islam

QUR'AN:

SURAT "AL-FATIHAH"

This chapter is called Al-Fatihah which means the beginning, and it's the beginning of the Book (Qur'an); moreover, it is recited at the beginning of each "Rak'ah" in prayer.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾
 الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢﴾
 الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣﴾
 مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴿٤﴾
 إِلَهِكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾
 اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٦﴾
 صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ﴿٧﴾

Translation of the meaning:

- (1) In the Name of Allaah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.
- (2) All the praises and thanks be to Allaah, the Lord of the 'Alameen (mankind, jinn and all that exists).
- (3) The Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.
- (4) The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection).
- (5) You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).
- (6) Guide us to the Straight Way.

(7) The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger (such as the Jews), or of those who went astray (such as the Christians).

SURAT AL-IKHLAS "SINCERITY"

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾
 اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ﴿٢﴾
 لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿٣﴾
 وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ﴿٤﴾

Translation of the meaning:

- (1) Say [O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)]: "He is Allaah, (the) One.
- (2) Allaah-us-Samad (The Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, He neither eats nor drinks.)
- (3) He begets not, nor was He begotten;
- (4) And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him."

SURAT AL-FALAQ:

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ①
 مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ②
 وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ ③
 وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ ④
 وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ⑤

Translation of the meaning:

- (1) Say: "I seek refuge with (Allaah) the Lord of the daybreak,
- (2) From the evil of what He has created;
- (3) And from the evil of the darkening (night) as it comes with its darkness; (or the moon as it sets or goes away).
- (4) And from the evil of the witchcrafts when they blow in the knots,
- (5) And from the evil of the envier when he envies."

SURAT AN-NAS:

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ﴿١﴾
 مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ﴿٢﴾
 إِلَهِ النَّاسِ ﴿٣﴾
 مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ﴿٤﴾
 الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ ﴿٥﴾
 مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ ﴿٦﴾

Translation of the meaning:

- (1) Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind,
- (2) The Sovereign of mankind.
- (3) The God of mankind.
- (4) From the evil of the retreating whisperer –
- (5) Who whispers [evil] into the breasts of mankind –
- (6) From among the jinn and mankind."

HADEETH

The sayings of the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam):

HADEETH 1:

It is narrated on the authority of Amirul Mu'minin, Abu Hafs 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab (Radia- Allaahu 'anhu), who said: I heard the Messenger of Allaah, (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), say:

"Actions are (judged) by motives (Niyyah), so each man will have what he intended. Thus, he whose migration (Hijrah) was to Allaah and His Messenger, his migration is to Allaah and His Messenger; but he whose migration was for some worldly thing he might gain, or for a wife he might marry, his migration is to that for which he migrated." [Al-Bukhari & Muslim]

This hadeeth was said by the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) at the time a man emigrated from Makkah to Madinah during the Hijrah for the sake of marrying someone and not for the sake of Islam.

It is considered to be one of the greatest Ahadeeth in Islam.

Niyyah (intention) has two meanings:

- 1- The intention before any worship (e.g. prayer)
- 2- The willingness

The second meaning is what is meant in this hadeeth.

Lessons:

1. The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) starts the hadeeth with the principle "Actions are judged by intentions" and then gives three

examples. This is the methodology of the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam). The examples help illustrate the principle so that it is easier for people to understand and they can apply the principle to other similar situations.

2. The three examples consist of one good intention (migration for the sake of Allaah and His Messenger) and two bad intentions (migration for the sake of worldly gain or for marriage).
3. This hadeeth emphasizes sincerity - to be truthful and honest to Allaah alone, performing an act solely for Allaah's sake whereby no other witness except Allaah is sought. Sincerity is one of the conditions of having one's deeds accepted by Allaah. The other condition is that the actions must be done in accordance with the Shar'iah laws, which is coming next.
4. To achieve sincerity, we have to avoid shirk (associating others with Allaah, which causes insincerity).

Ways to obtain sincerity:

- Do righteous deeds - the more good deeds we do and the closer we get to Allaah, the more sincere we will be.
- Before we do any deed, we should firstly seek knowledge - our actions/deeds should be guided by knowledge so that we do them in accordance to the Shar'iah.
- Do not give false impressions - do not make others believe that an action we did was good when it was not.
- Imam Ahmad (Rahimahullaah) said: "Before you do anything, check your intention - ask yourself: 'Is it for the sake of Allaah?'"

