

The **Right
Belief
Series**
VOLUME II



Lā ilāha illa Allāh

Worship
Your Lord

2ND EDITION



— ∞ — BY — ∞ —
KARIM ABU ZAID



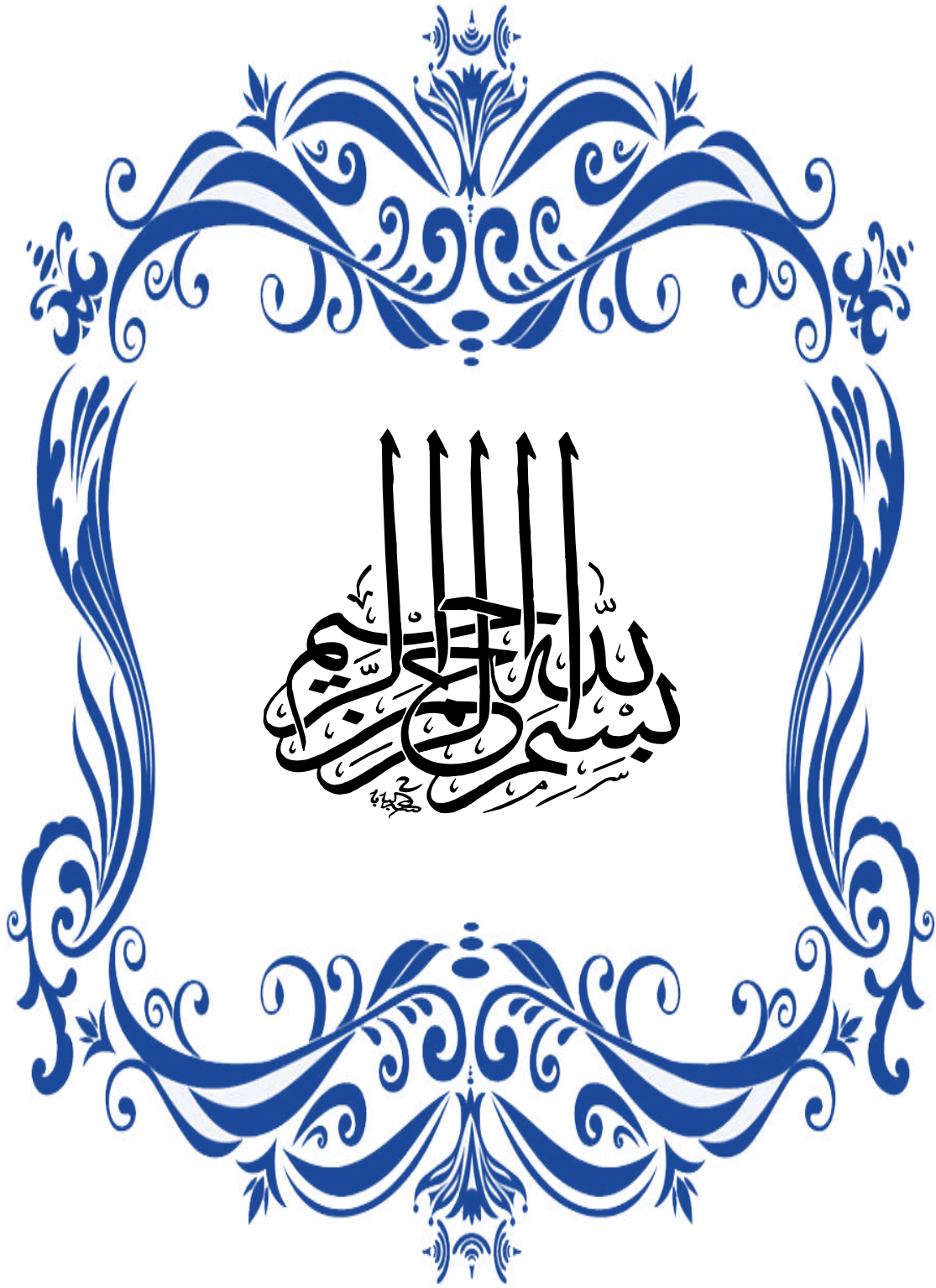
The Right Belief Series

Volume II
Lā ilāha illa Allāh

2nd Edition

By Karim Abu Zaid

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مقدمة

إن الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره، ونعوذ بالله من شرور أنفسنا وسيئات أعمالنا، من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضل فلا هادي له، وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له، وأشهد أن محمدا عبده ورسوله

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ، وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ [سورة آل عمران: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَجِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا رِجَالًا وَنِسَاءً وَأَتَقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ، وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا﴾ [سورة النساء: 1]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾ [سورة الأحزاب: 70-71]

فإن أصدق الحديث كتاب الله، وأحسن الهدي هدي محمد ﷺ، وشر الأمور محدثاتها، وكل محدثة بدعة، وكل بدعة ضلالة، وكل ضلالة في النار



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Introduction

All thanks and praise is for Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. We seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى from the evil within ourselves and the consequences of our evil deeds. Whomever Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى guides will never be led astray, and whomever Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى leads astray will never find guidance. I bear witness there is no God but Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, alone without any partners, and I bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is His slave and His Messenger. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ ؕ وَلَا تَمُونَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿102﴾

[سورة آل عمران: 102]

“O you who have Faith (Iman), fear Allah as it is His right to be feared and do not die except as Muslims.” (1)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى also said,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ؕ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ ؕ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ

عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿سورة النساء: 1﴾

“O people, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. Fear Allah, through whom you ask one another and maintain family ties. Verily, Allah is ever watching over you.” (2)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى also said,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾

[سورة الأحزاب: 70-71]

“O you who have Faith (Iman), fear Allah and speak upright words. He will correct your deeds and forgive your sins. Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has won a tremendous victory.” (1)

(1) Quran 3:102

(2) Quran 4:1

Verily, the most truthful speech is the Book of Allah ﷻ, the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad ﷺ, and the worst of affairs are newly invented matters. Every newly invented matter is religious innovation (Bid'ah), and every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance leads to Hellfire (Jahannam).

Matters of Beliefs (*Masā'il Al-i'tiqād*) do not change from one time to another and from one generation to another. For instance, although, now that grave worship became more widespread and widely practiced during our time, **this does not make it lawful at all**, since it was always **unlawful** during the time of the first three praised generations (*Al-Salaf Al-Salih*) of the Muslim Community (*Ummah*). Hence, one finds a unique commonality between the books of Islamic Belief System (*Aqeedah*) written during different times by scholars who follow the first three generations' (*Al-Salaf Al-Salih*) belief system. For example, one such book written in the 4th century A.H is almost identical to the one written in the 10th century A.H.

Furthermore, these scholars adopted an identical process when it came to authoring literature addressing Matters of Beliefs (*Masā'il Al-i'tiqād*). They first compiled all the relevant pieces of evidence and then generated a belief matter. Hence, one finds that the same shreds of evidence used to validate belief issues are similar. For example, the evidence to validate Monotheism of Allah's Lordship (*Tawheed Ar-Rububiyah*) by almost every author of the Islamic Belief System (*Aqeedah*) used the first Verse (*Ayah*) in Surat Al-Fatihah throughout time. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord (The Creator, the Sovereign, the Nourisher) of the 'Alamin (mankind, Jinn and all that exists).” (2)

However, the one aspect which distinguished the books of Islamic Belief System (*Aqeedah*) from one another was the portion of the book which the authors designated to refute the innovators' false allegations of their time.

For instance, in the book “*Al-Aqeedah Al-Wasitiyyah*” by Ibn Taymiyyah ﷺ; he utilized a significant part of his book to counter his time's widespread innovations regarding Allah's ﷻ Names and Attributes.

When I wrote the first edition of this book, “Worship Your Lord,” which is the second book of the Right Belief Series, I intended to impart a few benefits to the readers; we can sum them up as follows:

(1) Quran 33:70-71

(2) Quran 1:2

The first benefit – To familiarize the readers with the two categories of the concept of Monotheism (*Tawheed*), which is the knowledge and worship of Allah ﷻ: I presented Volume Two’s contents of the Right Belief Series “Worship Your Lord” to be a logical continuation of Volume One’s contents “Know Your Lord.” I wanted to say that the correct and sound understanding of Allah’s ﷻ Names, Attributes, Lordship, and Actions must lead to the proper and sincere worship of Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ﴾ (سورة فاطر ٢٨)

“It is only those who have knowledge of Allah among His slaves that have fear (Khashyah) of Allah.” (1)

The Prophet ﷺ said, “I am the most knowledgeable of Allah amongst you and the most fearful (having Khashyah) of Him.” (2)

The second benefit – To simplify Monotheism’s (*Tawheed*) matters to the layman Muslims as it is the Islam’s first and most important pillar: Unfortunately, many Muslims are not drawn to learn it and don’t realize its importance. They have never actively concerned themselves with engaging in Monotheism’s (*Tawheed*) educational pursuit. Monotheism (*Tawheed*) takes one out of the fold of Disbelief (*Kufr*) and helps to attain true belief or Faith (*Iman*). One cannot be a Muslim without fully understanding and implementing the pillar of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) correctly.