There are four things that contradict sincerity:

- 1- Committing sins - this will weaken sincerity.
- 2- Shirk - associating others with Allaah in worship.
- 3- Riya' - performing a worship with the intention of showing off to others.
- 4- Hypocrisy.

Even though we must always make sure that our actions do not deviate from sincerity, there are actions which are automatically considered that

of good intentions. For example, seeking knowledge in Islam, helping the community, etc.

Conclusion:

Our actions are undermined by our intentions - whether they are good intentions or bad intentions. Therefore, we should always check our intentions before we do or say anything. We must make sure that the action is for the sake of Allaah so that it is accepted by Allaah and that we will be rewarded for it.

HADEETH 2

It is narrated on the authority of the Mother of the Believers, Umm 'Abdullaah 'Aishah, (Radia- Allaahu 'anha) that the Messenger of Allaah (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Whosoever introduces into this affair of ours (i.e. into Islam) something that does not belong to it, it is to be rejected." [Al-Bukhari & Muslim]

Like hadeeth 1, this hadeeth is one of the most important Ahadeeth. Imam An-Nawawi said it should be memorized by every Muslim.

This hadeeth is used as a criterion for judging external actions or performance of worship. If an action is not done in accordance with the Shar'iah or the Sunnah of the Prophet, (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) it will be rejected and not accepted by Allaah based on this hadeeth. This hadeeth complements hadeeth 1, which was a criterion for judging the intentions or the internal actions of the heart. The Scholars say that the acceptance of actions of worship is based on the above two conditions:

- The intention - the action should be done with sincerity, only for the sake of Allaah.
- It should be done in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam).

Looking at it in a positive way, the actions (i.e. forms of worship) that we do should be done in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), and to ensure this, there is a criterion consisting of five aspects that will keep our actions in check:

Time

Any worship that we do has to be done in its designated or specified time. E.g. There are fixed times in the day for the five prayers. For fasting, the month for fasting is Ramadhan. The period that we can fast is from Fajr (dawn) to Maghrib (sunset). Similarly, there is a specific time in the year when we can perform the Hajj - from the 8th to the 12th Dhul-Hijjah.

Place

The Shar'iah has specified that certain Ibadahs have to be performed in designated places.

E.g. The places for performing the Hajj, I'tikaf, pronouncing Ihram for Hajj have been fixed by the Shar'iah and this is something which is sometimes violated by Muslims, e.g. doing the Ihram (starting talbiyyah and niyyah for Hajj) in Jeddah is incorrect. It should be from the Meeqat.

Quantity

For most of the worship, the Shar'iah has specified a certain number of times that the Ibadahs (worship) or their components need to be performed. E.g. For prayers, there are a specified number of Rakaahs and Sujud, and for Tawaf, there is a fixed number of rounds (7), etc. We should not violate these rules intentionally, as it may make the Ibadah rejected.

Way

Every Ibadah (act of worship) was described or shown to us by the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) - being our best model to follow and emulate. The way that the Ibadahs were performed by him have to be followed - it should not be violated. E.g. There are different ways of performing different prayers - Salat ul-Janazah (funeral prayer) has no Ruku' or Sujud. Even the size of the stones used for throwing at the Jamrat has been specified by the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), as not to be too big.

Before we perform any Ibadah, we should know and learn the way the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), performed it and we should do it in the right way as he did it. The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "Pray as you have seen me praying." [Al-Bukhari 631 and 7246]. Many Muslims today violate the way Ibadahs are performed, because of ignorance or because they do not bother to learn, and they end up doing the Ibadah in the wrong way.

Type

If the Shar'iah has specified a type of Ibadah, then we should stick to that type. E.g. Al-Udhiah (sacrifice) - the type of animal to be sacrificed has been specified by the Shar'iah and this should not be violated. If a Muslim offers a chicken as a sacrifice - this is a violation of the type. If a

Muslim cannot afford to offer a sacrifice, then he doesn't have to do it as it is not a Wajib (i.e. an obligation).