The third benefit – To help advance the Call (*Dawah*) to Monotheism (*Tawheed*): Since some of us live in the West, we as Muslims are required to convey the concept of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) to the predominant “*People of the Book*” community members. Therefore, I intended to tune my work to equip Muslims with the necessary knowledge to convey Monotheism (*Tawheed*) to the “*People of the Book*,” acting upon the Prophet’s ﷺ advice to Mu’adh Ibn Jabal رضي الله عنه when he sent him to Yemen. Narrated Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه: When the Prophet ﷺ sent Mu’adh to Yemen, he said to him, “You are going to a nation from the People of the Scripture, so let the first thing to which you will invite them, be the Monotheism (*Tawheed*) of Allah.” (3)

The fourth benefit – To familiarize the readers with the different names of *Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama’ah* (the mainstream people of the *Sunnah* or Prophetic Tradition). We wanted to emphasize their methodology of understanding and apply the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*). We want to list out the different names they are given which are as follows:

(1) Quran 35:28

(2) Sahih Muslim

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari

- ◆ The Mainstream People of the Prophetic Tradition (*Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah*)
- ◆ The Aided Group (*At-Ta'ifat-ul-Mansourah*)
- ◆ The Saved Sect (*Al-Firqah An-Najiyah*)
- ◆ The People of the Narration (*Al-Athariyyah* or *Ahlu Ul Athar*)
- ◆ The Companions or the People of the Narration (*Ashab* or *Ahlu Ul Hadith*)
- ◆ The Righteous Predecessors (*Al-Salaf Al-Salih*)

Now let's shed some light on these different names:

◆ Mainstream People of the Prophetic Tradition (*Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah*)

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمته الله said, “The tradition of the Prophet (*Sunnah*) is associated with unity (*Jama'ah*), just as innovation (*Bid'ah*) is linked to separation (*Firqah*). So it is said *Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah* (the mainstream people of the *Sunnah* or Prophetic Tradition), just as it is said *Ahlul Bid'ah Wal Firqah* (The People Of Innovation And Division).” (1)

Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah (the mainstream people of the *Sunnah* or Prophetic Tradition) are identified by two noble qualities:

1. They adhere strictly to the Prophet's ﷺ Tradition (*Sunnah*) to the point that they became its people; as opposed to the rest of the groups.
2. They unite upon the way and the Tradition of the Prophet ﷺ (*Sunnah*). So they are called the *Jama'ah* due to their unification upon the truth as opposed to disunity.

◆ The Aided Group (*At-Ta'ifat-ul-Mansourah*)

They are also called the Aided Group, since they strive to adhere to the correct understanding of the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*), and they are on the right methodology. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will always aid them.

Mu'awiyah رضي الله عنه narrated that I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying: “There will not cease to be a group from my Community (*Ummah*) upholding the affair of Allah, not being harmed by those who oppose them until Allah's Command comes about and they are uppermost amongst the people.” (2)

(1) Al-Istiqamah 1/42

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

◆ The Saved Sect (*Al-Firqah An-Najiyah*)

They are called the “Saved Sect” because Allah ﷻ saved them from disagreement over fundamental, general, and decisive religious issues in this world. They will also be saved from the Fire (*Jahannam*) since the Prophet ﷺ excluded them in the following Narration (*Hadith*).

Narrated by Abdullah Ibn Amr رضي الله عنه, the Prophet ﷺ said, “The Jews split up into seventy-one or seventy-two sects. The Christians split up into seventy-one or seventy-two sects. And my Community (*Ummah*) will split into seventy-three sects. All of them are in the Fire (*Jahannam*) except one.” The Prophet ﷺ was asked who they are. He said, “It is that which my Companions (*Sahabah*) and I are upon.” (1)

Al-Hafiz Al-Hakimi رحمته الله said, “The truthful one, the one who is believed has informed us that the Saved Sect (*Al-Firqah An-Najiyah*) are; they who are upon the likes of what he (The Prophet ﷺ) and his Companions (*Sahabah*) were upon.” (2)

Another Narration (*Hadith*) reported by Awf Ibn Malik رضي الله عنه has the following response as to who is the Saved Sect. Awf Ibn Malik رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The *Jama’ah*.” (3)

Notice that the first Narration (*Hadith*) mentioned above establishes the Saved Sect’s methodology to understand the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) following the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions (*Sahabah*). The second Narration (*Hadith*) establishes the *Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama’ah* (the mainstream people of the *Sunnah* or Prophetic Tradition) to be those who gather upon this principle regardless of their number.

Hence, the people of *Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama’ah* (the mainstream people of the *Sunnah* or Prophetic Tradition) adhere strictly to the Prophet’s ﷺ Tradition (*Sunnah*) and his Companions’ (*Sahabah*) way of understanding, and apply the revelation (Quran and Prophetic Tradition or *Sunnah*) when it comes to the belief system, manners, and ritualistic practice. Furthermore, they are also the people who united (*Al-Jama’ah*) upon this methodology until Judgment Day (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). Allah ﷻ said,

(1) Sunan At-Tirmidhi

(2) Ma’arij Al-Qubol 1/19

(3) Sunan Ibn Majah, Albani

﴿وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾ (سورة التوبة: 100)

“And the first to embrace Islam of the Muhajirun (those who migrated from Makkah to Al-Madinah) and the Ansar (the citizens of Al-Madinah who helped and gave aid to the Muhajirun) and those who followed them exactly (in Faith). Allah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.” (1)

◆ The People of the Narration (*Al-Athariyyah* or *Ahlu Ul Athar*)

The People of the Narration (*Al-Athariyyah* or *Ahlu Ul Athar*) are the adherents to the textual evidence from Quran and *Sunnah* (*Al-Athari* or The Adherents to the Text). They stick to textualism in interpreting the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*), opposing the those who are in favor of intellect and speculative speech (*Almu Al-Kalam*) in interpreting the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*).

Ibn Abi Hatim Ar-Razi رحمته الله said, “Our methodology (*Madhab*) and that which we choose as a way is following the Messenger of Allah, his Companions (*Sahabah*) and the students of the Companions (*Tabi’een*), and the students of the students of Companions (*Tabi ut-Tabi’een*), clinging to the methodology of the people of the Narrations (*Ahlu Ul Athar*) such as Ahmad Ibn Hanbal.” (2)

Ibn Abi Hatim Ar-Razi رحمته الله also said the following (3):

- The sign of the people of Innovations (*Bid’ah*) is fighting of the people of the Narration (*Ahlu Ul Athar*).
- The sign of the heretics, the people who give precedence to the intellect over the revelation (*Az-Zanadiqah*), is their labeling of the people who give precedence to the revelation over the intellect (*Ahlu Ul Athar*) as the worthless ones (*Hashawiyah*).

(1) Quran 9:100

(2) Sharh Usool I’tiqaad Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa’ah 1/179

(3) Sharh Usool I’tiqaad Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa’ah 1/179

- The sign of the people who do not believe in the Predestination (*Al-Qadar*) is their labeling of the people of Narration (*Ahlu Ul Athar*) as people who believe that man has no free will (*Mujabbirah*).
- The sign of the people who do not condone the belief matter that Faith (*Iman*) increases and decreases (*Al-Murji'ah*), is their calling of the people of Narration (*Ahlu Ul Athar*) as opposers (*Mukhalifah*) and those who fell short (*Nuqsanaiyyah*).
- The sign of the Extreme Shias (*Ar-Rafidhah*) is their calling of the people of Narration (*Ahlu Ul Athar*) as those having enmity for the household of the Prophet ﷺ (*Nasibah*).

◆ The Companions or the People of the Hadith (*Ashab* or *Ahlu Ul Hadith*)

People of the Hadith (*Ahlu Ul Hadith*) are adherents to the Narration (*Hadith*) and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*), while oppose those who deny and reject the authority of the Narration (*Hadith*) and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*).

This name has come forward frequently in the speeches of many of the Imams; such as Ibn Taymiyyah ؒ and others from the people of knowledge before him and after him. What is meant by the people of the *Hadith* or the companions of the *Hadith* (*Ahlu Ul Hadith*) is that every person who actualizes the preservation of the Narrations (*Ahadith*), their knowledge and their understanding outwardly and inwardly; and following them outwardly and inwardly. Likewise is the *Ahlu Quran*. (1)

◆ The Righteous Predecessors (*As-Salaf As-Salih*)

As-Salif (singular of *As-Salaf*) literally means “the one who precedes.” Hence, we add “righteous” next to it to specify them since some of the predecessors (*As-Salaf*) were not righteous, and opposed the Messenger ﷺ and his Companions (*Sahabah*).

The term *Salaf* is a Quranic and Prophetic term. But, unfortunately, some people, including some Muslims, often associate the name *Salaf* with extremism, fanaticism, and harshness, intended to deflect layman Muslims from learning the religion. Allah ﷻ said,

(1) Majmoo' Al-Fataawaa 4/95

“And We made them predecessors (*Salaf*) and an example for the others” (1)

The Prophet ﷺ was the first one to use the word *Salaf* when he said to his daughter Zainab رضي الله عنها while burying her, “Join your *Salaf* Othman Ibn Mazoon.” (2)

I mentioned in my previous book “Let’s Pray the Prophet’s Way” that since the Muslims' first three esteemed generations (*As-Salaf Al-Salih*) are the best that Islam offers, thus they held the best beliefs, ritual practices, and mannerisms. If we want to be true successors (*Khalif*) to them, we must strive to imitate, emulate, or act following them in terms of their beliefs, rituals, and mannerisms. (3)

The above incentives incited me to present the Right Belief Series Volume II and titled it “Worship Your Lord.”

The Need for a Revised 2nd Edition

A layman Muslim who sought guidance on a sensitive matter related to Monotheism (*Tawheed*) and Polytheism (*Shirk*) asked Yasir Qadhi a question regarding the ruling on people visiting the graves and invoking the saints (*Awliya*) for their needs.

Yasir Qadhi answered him publicly, saying, —”...The second opinion is the opinion that invoking the saints (*Awliya*)... it is *Haram* (Unlawful), and it is evil, and evil innovation, a religions innovation, a *Bid’ah*, and it is a steppingstone to *Shirk* (Polytheism). It is opening the doors to *Shirk* (Polytheism). But it is not *Shirk* (Polytheism) in and of itself unless that action is accompanied by a belief that you are calling out to a god. I myself am an advocate of this second position.”

Yasir Qadhi’s answer is false, baseless, misleading, deceitful, tricky, and dishonest. He intentionally downgrades the crisis of grave worship tradition with an implicit and tacit endorsement and indirectly encourages it. For one to assess the magnitude of his statement in a fair and just way, Polytheism (*Shirk*) is the one unforgivable sin if the perpetrator dies without repenting it. However, any other sin which does not amount to Polytheism (*Shirk*), the doer still has a chance of forgiveness in the court of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

(1) Quran 43:56

(2) Musnad Ahmed

(3) “Let’s Pray the Prophet’s Way” by Karim Abu Zaid

However, the worst thing about his answer is the fact that he used the same argument the Pagan Arabs used to justify their idol worship. It's unbelievable that a graduate of the Islamic University of Madinah, someone who used to teach Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) based on the understanding of the first three generations (*Al-Salaf Al-Salih*), now knowingly and willfully encourages grave worship when it is a clear-cut demolition of the Universal Declaration of Faith (*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*).

How is Yasir Qadhi's Answer the Same as the Pagan Arabs' Argument?

Yasir Qadhi said that grave worship will only amount to be an act of Polytheism (*Shirk*) if the perpetrator is accompanying his invocation of the deceased with a belief that they have divine attributes. Does Yasir Qadhi not realize that the pagan Arabs at the time of the Prophet ﷺ employed an identical argument to justify their acts of Polytheism (*Shirk*)?

The pagan Arabs used to say, "We believe that Allah is the Creator, the Controller, the Provider, the Sustainer, the Giver of life and death, and the Source of every blessing." Regardless, Allah ﷻ still classified them as Polytheists (*Mushrikun*) in the Quran. Moreover, the Prophet ﷺ challenged them on all fronts till they gave up the practice.

The pagan Arabs acknowledged Allah's ﷻ Lordship (*Rububiyyah*). Today's grave worshipers also acknowledge that Allah ﷻ can do things that their engraved saints (*Awliya*) cannot. Yet, despite their acknowledgments, they both denied Allah's ﷻ right to be worshiped alone (*Uluhiyyiah*). The grave worshipers of today direct their worship to the engraved like the pagan Arabs directed their worship to the idols.

The pagan Arabs believed that their idols had status and gained Allah's ﷻ honor and respect. Hence, they appointed them as Intermediaries (*Wasilah*), and they used to think that they communicated with Allah ﷻ through them. Similarly, today's grave worshipers believe that the engraved saints (*Awliya*) have status, honor, and respect with Allah ﷻ. Hence, they appoint them as Intermediaries (*Wasilah*), and they invoke Allah ﷻ through them as well.

In fact, we should add here that the pagan Arabs have a slight edge over today's grave worshipers in one area. When a pagan Arab experienced severe hardship, calamity, or distress, or while making his Urgent Appeal (*Istighathah*), he called upon Allah ﷻ and ultimately abandoned his idols. However, when a grave worshiper of today is distressed and in dire need of help, he directs his Urgent Appeal (*Istighathah*) to his saint (*Wali*), the engraved, the dead, and calls upon their so-called "Supreme Helpers" (*Al-Ghawth Al-Azam*).

Unfortunately, Yasir Qadhi is using the same language and argument of the today's Islamophobes whether Muslims or non-Muslims. However, we **cannot** call the grave worshipers as non-Muslims, until we establish the evidence and remove the obstacles. We need to verify

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

that they know that their invocation of the saints (*Awliya*) is an act of Polytheism (*Shirk*), and verify that they are doing the act out of willful intention.

Lā ilāha illa Allāh comprises two pillars: the complete negation of any form of worship to others than Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى, and the unquestionable and firm affirmation of all forms of worship only to Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Hence, I decided to introduce a revised edition of the Right Belief Series Volume II, since the recent blunder by Yasir Qadhi is associated with its core subjects:

- The second edition will carry a different main title that is “*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*,” and “Worship Your Lord” as the subtitle.
- The second edition will have an additional part “Grave Worshipers’ Pitfalls” which I placed at the beginning of the book dealing with the grave worship tradition and its devastating consequences. However, this addition is taken from the book “Refutation of Yasir Qadhi’s Grave Worship Blunder” which I authored at the same time with this book.

We ask Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى to grant us the light of the heart to speak the truth.





PART ONE
Grave Worshipers' Pitfalls

Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه said, "Whoever wants to follow a path, let him follow the path of one who has died, for the living are not safe from Contradiction (*Fitnah*). I mean the Companions (*Sahabah*) of Muhammad. They were the best of this Community (*Ummah*), the purest in heart, the deepest in knowledge, and the most straightforward. Allah chose them to accompany His Prophet and establish His religion, so recognize their status and follow in their footsteps and adhere as much as you can to their example of conduct and attitude, for they followed true guidance." (1)

The above report is well-known that appears in many of the books of *Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah* (the mainstream people of the *Sunnah* or Prophetic Tradition), and its meaning is sound and approved by them; despite the lightly questioned chain of transmitters by some of the Narration (*Hadith*) experts.

According to Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud's رضي الله عنه profound statement, all the living beings are not immune from falling into the traps of Contradiction (*Fitnah*). Hence, if we want to follow the straight path that will lead us to Paradise (*Jannah*), we should not blindly imitate someone who is still alive because we do not know what kind of end Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will cause him to have.

Yasir Qadhi was strictly following the guidance and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) for many years, but he recently ended up following something other than that. Hence, the only way that is safe to follow is the way of the righteous early generations of this Community (*Ummah*). They are the Companions (*Sahabah*) of the Prophet ﷺ, those who have died, and there is no longer any fear that they may fall into Contradiction (*Fitnah*).

Imam Nasr Ibn Ibrahim Al-Maqdisi رحمته الله said after narrating the above statement that "Allah approved the community of Companions (*Sahabah*) in more than one place and He stated that He is pleased with them. The Messenger also spoke of them and instructed us to refer to their example, learn from it, and act upon what they said. So, we must follow his commands and instructions and heed his prohibitions. Furthermore, it was the way of the scholars and Imams in earlier generations until innovations became widespread." (2)

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمته الله said, "It is very well known to anyone who ponders the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) and the consensus of all groups among *Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah* (the mainstream people of the *Sunnah* or Prophetic Tradition) that the best generations of this Community (*Ummah*)—in deeds, words, beliefs, and all other virtues—is the first generation, then those who came after them, then those who came after them, as is proven in more than one

(1) Ibn Abd al-Barr in *Jami' Bayan al-'Ilm Wa Fadluhu*, 2/947, no. 1810.