The forbidding of introducing something which doesn't belong to the Shar'iah is associated with the concept that Islam is a complete religion as Allaah (Ta'ala) says in Surat Al-Ma'idah (interpretation of the meaning):

"Today have I perfected your religion for you, and have bestowed upon you the full measure of My blessings, and willed that Islam shall be your Religion." (5:3)

Since it is complete, there is no need for additions or deletions to the religion. Therefore, to introduce some new matter into Islam or to delete/omit something from it is an affront to Allaah and the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam).

HADEETH 3

On the authority of Abu 'Abdullaah al-Nu'man ibn Bashir, (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu) , who said: I heard the Messenger of Allaah, (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), say:

"Truly, what is lawful is evident, and what is unlawful is evident, and in between the two are matters which are doubtful which many people do not know. He who guards against doubtful things keeps his religion and honor blameless, and he who indulges in doubtful things indulges, in fact, in unlawful things, just as a shepherd who pastures his flock round a preserve will soon pasture them in it. Beware, every king has a preserve, and the things Allaah has declared unlawful are His preserves. Beware, in the body there is a flesh; if it is sound, the whole body is sound, and if it is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt, and behold, it is the heart." [Al-Bukhari & Muslim]

The Scholars are of the view that the vast majority of acts fall into one of the first two categories: either it is evidently lawful or unlawful. Only a minority of acts fall into the third category, that which is doubtful.

It can be noted here that the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is using a metaphor, or analogy, twice in this hadeeth. As mentioned before, using metaphors or analogies in communicating ideas is very effective and powerful. From the metaphor and the way it is worded "just as a shepherd who pastures his flock round a preserve will soon pasture them in it", it can be said that the doubtful things are closer to the unlawful things.

The great actions or the principles of Tawheed are done by the heart. That is why the heart is mentioned at the end of this hadeeth. Looking at the hadeeth at first glance, we might have asked what has the heart got to do with the rest of the hadeeth. It is in the heart that we glorify Allaah. It is the action of the heart when we refrain from the unlawful. If the heart is strong, sound, has no weaknesses, and is full of Iman (faith), then this would lead us to refrain ourselves from unlawful and undesirable acts. Therefore, only those with a strong and sound heart, i.e. the heart that is full of love for Allaah, fear of Allaah and glorification of Allaah, will refrain from the doubtful matters.

That is why the Scholars talk about the life of the heart. For example, when you see Muslims praying in the masjid (mosque), you see hundreds of people praying together. But what distinguishes them from one another is the status of their hearts, and whether it is devoted to Allaah or not. How strong and pure is the heart? How sound is the heart? That's where people differ. This is what we should concern ourselves with, and compete - taking care of one's heart, purifying it, taking away any diseases from one's heart, to activate Iman in the heart in order to make it alive.

The evil doers promote evil and impose it on others. So if a Muslim is not careful, his/her heart might be stolen. As mentioned by the great contemporary scholar, Shaikh 'Abdur-Rahmaan ad-Dusari, there are many thieves today who steal the hearts, sometimes without the owner even being aware of it.

If you read any hadeeth of the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), it talks about a matter, whether it is something good that we should do, or something bad that we should avoid. In the hadeeth the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) then mentions a principle. Usually, the principle, which is the main point of the hadeeth, is delivered in the last words or sentence. The hadeeth above mentions that the lawful and unlawful are evident, then there is the doubtful matter and then there is the last sentence of the hadeeth; this is the bottom-line of the hadeeth, the main issue. If we want to get away from the Muharramat (unlawful), and also from the doubtful matters, we have to care about our heart. We have to purify our heart and make sure it is sound and alive, and it is not lost from us.

There are doubtful matters that a Muslim might face in his everyday dealings and activities. This hadeeth helps the Muslim in dealing with such matters. There is an early ongoing preparation which is needed in such a case - to purify one's heart. There are some actions that can help us achieve this task, like: Hayaa' (modesty), Muraqabah (self-reckoning), Muhaasabah (self-accountability), Dhikr (remembrance of Allaah), and as-Salatu 'ala an-Nabi, (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam). These are things that, in sha Allaah, can help us and enlighten and purify our heart, and also help us to identify and avoid the doubtful matters - this is the main point, the key, the principle of the hadeeth.