(2) *Al-Hujjah 'ala Tarik al-Mahajjah* by Nasr al-Maqdisi, 1/159

report; they are superior to the later generations in every virtue, be it knowledge, deeds, faith, reason, religious commitment, eloquence or worship. Their view of any problem is more deserving of being followed. This cannot be denied except by the one who would refuse to accept that which is well known in the religion of Islam and whom Allah sends astray despite his knowledge, as Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud said.” (1)

Imam Ash-Shatibi رحمته الله said, “The reports that confirm this idea are many; all of them indicate that one should take them as an example and follow their way in all situations. It is the way of salvation, as was pointed out in the Narration (*Hadith*) that speaks of the division of the Community (*Ummah*), in which the Prophet ﷺ said: "... what my Companions (*Sahabah*) and I are following." (i.e., the group that follows this path is the saved group). (2) (3)

In the first three chapters of the first additional part of the book, we will shed light on how excessiveness and exaggerating the status of the engraved saints (*Awlyia*) was the seed of Polytheism (*Shirk*) on earth:

Chapter One - Pure Monotheism (Tawheed) is the Origin

Chapter Two - Grave Worship is The Origin of Polytheism (Shirk)

Chapter Three - Grave Worshipers' Polytheistic Rituals (Shirk)

The previous nations faced the severe consequences of Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى powerful wrath because they turned the graves of their Prophets and righteous people into idols, Hence, our Prophet ﷺ implored Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى not to turn his grave into an idol that is worshiped. (4)

In chapters four and five of the first part, we will mention why the grave worshipers and the innovators in general, do not condone the concept of the classifications of Tawheed, and why they confine the entire idea of Tawheed solely to Allah's Lordship since categorizing it would reveal distorted understanding. Furthermore, we will prove through authentic evidence that they oppose the prophetic guidance:

Chapter Four - Grave Worshipers Opposition to Monotheism (Tawheed)

Chapter Five - Grave Worshipers Oppose the Messenger ﷺ

(1) Majmoo Al-Fatawa, 4/157

(2) Al-I'tisaam, 3/307

(3) The article is taken from Islamqa.info with Abridgment

(4) Muwatta Imām Mālik

Part one will conclude with a chapter that can guide us in how to get our Supplication (Dua') answered:

Chapter Six - The Answered Supplication (Dua')



Chapter One
Pure Monotheism (Tawheed)
is the Origin



In Surat Al-Baqarah, Allah ﷻ mentioned that all the Children of Prophet Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام were a single family due to their full conviction to pure Monotheism (*Tawheed*). All people used to be upon the true path, upon the sound Belief of Monotheism (*Aqeedah of Tawheed*) and worship. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً﴾ [سورة البقرة: 213]

“All of humanity was just one nation (*Ummah*).” (1)

Abdullah Ibn Abbas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: “Between Adam and Nuh (Noah) are ten generations; all of them were upon pure Monotheism (*Tawheed*), then they started breaking up into different groups due to deviating from pure Monotheism (*Tawheed*), and slowly embracing Polytheism (*Shirk*), and polytheist practices, that is, to direct acts of worship, whether partially or entirely, to others in association with Allah; even though these acts of worship are the sole right of Allah, regardless of whether these acts are the hearts, the tongues, or the limbs.” (2)

Hence, Allah ﷻ sent the Prophets as bringers of good tidings to those who adhere to pure Monotheism (*Tawheed*) and to warn those who continue turning away from pure Monotheism (*Tawheed*). (3)

The above Verse (*Ayah*) in Surat Al-Baqarah and Abdullah Ibn Abbas’ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ understanding of it confirms the following conclusions:

A. The Fallacy of Philosophers and Atheists

We can declare the fallacy of philosophers and atheists’ claim that humanity’s origin and basis is Polytheism (*Shirk*) and that Monotheism (*Tawheed*) emerged later. Pieces of evidence from the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) invalidated completely their claim, such as:

Iyadh Ibn Himar Al-Mujashi’i رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ shared the saying of his Lord (Allah). Allah ﷻ said, “I created all my slaves upon the true religion (upon *Tawheed*, free from *Shirk*). Then the devils came to them and led them astray from their true religion. They

(1) Quran 2:213

(2) Al-Hakim "It is authentic according to Al-Bukhari."

(3) Tafsir Ibn Jarir at-Tabari

made unlawful to people that which I had made lawful for them, and they commanded them to associate in worship with Me, that which I had sent down no authority.” (1)

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Every child is born upon natural instinct (*Fitrah*), but his parents make him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian. It is like the way an animal gives birth to natural offspring. Have you noticed any born mutilated before you mutilate them?” (2) Then Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه said: “Recite if you wish:

﴿فَطَرَتَ اللَّهُ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [سورة
الروم:30]

“Allah’s Natural Way (*Fitrah*) with which He created humanity. There is to be no change to the creation (Religion) of Allah.” (3)

B. The Fallacy of the People of the Books' Historians

We can comfortably refute the claimants from amongst the historians of “*People of the Books*.” They propagated the notion that Polytheism (*Shirk*) existed since Cain’s time, Prophet Adam’s عليه السلام immediate son, the first killer on earth—Cain’s offspring used to worship the fire. They claim in the Bible that Cain’s descendants are enumerated to the sixth generation. They gradually degenerated in their moral and spiritual condition till they became wholly corrupt before God. This corruption prevailed, and at length, the Deluge was sent by God to prevent the final triumph of evil. (4)

C. Uniting Muslims Can Only Happen on Monotheism (*Tawheed*)

Unity on pure Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is the most effective and long-lasting approach. It led mankind to stay as a single family for ten generations. Unfortunately, we hear from time to time these unreliable proposals by the so-called progressive Muslims to unite all the sects in Islam regardless of their compromises of the basic concepts of Monotheism (*Tawheed*).

The Devastating Connection

The close bond between Polytheism of Love (*Shirk Al-Mahabbah*) and grave worshiping was Satan’s (Shaytan) ample opportunity to plant the first seed of Polytheism (*Shirk*) on the earth since Prophet Adam’s عليه السلام arrival.

(1) Sahih Muslim

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(3) Quran 30:30

(4) Easton’s Bible Dictionary: Genesis (4:1-16)

Polytheism of Love (*Shirk Al-Mahabbah*) is to associate others in Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** exclusive love. At first, Satan (Shaytan) conspired to foster this dominating type of Polytheism (*Shirk*) to exaggerate the status and the love they had towards righteous people (*Awliya*). The grave worship tradition was a consequence of this kind of Polytheism (*Shirk*).

The following is a statement by a Yemeni scholar, Abdurrahman Al-Moalamy **رحمه الله**: "One of the most spacious passages to misguidance is going overboard venerating, praising the righteous." (1)

From people's habits, they will go to extremes in veneration of those they see to be righteous. It is this type of exaggeration that leads the people to worship which they venerate instead of directing worship to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** alone.

Hence, exaggerating the status of the righteous people (*Awliya*) leads to worshipping them after their death instead of worshipping Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** alone. Excessive love towards someone, such as leaders of Spiritual Path (*Shaykh Al-Tariqa*), saints (*Awliya*), scholars, Imams, or something, such as wealth, culture, and societal norms, will lead us to place them equal to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**. One will end up putting what he loves more ahead of Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**. Although this person may recognize Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** as the Creator, the Sovereign, and the Sustainer, his excessive love towards this righteous person will dominate his heart, and that's the main problem. The evidence for this is the Verse in Surat Al-Baqarah. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِذْ يُرُونَ الْعَذَابَ أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعَذَابِ ﴾ [سورة البقرة: 165]

"Of mankind are some who take objects of worship which they set as rivals to Allah, loving them with love like (that which is the due) of Allah (only)." (2)

The meaning is as follows: "There are those who associate in their love to Allah others such as individuals and things to the extent that they make them Allah's rivals. They will love, exalt, and magnify them equally or even more. They magnify and love Allah. Furthermore, they will become subservient to them concerning worship and obedience." (3)

Let's present some examples of some who became victims to this deadly and devastating connection:

(1) At-Tankil (Volume 1/Page 184)

(2) Quran 2:165

(3) Surat Al-Baqarah (Tafsir Al-Jalalayn)

The Christians Regarding Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

For example, Christians love Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ so much so that they place him ahead of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said while rebuking them,

﴿يَتَاهَلَّ الْكُتُبَ لَا تَعْلَمُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةً انْتَهُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا﴾ [سورة النساء: 171]

"O People of the Book do not go to extremes in your religion—and do not speak concerning Allah except the truth. Indeed, Isa (Jesus), the son of Maryam, is the Messenger of Allah, and he came into existence due to His word, which He bestowed upon Maryam, and a spirit created by Him. So, believe in Allah and His Messenger—and do say, 'Three (i.e., the Trinity)'—desist, for that is better for you. Indeed, Allah is only one God." (1)

The Pagan Arabs

Ibn Jarir At-Tabari رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reported in his Interpretation (*Tafsir*) regarding the following Verse (*Ayah*) in Surat Al-Najm:

﴿أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ اللَّاتَ وَالْعُزَّىٰ﴾ [سورة النجم: 19]

"Have you then considered [the two idols] Al-Lāt and Al-‘Uzzā..."(2)

Mujahid رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, "Lāt used to serve the pilgrims flour mixed with ghee and water (called *Sawiq*). So, when he died, they would gather and sit around his grave in devotion."

So, Al-Lat was a person who exceeded the boundaries in his devotion to serving the pilgrims, feeding and serving them. People went to exaggeration in veneration of him until they made him an object of worship, and they gathered around his grave in devotion.