"Beware; in the body there is a flesh; if it is sound, the whole

***body is sound, and if it is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt,
and behold, it is the heart."*** [Al-Bukhari]

HADEETH 4

On the authority of Abu Hurairah, (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu), who said: The Messenger of Allaah (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said :

"Part of the perfection of someone's Islam is his leaving alone that which does not concern him." [At-Tirmidhi]

Ibn Rajab, one of the commentators of Imam Nawawi's Forty Hadeeth, mentioned that this hadeeth is a foundation of manners, behavior and etiquette in Islam.

This hadeeth states that a believer should avoid things that are of no concern to him. They are of no benefit to this life nor to the hereafter, in terms of belief, speech or actions.

Putting the hadeeth in a different way, part of the perfection of faith (Iman) of a believer is to be concerned with matters that are beneficial in this life and the hereafter. This is emphasized by another hadeeth:

"Be keen with what is beneficial to you, and seek help from Allaah - do not be reckless." [At-Tirmidhi]

Muslims have enough matters of concern to the extent one may not have enough time to deal with all of them. This is related to the issue of time management, whereby we need to be involved with matters that are of concern to us.

An important question related to this hadeeth is, what are the things that a true believer must be with? Answering this question will enable one to practice this hadeeth in the right manner.

One of the things that should be of concern to us is to fulfill the obligations, to perform as much as we can of the recommended or preferable acts, to avoid the forbidden (Haram) and to avoid as much as we can of the disliked acts.

Matters of concern to the Muslims cover the affairs of oneself, the family and the whole Muslim community. We need to create awareness among each other in facing the issues and challenges of the Ummah. This can be done through dialogues and talks. Those in authority have a greater responsibility in carrying out this task.

We should be aware not to waste our time and effort in matters that are of no concern to us. We should keep ourselves busy only with matters of benefit to us and to the Ummah.

CHAPTER FOUR

GOOD MANNERS IN ISLAM

1. Introduction
2. The religious nature of Islamic manners
3. The wisdom behind Islamic manners
4. Islamic manners unite the Muslims:

SOME EXAMPLES OF ISLAMIC MANNERS

5. Etiquette regarding greeting
6. Etiquette regarding sitting and gathering
7. Etiquette regarding eating
8. Etiquette regarding dressing
9. Etiquette regarding dealing with each other
10. Conclusion

Good Manners in Islam

Introduction

“Adab” is an Arabic term which means custom; a habit, an etiquette or a way of behaviour taken from people who are seen as models.

“Aadaab al-Islam” means the good manners adopted by Islam, taken from its two main sources, namely the Qur’an and Sunnah (the Prophet’s deeds, words and indirect commandments.)

In the Qur’an, we read in Surat Al-Qalam (interpretation of the meaning):

“And verily, you (O Muhammad) are on an exalted standard of character.” (68:4)

And in Surat Al-Ahzaab (interpretation of the meaning):

“Indeed, in the Messenger of Allaah [Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)] you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allaah and the Last Day and remembers Allaah much.” (33 : 21)

’Aishah, the mother of the Believers (Radia-Allaahu ’anha) was once asked about the Prophet’s morality and she answered: "His manners were the Qur’an." [Muslim, Abu Dawoud, and Ahmad]

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) set the foundations of a Muslim’s relationship with Allaah (Azza wa Jall), with himself and with the people and the world around him. In the Ahadeeth and in the practical life of the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) we can find a detailed way of life and they show us an excellent example to follow.

The religious nature of “Aadaab Al-Islam”:

In reality, “Aadaab al-Islam” or the good manners in Islam are divinely

inspired. This means that in Islam, good manners have a religious character (nature) and this motivates you to stick to them and to follow them, because if you want to be good regarding your religion and you want to fully practice it, you will naturally try to observe the good manners commanded or required by Islam.

The true purpose of “Aadaab al-Islam” or good manners in Islam lies in their religious nature and character. They are designed to keep up man’s remembrance of Allaah and to help him act rightly and correctly.

To observe and follow the ethical, moral, legal and other prescriptions (commandments) of Islam without someone or something forcing you to do so, of course, “Eman” (Faith) is essential. At the same time, if you follow the prescriptions voluntarily, your “Eman” will strengthen and increase. The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“The most perfect in Faith among the believers are those who have the best manners and who are moderate, and so friendly that the people befriend them in no time.” [Al-Tabaraani]

Islamic manners train and educate one to control his passions and to respond to the voice of reason. They also educate him to show the qualities of patience and of being satisfied (content).