(1) Quran 4:171

(2) Quran 53:19

Lovers of Wealth, Whims and Desires

Some people love wealth more than they love Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Hence, they will do whatever it takes to obtain wealth, such as stealing, cheating, or deal in usury, even though they know that they are disobeying Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. The Prophet ﷺ talked about this: “He who became the slave of the Dinar, or the Dirham will perish and be destroyed...” (1)

Others love their whims and desires more than they love Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. They will be after fulfilling their whims, although it might be at the expense of Allah’s سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى disobedience. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said about those,

﴿أَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُ هَوْنَهُ أَفَأَنْتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلاً﴾ [سورة الفرقان: 43]

“Do you see the one who is taking as his lord his desires?” (2)

The Mystical Sufi Tradition

In the mystical Sufi tradition, the blind follower (*Al-Murid*) loves a particular path’s Spiritual Leader (*Shaykh Al-Tariqa*) more than Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and His Messenger ﷺ. Hence, the blind follower (*Al-Murid*) will do whatever the spiritual leader asks of him.

However, it may be totally against Islam’s primary tenants. Once the spiritual leader dies and is engraved, the blind followers will continue to pursue their obedience by invoking them. Similarly, the blind followers of the Shia tradition will do the same with the twelve Imams like the Sufi Path’s blind follower.



(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Quran 25:43

Chapter Two
**Grave Worship: The Origin of
Polytheism (Shirk)**



Allah ﷻ created the humans sinless and on the pure Natural Instinct (*Fitrah*), which is the Islamic faith. When Allah ﷻ sent Prophet Adam ﷺ into the earth as a vicegerent, he kept the state of Islam on. He ﷺ taught his children about Monotheism (*Tawheed*) and warned against the acts of worship and advised them to follow his path. It was in the later generation of Prophet Nuh (Noah) ﷺ that the first act of Polytheism (*Shirk*) began.

Ibn Taymiyyah ﷺ said that “There are two origins to Polytheism (*Shirk*) on earth that spread amongst the believers after they were upon Monotheism (*Tawheed*). The first is Nuh’s (Noah) people, who started with grave worship, and the second was amongst the people of Ibrahim (Abraham), which stated the worship of the stars. Satan (Shaytan) and his helpers from his race (*Jinn*) were the Polytheism (*Shirk*) types of drivers amongst the two communities.” (1)

Ibn Al-Qayyim ﷺ said: “The root of Polytheism (*Shirk*) and idol worship is from dedication and preoccupation over the graves and taking them as places of worship.” (2)

Such actions of taking the graves as places of worship were something that the Prophet ﷺ strictly forbade. Moreover, in his final illness from which he passed away, he again cautioned against such acts in the sternest warning as mentioned in the Narration (*Hadith*) of Aishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا who said that Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said during his illness from which he did not get up: “Allah’s curse is upon the Jews and the Christians. They took the graves of their Prophets as places of prayer.” (3)

Allah ﷻ said regarding the commencement of the grave worshiping tradition, which was the origin of Polytheism (*Shirk*) on earth,

﴿وَقَالُوا لَا نَذَرُنَّ آلِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا نَذَرُنَّ وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا﴾ [سورة نوح: 23]

“And they have said: You shall not forsake your gods, nor shall you forsake Wadd, nor Suwa, nor Yaghoth, nor Ya’ooq, nor Nasra.” (4)

Polytheism (*Shirk*) first started amongst the people of Prophet Nuh (Noah) ﷺ when they exaggerated and went beyond bounds regarding the status of the righteous people (*Awliya*),

(1) Al-Qaida Jalilah fi At-Tawassul Wal-Wasila

(2) Ighathatul Lahfaan Min Masaaid As-Shaytan

(3) Sahih Muslim

(4) Quran 71:23

which led them to worship them and resist the call of their Prophet Nuh (Noah) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام out of pride.

Ata رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reported: Abdullah Ibn Abbas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا said, “All of the idols among the people of Nuh (Noah) appeared among the Arabs later. They were the names of righteous men among the people of Nuh (Noah). When they passed away, Satan (Shaytan) inspired their people to build statues in the places they used to sit and name them by their names. They did so, and they were not worshiped until the first generation passed away and knowledge was lost; then they were worshiped.” (1)

All the referenced accounts when compiled together state the following: (2) (3)

1. These five mentioned names in Surat Nuh (Noah) are names of people who used to be righteous and pious. However, when they died, Satan (Shaytan) whispered into their people to retreat and sit at their graves. The people began to gather around their graves, wailing, and mourning.
2. So, when Satan (Shaytan) saw them mourning and grieving over them, he took the form of a man and came to them, saying “I see that you are mourning and grieving over their loss. So why don’t you make shapes and images of them (i.e., statues) and place them in your places of gatherings so that you may be reminded of them?” So, they said: “Yes,” and so they did what Satan (Shaytan) suggested.
3. When Satan (Shaytan) saw how they were (excessively) remembering them, he said, “Why doesn’t every man amongst you make similar shapes and images (statues) to keep in your own houses so that you can be (constantly) reminded of them?” So, they all said “Yes.” So, each household did exactly what Satan (Shaytan) suggested.
4. Parents started adoring and venerating the statues of these righteous men (*Awliya*) while their children were watching. Then Satan (Shaytan) whispered to those who came after them that they should take them as idols, beautifying to them the idea that you will be reminded of them and thereby follow them in righteous conduct.
5. Until those from the later generation saw what the (previous generation) had done and considered that to the extent that they took them as deities (gods) to be worshiped besides Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى. (4) (5)

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Ibn Jarir At-Tabari in his tafsir from several predecessors

(3) Ad-Durr al-Manthur Abdullah Ibn Humaid related from Abu Muttahar, who said: "Yazid Ibn Al-Muhallab was mentioned to Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (d. 11 A.H)

(4) Ibn Abi Hatim

(5) Al-Kawakib ad-Durari of Ibn' Urwah al-Hanbali

6. So, Allah ﷻ sent Prophet Nuh (Noah) ﷺ, commanding them to worship Allah ﷻ alone. However, none responded to his call except a few.
7. Thus, the Wisdom of Allah ﷻ was fulfilled when He sent Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as the final Prophet and made his Islamic Law (*Shariah*), the compilation of all Divinely Prescribed Laws, in which He prohibited all means and avenues by which people may fall for Polytheism (*Shirk*), which is the greatest of sins. For this reason, building shrines over graves and intending to specifically travel to them, taking them as places of festivity and gathering, and swearing an oath by the inmate of a grave have all been prohibited. All these lead to excessiveness and lead to the worship of others than Allah ﷻ.

This being the case even more so in an age in which knowledge is diminishing, ignorance is increasing, few sincere advisors (to the truth), and Satan (Shaytan) cooperating with men and *Jinn* to misguide mankind, and to take them away from the worship of Allah ﷻ alone. (1)

From the above history of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) and Polytheism (*Shirk*), we can conclude that the leading causes for Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) which takes Muslims out of the fold of Islam are as follows:

1. Grave worshiping is a Satan-inspired (Shaytan) tradition, which was the origin of Polytheism (*Shirk*) on earth.
2. Satan (Shaytan) is willing to harvest the fruits of people's misguidance in future generations, though not necessarily right away. We can see that from his scheming, plotting, and lying to the three generations from the people of Prophet Nuh (Noah) ﷺ until he finally managed to firmly plant Polytheism (*Shirk*) in the love of idols.
3. Muslims can easily be hunted by Satan (Shaytan) and his helpers from the *Jinn* and the human when they are distant from the Book of Allah ﷻ and the Prophet's ﷺ Tradition (*Sunnah*).
4. Their ignorance of the correct meaning of Monotheism (*Tawheed*), which is negation and affirmation. Furthermore, the firm knowledge that Monotheism's (*Tawheed*) implementation is not by merely uttering the testimony "Lā ilāha illa Allāh."
5. Promoting doubts and suspicions regarding the authority of the Tradition of the Prophet ﷺ (*Sunnah*), which details the shields every Muslim must pursue to block all possible paths to Polytheism (*Shirk*).
6. To ignore the Prophet's ﷺ instruction to refrain from praising others and ourselves.

(1) Tahdhir as-Sajid min Ittikhadh al-Quburi Masajid, pp.101-106

7. Ignoring the Prophet's ﷺ instruction regarding raising the graves and placing idols and shapes around them.
8. To ignore the Prophet's ﷺ instruction regarding praying around the grave.
9. Exaggerating in the remembrance and dignifying of the pious people and extending this remembrance to the extent of worship.
10. Determination to imitate and follow the ancestors, without verifying their beliefs, despite them straying from Allah's سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى right path. (1)



(1) The following three references are abridged and slightly paraphrased:

- Tahdhir as-Sajid min Ittikhadh al-Quburi Masajid,
- Origin of Shirk by Shaykh Albani
- The truth of Monotheism by Al-Fawzan

Chapter Three
Grave Worshipers'
Polytheistic Rituals (Shirk)



There are many polytheistic practices (*Shirk*) associated with the grave worship tradition. In this chapter, we will discuss five of the predominant rituals:

1. The Urgent Appeal (*Al-Istighathah*)
2. Circumambulation (*Tawaf*)
3. Seeking Goodness (*Tabarrok*)
4. Slaughtering (*Az-Zabih*)
5. Making Vows (*An-Nazir*)

1. The Urgent Appeal (*Al-Istighathah*)

Al-Istighathah or *Al-Isti'annah* is an Arabic term that refers to “making an urgent request due to distressful situations.” It is a unique form of Supplication (*Dua*), in which the distressed person typically directs exclusively to the power they believe can rescue them.