Punctuality (being on time) and self-discipline are very important characteristics of a good Muslim. The five daily prayers for example teach punctuality and the month of fasting teaches self-control. The fruits of discipline are (a) moderation and (b) wise use of time.

Moderation is one of the main aims of “Aadaab al-Islam”, for it creates a life of balance which is necessary if a man is to serve Allaah in all that He commands and if he is to be of service to others.

Time is a human measure of the value of the life Allaah has given: one of the most important questions that every man will be asked on the Day of Resurrection is what use he made of his time. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every Muslim to make the best use of every minute, for his own interest and for the interest of the nation as a whole. For example, socializing for the sake of passing the time is disapproved. Although it is recommended that Muslims meet one another frequently, they should make use of these meetings to discuss useful matters. Also, moderation

in speaking is required. Speaking for a long time or just for the sake of it is a bad habit and considered a waste of time: silence is preferable.

The Wisdom behind Aadaab Al-Islam

Islam fixes every aspect of the life of a Muslim.

This is an essential fact which is very difficult for non-Muslims to grasp. But for a believer, Islam gives the standards for judging all of a Muslim's behavior and conduct; it determines the individual's relations with the societal physical world, and his relation to his own self.

The manners of Islam are not just rules of courtesy (politeness) for various occasions, but cover the whole range of human relations from the simplest actions to the most complicated social occasions, for example: cleanliness, table manners, dress, celebrating the Eids, births, social life, funerals, traveling, etc.

The details of "Aadaab al-Islam" are not meaningless formalities or rituals, but they show us how to best perform the different duties in our daily lives; things that we do every day, from a religious, cultural, social, economic, psychological or even medical point of view. They are intended to concentrate attention on what's important and to save man from what's distracting. The rules of conduct or behaviour for a Muslim life contains sound wisdom and wants to protect one from just following his lusts or your own ideas.

One of the main foundations of "Aadaab al-Islam" is morality. It is to do with right and wrong, which often makes the Islamic way of life seem inflexible or very strict in the religion. For example, in the way that Islam blocks all ways leading to corruption, such as illegal relationships. But when we look at the importance of morality to the health of a nation, we can see the wisdom behind it.

Among the main aims of "Aadaab al-Islam" is to help in establishing and maintaining healthy social relationships. Some of the necessary attributes of the ideal Muslim personality are honesty, respect for others, honoring one's word, restraining anger, patience, modesty, kindness, etc. These virtues or qualities get rid of mistrust and create trust, which is the necessary foundation upon which alone healthy relations, free from corruption, can be built and developed.

“Aadaab Al-Islam” unites the Muslims:

If we look at Western “etiquette”, we see that it originated in the Royal courts of Europe, and was invented to meet the requirement of behaviour in courts and among aristocrats (the nobility, usually the rich) everywhere. The meaning of etiquette was weakened when it spread to all classes. To this day, Western etiquette varies from group to group. Members of so-called “high society” observe more complicated and inflexible forms of etiquette than the less well-to-do. This comes out of and helps sustain the class system (dividing people into different groups).

“Aadaab al-Islam”, however, are different. They are not designed to divide society according to social classes. The rules, revealed through the Qur’an and the Sunnah, were not formulated by certain groups, for example by the rich and powerful to suppress or distance other groups. In Islam, it is very important that the whole Muslim society sticks to its manners.

These manners are not just the privilege or right of a certain group, but they are a privilege open to every member of the Muslim society. There is no variety of etiquette levels in Islam. The function of good manners in Islam is to unify Muslim communities, and it is also an expression of their unity.

“Aadaab al-Islam” have in fact contributed to the unity of Muslim peoples who belong to different races, speak different languages and live in different parts of the world. For example, a Moroccan who travels to Pakistan will not find it difficult to understand the manners of the people there, nor feel out of place. Muslim women from Egypt will not be astonished by the sight of Turkish women wearing Islamic dress. There is a unity, a solidarity for members of the Islamic community every time they stick to the “Aadaab al-Islam” and it creates a common understanding among them. The local culture may be different from one Islamic community to another, but the way of prayer, greetings, food which is allowed or not, etc., they are all part of the universal Islamic pattern.