If the person is on pure Monotheism (*Tawheed*), then he will automatically and without any hesitation implore Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*. Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* said,

﴿أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ أَأَلَا لَهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ قَلِيلًا مَا نَذَكَّرُوكُمْ﴾ [سورة النمل: 62]

"Is not He (better than your gods) Who responds to the distressed one when he calls on Him, and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth, generations after generations?" (1)

Ikrimah *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ* (the son of Abu Jahl) fled from Makkah when Muslims conquered it. He decided to travel to another land across the Red Sea to escape the fear of what may be done to him. While on his journey, the ship he had boarded was caught in a storm, and those who were with him exclaimed that they should sincerely pray for salvation. Ikrimah *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ* vowed to Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* that he would return to Makkah and embrace Islam if he survived the storm. (2)

In principle, whoever invokes, supplicates, or worships anyone other than Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* or alongside with Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*, whether they worship Abdul Qadir Al-Jeelani, a Prophet of Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* like Isa (Jesus) *عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام*, or Uzair (Ezra) or others from the righteous people (*Awliya*), he is

(1) Quran 27:62

(2) Sunan An-Nasai

considered a Polytheist (*Mushrik*) and a Disbeliever (*Kafir*). Similarly, suppose someone observes Prayer (*Salah*) at the gravesite, considering that he will receive an extra reward or achieve more excellence because of the gravesite. Then he is on the most dangerous of pathways that leads to Polytheism (*Shirk*). Hence, our Prophet ﷺ warned against doing that in the sternest manners. He also emphasized that doing that will be the leading cause to endanger oneself to Allah’s *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* curse.

However, grave worshipers attribute Allah’s *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* absolute power of rescuing the distress to their so-called “The Supreme Helper” (*Al-Ghawth Al-A’zam*) or so-called “The Mightiest Succor.” They claim Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* shares His absolute power of helping the distressed to him and empowered him to bring assistance to suffering humanity in response to His creatures’ cry for help in times of extreme adversity. Hence, they will call upon them right away, mechanically, and without any hesitance.

The Christians reflexively call upon Prophet Isa (Jesus) *عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام* when they are distressed, although they still believe the father is ‘God.’ Likewise, grave worshipers right away call upon their so-called “Supreme Helper” (*Al-Ghawth Al-A’zam*), based on their extreme Sufi Spiritual Path (*Tarikhah*); it can be Abdul Qadir Al-Jeelani, or As-Syed Al-Badawi, or Arafī.

One type of Urgent Appeal (*Istighathah*) may direct to the created beings as part of the means Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* placed at our disposal to utilize. Certain conditions must be fulfilled; the created being must be alive, present, and able to relieve the suffering.

For example, in distress, one can seek help from another to push away an enemy. Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* told us about a similar incident in the story of Prophet Musa (Moses) *عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام*,

﴿فَاسْتَعَاذَ الَّذِي مِنْ شَيْعِنِهِ عَلَى الَّذِي مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ فَوَكَرَهُ مُوسَى فَقَضَى عَلَيْهِ قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ مُضِلٌّ مُبِينٌ﴾

[سورة القصص: 15]

"The man of his (own) party asked him for help against his foe, so Musa (Moses) struck him with his fist and killed him." (1)

The Urgent Appeal (*Istighathah*) during distress sought from the created beings—who cannot help because they are dead or alive but absent or asking something they cannot deliver, such as seeking help for providing with having children, giving life to the deceased, and relieving sorrow—is forbidden. Such an Urgent Appeal (*Istighathah*) is considered a Polytheistic Act (*Shirk*) since the one who is making the Urgent Appeal (*Istighathah*) and seeking help believes that the created being is the source of his rescue and not the Creator.

(1) Quran 28:15

It is totally against the foundations of pure Monotheism (*Tawheed*) to believe that the power of rescuing (*Istighathah*) is shared between Allah ﷻ and others. Even if one attributes this to an Angel, Prophet, or righteous man, while believing that those are no more than means, he is still guilty of committing a form of Polytheism (*Shirk*) which can take him out of the fold of Islam if he does this willfully and knowingly.

Allah ﷻ states in the Quran that those who take idols as a means between them and the Creator are Polytheists (*Mushrikun*), and ordered Muslims to wage war against them. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ﴾
[سورة الزمر: 3]

"And those who take saints (Awliya) (protectors, helpers, lords, gods) besides Him (saying): "We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah." (1)

Allah ﷻ also said,

﴿وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْصُرُهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ هَؤُلَاءِ شَفَعَتْنَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۖ قُلْ أَتَدْعُونَ اللَّهَ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ سُبْحٰنَهُ، وَتَعَلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ﴾ [سورة يونس: 18]

"And they (The polytheists about whom they take as helpers beside Allah) say: "These are our intercessors with Allah." (2)

2. Circumambulation (*Tawaf*)

Circumambulation (*Tawaf*) is an act of worship. The only place to perform Circumambulation (*Tawaf*) is Allah's ﷻ House (*Kaa'bah*) in Makkah. It is not allowed anywhere else on this earth's face. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ثُمَّ لِيَقْضُوا تَفَثَهُمْ وَلِيُوفُوا نَدْوَرَهُمْ وَلِيَطَّوَّفُوا بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ﴾
[سورة الحج: 29]

"Then let them complete the prescribed duties (*Manasik of Hajj*) for them, and perform their vows, and circumambulate the Ancient House (*the Kaa'bah at Makkah*)." (3)

(1) Quran 39:3

(2) Quran 10:18

(3) Quran 22:29

Likewise, walking between Safa and Marwa is only legislated for Safa and Marwa. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ حَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾
[سورة البقرة: 158]

"Verily! As-Safa and Al-Marwah (two mountains in Makkah) are of the Symbols of Allah. So, it is not a sin on him who perform Hajj or Umrah (pilgrimage) of the House (Kaabaah at Makkah) to perform the going (Tawaf) between them (As-Safa and Al-Marwah). And whoever does good voluntarily, then verily, Allah is All-Recognizer, All-Knower." (1)

Grave worshipers perform Circumambulation (*Tawaf*) around the grave of their saints (*Awliya*), stroking them with one's hands, seeking blessings from them, and hoping to be benefited. Even though such acts are equivalent to deification, it is like the pre-Islamic idolaters who used to do with their gods. Whoever wishes for reward or blessings through these acts of worship at the graves, then indeed he has exalted that which Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has not legislated to be exalted.

The evidence to assert that these practices are acts of Polytheism (*Shirk*) is in the Narration (*Hadith*) of Abu Waqid Al-Laythi رضي الله عنه, who said, "We went out with the Messenger of Allah to the (military) campaign to Hunayn. At the same time, we were new converts from disbelief to (Islam). The idol-worshipers had a lote tree in (whose vicinity) they used to stay and hang their weapons, and it (i.e., this lote tree) was called *Dhaat Anwat*. So, when we went past a tree, we said, 'O Messenger of Allah! Set up a *Dhaat Anwat* for us just as they have a *Dhaat Anwat*.' So, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Allah is Great (*Allahu Akbar*)! It is a path that has proceeded (from the people of the past). By Allah in whose Hand my soul is! You have stated just as the children of Israel stated to Musa (Moses), 'O Musa (Moses)! Make for us *Ilaahan* (a god) as they have gods. He (Musa) said: 'Verily, you are a people who know not (the Majesty and Greatness of Allah and what is obligatory upon you, i.e., to worship none but Allah Alone, the One and the Only God of all that exists).'" (2)

The new Muslims wanted to perform that act of worship in that place and seek blessings, so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ referred to what they sought after; worshiping another deity besides Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. That act they asked to do was a means to Polytheism (*Shirk*), so the Prophet ﷺ immediately blocked it in their faces, reminding them what the children of Israel requested before them. After the Messenger of Allah ﷺ explained the matter, they turned in repentance and obedience to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and His Messenger ﷺ.

(1) Quran 2:158

(2) Musnad Ahmed and At-Tirmidhi

There are those who wish to perform Circumambulation (*Tawaf*) around the Prophet's ﷺ grave. They want to defy the wish and request of our Prophet ﷺ for which he Supplicated (made *Dua* ') to Allah ﷻ in the following Narration (*Hadith*). He said, "O Allah! Do not make my grave an idol that is worshiped." (1) Allah ﷻ indeed protected his grave and answered his Supplication (*Dua* ').