In addition, when we follow the “Aadaab al-Islam”, many “Bid’ahs” (an innovated beliefs or practices added to the original and authentic Islamic belief or practice) that have come into the Muslim life will be wiped out. “Bid’ahs” change Islam from a simple religion into one which is complicated and difficult to practice, and slowly at least some aspects of the Muslim way of life will be left altogether.

SOME EXAMPLES OF AADAAB AL-ISLAM

There are so many Ahadeeth in the “Sunnah” about “Aadaab al-Islam” and we can’t mention them all. It is enough to say that all the books about the “Sunnah” have a separate chapter about manners, like Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawoud etc. Some will be more familiar than others and one will find for example the etiquette related to intention, towards Allaah (Azza wa Jall), towards the Qur’an, towards one’s parents, one’s children, one’s spouse (husband/wife), one’s neighbors, towards Muslims in general, towards the disbelievers, towards animals, etc.

The following are some examples of Ahadeeth regarding “Aadaab al-Islam” or Islamic etiquette (manners):

ETIQUETTE REGARDING GREETING:

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in" the Holy Qur’an (interpretation of the meaning):

“When you are greeted with a greeting, greet in return with what is better than it, or (at least) return it equally. Certainly, Allaah Is Ever a Careful Account Taker of all things.” (4:86)

“But when you enter the houses, greet one another with a greeting from Allaah, blessed and good.” (24:61)

How the greeting began:

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "Allaah created Adam, making him 60 cubits tall. When He created him, He said to him, 'Go and greet that group of angels, and listen to their reply, for it will be your greeting (salutation) and the greeting (salutations of your offspring.' So, Adam said (to the angels), As-Salamu Alaikum (i.e. Peace be upon you). The angels said, "As-salamu Alaika wa Rahmatu-llahi" (i.e. Peace and Allaah's Mercy be upon you). Thus the angels added to Adam's salutation the expression, "Wa Rahmatu-llahi"

[Al-Bukhari]

It is narrated that the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) enjoined upon us the following seven acts: 1) visiting the sick; 2) following a funeral procession; 3) invoking the Mercy of Allaah (Azza wa Jall) upon one who is sneezing (by saying Yarhamuka Allaah); 4) supporting the weak; 5) helping the oppressed; 6) spreading the Salam (greeting of peace); 7) honoring vows (undertakings) . [Al-Bukhari & Muslim]

The Messenger of Allaah (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“A rider should salute a pedestrian, a pedestrian should greet one who is sitting and a small party should greet a large party.” [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) also said:

“When you enter your home, greet your people with the salutation of peace. It would be a blessing for you and for the members of your family.” [At-Tirmidhi]

We should not greet non-Muslims with this greeting:

Abu Hurayra reported that the Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“Do not give the People of the Book the greeting first”

And also:

“If the Jews and the Christians greet you, you respond with only ‘Wa alaikum’ (and on you).” [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

ETIQUETTE REGARDING SITTING AND GATHERING:

Allaah’s Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“It is not allowed for a person to come between two people except by their permission.” [Abu Dawoud]

If you want to sit down, you should greet the people first and then sit without making someone else stand up for you to take his place:

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"None of you should make a person stand from his place and then take his seat. Instead, the people should spread out or make space." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"If one of you stands from his place of sitting and then returns, he has the most right to that place." [Muslim]

Hudhaifah (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu) said: "Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) cursed the one who sat in the open space in the middle of a gathering." [Abu Dawoud]

ETIQUETTE BEFORE EATING:

Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"I do not eat while reclining (leaning). Instead, I am a servant, so I eat like a servant eats and I sit like a servant sits."
[Al-Bukhari]

Abu Hurairah (Radia-Allaahu 'anhu) said: "Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) never found fault with any food. If he desired it, he would eat it. If he disliked it, he would leave it." [Al-Bukhari]

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) also said:

"Eat your food together, for you will thereby be blessed in it."
[Ahmad]

Etiquette while eating:

Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) stated:

"If any of you is about to eat, he should mention the Name of Allaah. If he forgets to mention the Name of Allaah at the beginning, he should say, "In the Name of Allaah over the beginning and the ending." [Abu Dawoud]

Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) told Umar bin Salamah:

"O young man, mention the Name of Allaah, eat with your right hand and eat from what is close to you." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) also said:

"The blessings descend on the middle of the food. So, eat from the edges and do not eat from the middle." [At-Tirmidhi]

Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) stated:

"If a morsel of food falls from any of you, he should take it and wipe it clean of any dirt, and then eat it. He should not leave it for the Satan." [Reported by Muslim]

Ibn 'Abbaas (Radia-Allaahu 'anhuma) narrated that Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) forbade breathing into a drinking vessel or blowing into it; he (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) also forbade blowing into a drink. [At-Tirmidhi, Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"(Begin with) the eldest, the eldest", and then the one on the right should be given first: "(Begin with) those on the right, and those on the further right." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"A human does not fill any container worse than his stomach. It is enough for a human to have some morsels to strengthen his back (keep his back straight). If he must eat more, then it should be one third of his stomach for food, one third for drink and one third for breathing." [Ahmad]

He (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) also said:

"If one of you is invited, he should respond. If he is fasting, he

should pray for the person. If he is not fasting, he should eat."

[Muslim]

ETIQUETTE RELATED TO DRESSING:

Allaah (Ta'ala) said in the Qur'an (interpretation of the meaning):

“O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies (i.e. screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way). That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allaah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (33:59)

“And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent (like palms of hands or one eye or both eyes for necessity to see the way, or outer dress like veil, gloves, head-cover, apron, etc.), and to draw their veils all over Juyubihinna (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms, etc.)” (24:31)

Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) stated:

“Allaah (Azza wa Jall) curses the man who wears women's clothing and the woman who wears man's clothing. He also curses the men who imitate women and the women who imitate men.” [Al-Bukhari]

'Aishah (Radia-Allaahu 'anha) said:

“Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) loved to begin with the right in all his matters, in putting on his shoes, in combing his hair and in purifying himself.” [Muslim]

Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“If one of you is putting on his shoes, let him begin with the right. And when he takes them off, he should begin with the left.” [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

He (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) also said:

“When you have new clothes, you should say: “O Allaah, to you is the Praise. You are the One Who clothed me with it. I ask you for its good and the good of what it was made for. And I seek refuge in You from its evil and the evil of what it was made for.” [Abu Dawoud and At-Tirmidhi]

ETIQUETTE TOWARDS EACH OTHER:

There are of course etiquette and principles in Islam for the security of friendships, and to protect Muslims from being divided. For example, the Hadeeth which forbid backbiting and slander, because this creates bad feelings between friends and destroys the cleanness of the hearts.

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) used to stop his Companions from saying things which could hurt the feelings of others.

He (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“None of you should convey to me any hurtful thing about my Companions, for I want that as long as I may come to you, my breast (heart) should be clean in respect of every one of you.”
[Abu Dawoud]

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

“Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the worst of false tales; and do not look for others’ faults and do not spy, and do not be jealous of one another, and do not desert (cut your relation with) one another, and do not hate one another; and O Allaah’s worshippers! Be brothers (as Allaah has ordered you!)” [Al-Bukhari]

Allaah’s Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"If you are three, two amongst you should not converse (talk) secretly between yourselves to the exclusion of the other (third one) until some other people join him (and dispel [drive away] his loneliness), for it may hurt his feelings." [Muslim]

The Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"It is part of the excellence of a person's Islam that he should discard (leave) that which is of no benefit to him either in this world or the Hereafter." [At-Tirmidhi]

CONCLUSION:

As a Muslim, we must restrict our actions according to the teachings of the Book of our Lord and the Sunnah of our Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam). It is by the light of these two sources that we must live. All the affairs of our lives should be performed according to their guidance.

Allaah (Azza wa Jall) says in the Qur'an (interpretation of the meaning):

"It is not for a believer man or woman, when Allaah and His Messenger have decreed, a matter that they should have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allaah and His Messenger, he has indeed, strayed in plain error." (33 :36)

"And whatsoever the Messenger [Muhammad (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)] gives you take it, and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it) , and fear Allaah. Verily Allaah is Severe in Punishment." (59 : 7)

Allaah's Messenger (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"None of you truly believes until his desires are subservient to what I have brought." [An-Nawawi in Forty Hadeeth]

He (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) also said:

"Whoever performs a deed that is not in accordance with our affair shall have it rejected." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

Therefore, we must stick to following the "Aadaab al-Islam" or the Islamic manners as much as we can and do our best to learn more about it, to be more complete in following the "Sunnah" of our Prophet (Salla-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and thus more complete in our Islam.



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