Seeking blessings from graves, performing Circumambulation (*Tawaf*) around them, and stroking them are more severe acts of *Shirk* and sin than what those new Muslims sought after.(2)

3. Seeking Goodness (*Tabarrok*)

It refers to attempting to gain good things and Blessing (*Barakah*) by touching, consuming, or just being in the vicinity of something, objects, places, times, or people.

It is not a matter that is subject to deliberation or Individual Finding (*Ijtihad*), but only through revelation can we decide to conclude that certain places, objects, and people have Blessings (*Barakah*). Other than that, it would be an act of Polytheism (*Shirk*) to claim benefits or Blessings (*Barakah*) allegedly.

The following people, places, times, and entities possess Blessings (*Barakah*) by evidence: The Prophet ﷺ, Zamzam water, the Black Stone, certain times (The month of *Ramadan*, the Night of *Al-Qadr* and the first ten days of the month of *Thul-Hijjah*), certain places (Makkah, Madinah, and Jerusalem), and certain acts such as Prayer (*Salah*), Fasting, and Obligatory Charity (*Zakah*).

It is not allowed to do like the grave worshipers when they make Circumambulation (*Tawaf*) around the graves and shrines of their dead saints (*Awlyia*) and touch the different parts of the graves to seek Blessings (*Barakah*). They have no evidence to validate their actions. Furthermore, it is also not allowed to make up certain times and attribute Blessings (*Barakah*) such as the Night of *Al-Isra'* and the Night of *Al-Mawlid*.

4. Slaughtering (*Az-Zabih*)

Grave worshipers offer their Sacrifices (*Qurbani*) next to the graves of their venerated saints (*Awlyia*), and they claim that their action is directed solely to Allah ﷻ. It is easy to refute their claim and prove them wrong because if they intended their Sacrifice (*Qurbani*) to be for the sake of Allah ﷻ, there would be no need to sacrifice it next to the graves where other acts of worship are also observed.

(1) Muwatta Malik

(2) An Excerpt from 'Al-Min'dhar Fi Bayani Kathir Minal Akhta` Ash-Shaa'i'ah (page: 11)

Slaughter (*Az-Zabih*) means to shed a lawful animal's blood to consume in a specific manner. It is an act of worship through which we venerate and glorify Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. It is called *Qurbani*, *Nusuk*, or Sacrifice. However, it is permissible to offer the sacrifice's meat as food to the people and ourselves. The evidence is in the Verse (*Ayah*), in which Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ [سورة الأنعام:162]

"Say (O Muhammad): Verily, my Prayer (*Salah*), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the 'Aalameen (mankind, *Jinn* and all that exists)." (1)

Shedding animals' blood to glorify or venerate anyone other than Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is a Polytheistic Act (*Shirk*). The meat they slaughtered is no longer regarded as Permissible (*Zabihah* or *Halal*) to eat.

Furthermore, slaughtering to venerate Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and the dead saints (*Awlyia*) is regarded as an act of Polytheism (*Shirk*). The meat is no longer Permissible (*Halal*) to eat even though the individual has followed the slaughter rules in Islam.

Sometimes we slaughter to feed the people or honor a guest invited for a wedding feast, or on other occasions. These situations are completely allowed. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him honor his guest." (2)

The Prophet ﷺ said to Abd Al-Rahman Ibn Awf رضي الله عنه, "Give a wedding feast even if it is with only one sheep." (3)

It's also permissible to slaughter and get the meat for selling. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿أَوْلَدِيَرُوا أَنَا خَلَقْنَا لَهُمْ مِمَّا عَمِلَتْ أَيْدِينَا أَنْعَمْنَا لَهُمْ لَهَا مَلِكُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ وَذَلَّلْنَاهَا لَهُمْ فَمِنْهَا رَكُوبُهُمْ وَمِنْهَا يَأْكُلُونَ﴾ [سورة يس:71-72]

"Do they not see that We have created for them of what Our Hands have created, the cattle so that they are their owners. And We have subdued them unto them so that some of them they have for riding and some they eat." (4)

Shaykh Ibn Uthaymeen رحمه الله was asked about the ruling on offering a sacrifice to someone other than Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and whether it is permissible to eat that meat. He replied: "Offering a

(1) Quran 6:162
 (2) Sahih Al-Bukhari
 (3) Sahih Muslim
 (4) Quran 36:71-72

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

sacrifice to someone other than Allah is Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) because offering a sacrifice is an act of worship.” Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَحْرَسْ ﴾ [سورة الكوثر: 2]

"Therefore, turn in Prayer (*Salah*) to your Lord and sacrifice to Him only." (1)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى also said,

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾ [سورة الأنعام: 162]

"Say (O Muhammad): Verily, my Prayer (*Salah*), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the 'Aalameen (mankind, *Jinn* and all that exists)." (2)

So, whoever offers a sacrifice to anyone other than Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is committing an act of Polytheism (*Shirk*), regardless of whether he offers that sacrifice to an Angel, a Messenger, a Prophet, a caliph, a saint (*Wali*), or a scholar. All of that is Polytheism (*Shirk*) in which one is associating others in worship with Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. It puts one beyond the pale of Islam. (3)

5. Vowing (*An-Nazir*)

Worship is Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى exclusive right. These include Prayer (*Salah*), Obligatory Charity (*Zakah*), Fasting, Supplicating (making *Dua*), Sacrificing, making vows, and more. We must perform them sincerely and solely for the sake of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, following the Prophet's ﷺ way for them to be valid and accepted. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴾ [سورة الفاتحة: 5]

"You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything)." (4)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى also said,

﴿ وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ ﴾ [سورة الإسراء: 23]

"And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him." (1)

(1) Quran 108:2

(2) Quran 6:162

(3) Majmoo' al-Fatawa 2/148

(4) Quran 1:5

Making Vows (*An-Nazir*) is to pledge or promise to do an act of worship by taking an oath. Making Vows are only permissible if they are exclusive to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Muslims are not allowed to vow for someone other than Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى referred to pledging in many Verses (*Ayat*) in the Quran. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ نَفَقَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُمْ مِنْ نَذْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهَا﴾ [سورة البقرة: 270]

"And whatever you spend (e.g., in *Sadaqah*—Charity for Allah's Cause) or whatever vow you make, be sure Allah knows it all." (2)

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever vows to obey Allah, let him obey Him, but whoever vows to disobey Him, let him not disobey Him." (3)

According to the above Narration (*Hadith*), Vowing (*An-Nazir*) is invalid if the one who is making the vow associates others with Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى in his vow. For example, vowing to slaughter, perform Circumambulation (*Tawaf*), observe Prayer (*Salah*), or Fast for the sake of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى—along with a dead Imam, Ali, Al-Husayn, Abd Al-Qadir, Desouki, Tejanni, Jeelani, As-Sayyid Al-Badawir, As-Sayyidah Zaynab, As-Sayyidah Nafisah, or anyone else—is invalid.

Likewise, making a vow to Allah's Messenger ﷺ is also invalid because we cannot make vows to anyone other than Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى since it is an act of worship.

Shaykh' Ibn Baz رحمته الله said, "If someone vows to perform an act of worship, not exclusively to Allah, associating others with Him. This act is Polytheism (*Shirk*), and he should not fulfill his vow. Instead, he must repent."



(1) Quran 17:23

(2) Quran 2:270

(3) Mutta' Malik

Chapter Four
Grave Worshipers'
Opposition to Monotheism
(Tawheed)



The grave worshipers do not like the categorization of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) into two, three, or four parts, even though the categorization is based on concrete and valid evidence. For the sake of making this essential subject easy, we will present it in a series of questions and answers in a logical manner as follows:

1. Why are grave worshipers against categorizing Monotheism (*Tawheed*)? And why don't they consider their grave worship Polytheism (*Shirk*)?

The speculative speech scholars build their belief system on defective and imperfect intellect; in other words, whatever their logic and mind incite them, they will follow regardless of its opposition to the revelation.

Not only do grave worshipers oppose categorizing Monotheism (*Tawheed*), but *Sufis*, *Ash 'Aris*, *Maturities*, *Mu'tazilis*, and *Deobandis* are against it as well. According to them, Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is one entity or a single category, which is Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Actions of Lordship (*Tawheed Ar-Rubbubiyah*). Consequently, whoever affirms it has fulfilled all rights of Monotheism (*Tawheed*), and he is on pure Monotheism (*Tawheed*).

Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Lordship means Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** is The Creator (*Al-Khaliq*), the Sovereign (*Al-Malik*), the Sustainer (*Al-Raziq*), the Giver of life and death (*Al-Muhee*, and *Al-Mumeet*), and the One who sends the rain and brings forth vegetation out of the dead earth.

Hence, as long as they do not violate Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Lordship, their Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is sound, and there is nothing wrong with it, which is unquestionably incorrect.

According to them, Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** worship (*Tawheed Al-Uluhiyyah*) has nothing to do with Monotheism (*Tawheed*) whatsoever. Hence, singling out Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** when we're praying, Supplicating (making *Dua*'), and performing Circumambulation (*Tawaf*) is irrelevant and unnecessary. Consequently, they think they can invoke their so-called "Supreme Helper" (*Al-Ghawth Al-A'zam*), Abdul Qadir Al-Jeelani, Ar-Raffi, Al-Badawi, or others; according to them, it's not an act of Polytheism (*Shirk*) since it has nothing to do with Monotheism (*Tawheed*).

Furthermore, according to them, Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Names and Attributes (*Tawheed Al-Asma Wa-Sifat*) have nothing to do with Monotheism (*Tawheed*) whatsoever. Hence, to believe that Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** is One and Only, no one is like Him, and no created being is equal to Him, once it comes to His Divine Essence, Names and Attributes, is irrelevant and has nothing to do with Monotheism (*Tawheed*) whatsoever. Consequently, if they ascribe Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** exclusive

Names and Attributes to their venerated saints, for them, this is not an act of Polytheism (*Shirk*) and doesn't violate Monotheism (*Tawheed*).

Now based on what we discussed so far, I hope you can answer the following two questions:

1. Why grave worshipers oppose categorizing Monotheism (*Tawheed*)?
2. Why don't they consider their worship, invocation of the occupants of the graves, supplicating to them, seeking their mediation, and directing their calls of Urgent Appeals (*Istighathah*) to them and not Allah **سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى** as Polytheism (*Shirk*)?

2. What is wrong with dividing Monotheism (*Tawheed*) into categories?

There is nothing wrong with dividing Monotheism (*Tawheed*) into different categories, provided that the categorization is founded on valid evidence from the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*).

Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله said, "There is nothing wrong with introducing new concepts and new words as long as they do not have something disturbing about them." (1)

3. Why was there a need for such categorization?

There are many reasons which justify this approach:

1. It has always been a tradition from early times when scholars used the classification methodology to make subjects easy to understand. For instance, Al-Shafi'i رحمه الله set out the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence (*Usul Al-Fiqh*), and his categorization was well-received and was followed by the scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence (*Usul Al-Fiqh*). Likewise, other scholars in other branches of Islamic knowledge employed the same concept, such as recitation of Quran (*Tajweed*).
2. Today's Muslims do not have full command of the Arabic language. Instead, they are becoming weaker. The Arabic they speak is not the classical Quranic Arabic; besides, it lost its purity since it got mixed with foreign languages.
3. Many reverts who accepted Islam came from various religious and ideological backgrounds; besides, some came from heavily philosophical backgrounds. They were mainly graduating from speculative speech school (*Mutakallimin*). The people of rhetorical ideologies are worshipers of intellect, and they judge religion based on false, foreign, and innovative ideologies. Hence, the categorization of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) was more to confront them.

(1) Madarij al-Salikeen, 3/306

4. The similarities and dissimilarities between the grave worshipers and the pagan Arabs in Makkah.

There are similarities and dissimilarities between the pagan Arabs at the time of revelation and the grave worshipers of today.

Similarities

As for the similarities, the Polytheists (*Mushrikun*) of Makkah believed in one category of Monotheism (*Tawheed*), which is the belief in Oneness of Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Lordship (*Tawheed of Rubbubiyah*), precisely like the grave worshipers of today. They affirmed Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Lordship's Actions, the creation, the sovereignty, the provision, and the control of the creations.

Look carefully into these series of questions and how the pagan Arabs responded to them. This is only one example in one chapter of the Quran. If we go through the Quran, we can present hundreds of Verses (*Ayat*) like these, where the pagan Arabs affirmed Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Lordship, but they privileged their idols with their acts of worship. Meanwhile, they believe these idols do not benefit nor harm them. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿ قُلْ لِمَنِ الْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾ قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٨٨﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ فَأَنَّى تُسْحَرُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾ بَلْ آتَيْنَهُم بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾ مَا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ مِنْ وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِذَا أَذْهَبَ كُلَّ إِلَهٍ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلَّ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ ﴿٩١﴾ عَلِيمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَتَعَلَّىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾ ﴾ [المؤمنون: 84-92]

“Say: "Whose is the earth and whosoever is therein? If you know! They will say: "It is Allah's!" Say: "Will you not then remember?" Say: "Who is (the) Lord of the seven heavens, and (the) Lord of the Great Throne?" They will say: "Allah." Say: "Will you not then fear Allah (believe in His Oneness, and obey Him,)." Say, "In Whose Hand is the sovereignty of everything (i.e., treasures of each and everything)? And He protects (all), while against Whom there is no protector, They will say: "(All that belongs) to Allah." Say: "How then are you deceived and turn away from the truth?" Nay, but We have brought them the truth (Islamic Monotheism), and verily, they (disbelievers) are liars. No son (or offspring or children) did Allah beget, nor is there any Ilah (god) along with Him; (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 Allah above all that

they attribute to Him! All-Knower of the unseen and the seen! Exalted be He over all that they associate as partners to Him!" (1)

Dissimilarities

You will be amazed when you come to know the dissimilarities between today's grave worshipers and the pagan Arabs of the old times.

The pagan Arabs didn't believe their idols had any attributes of divinity. They firmly believed that they did not benefit nor harm them. Hence, when they experienced severe hardship, calamity, or distress, or while making the urgent appeal, they used to call upon Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** and ultimately abandoned their idols. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿وَلِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فِي الْبَحْرِ ضَلَّ مَنْ تَدْعُونَ إِلَّا إِلَٰهَهُ فَلَمَّا بَلَغَكُمُ الْبَرَّ ائْتَمَرْتُمْ
وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ كَفُورًا﴾ [سورة الإسراء: 67]

"And when harm touches you upon the sea, those that you call upon besides Him vanish from you except Him (Allah Alone). But when He brings you safely to land, you turn away (from Him). And man is ever ungrateful." (2)

However, when today's grave worshipers are distressed and in dire need of help, guess to whom they direct their Urgent Appeals (*Istighathah*)? To their saints, the engraved, the dead. They call upon their so-called "Supreme Helpers" (*Al-Ghawth Al-A'zam*). Despite their acceptance of the following Verse (*Ayah*) as part of the revelation:

﴿أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ ۗ إِنَّهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ قَلِيلًا مَا تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾
[سورة النمل: 62]

"Is not He (better than your gods) Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls Him, and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth, generations after generations. Is there any Ilah (god) with Allah? Little is that you remember!"(3)

By the way, many of these misguided innovators claim that the people who call upon the dead in their graves through Supplications (*Dua'*) and seeking rescue are not falling into Polytheism (*Shirk*) because they have not denied the category of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) of

(1) Quran 23:84-92

(2) Quran 17:67

(3) Quran 27:62

Oneness of Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Lordship (*Tawheed Ar-Rubbubiyah*). We can address their claim in two ways:

1. As we previously explained, Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is not just affirming Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Lordship; Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is to direct your Supplication (*Dua'*), which is an act of worship to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**.
2. The fact that they call upon them when they are distressed is evidence that they ascribe Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Lordship and Attributes to them. People typically do this unconsciously due to the ingrained beliefs that the engraved are their immediate rescuing source and not Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**. They believe that they are at least associated with Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** or the intermediaries between them and Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**.

5. Was Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab **رحمه الله** (died 1206 A.H) the first scholar to state that the Polytheism (*Shirk*) of Quraish was primarily in the area of Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** worship (*Tawheed Al-Uluhyiah*)?

This claim is incorrect as there were scholars before Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab **رحمه الله** who designated the Polytheism (*Shirk*) of the Quraish to be violating the Monotheism in Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** worship (*Tawheed Al-Uluhyiah*).

Imam Al-Baghawi **رحمه الله** who died in 516 A.H (almost 600 years before Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab **رحمه الله**) confirmed that the Polytheism (*Shirk*) of the Quraish was in violation of the Monotheism in Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** worship (*Tawheed Al-Uluhyiah*) based on the following Verses (*Ayat*):

﴿ قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكَ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ أَوْ يَنْفَعُونَكَ أَوْ يَضُرُّونَ ﴾ [سورة الشعراء: 72-73]

**“Do they hear your Supplication (*Dua'*) when you supplicate?
“Or do they benefit you or do they harm (you)?” (1)**

They answered by saying,

﴿ قَالُوا بَلْ وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا كَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ ﴾ [سورة الشعراء: 74]

“Nay, but we found our fathers doing so.” (2)

(1) Quran 26:72-73

(2) Quran 26:74

Meaning: They do not hear any statement or bring any benefit or repel any harm. However, they followed the example of their fathers. These Verses (*Ayat*) also refute the idea of blind following when it comes to beliefs. (1)

Ibn Kathir رحمه الله died in the year 774 A.H, 400 years before Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab's رحمه الله time. He commented while explaining the following Verse (*Ayah*):

أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي مَا هُمْ فِيهِ

يَخْتَلِفُونَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ كَاذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿٣﴾

[سورة الزمر: 3]

“Surely, the religion (i.e. the worship and the obedience) is for Allah only. And those who take *Awliya* (protectors and helpers) besides Him (say): "We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah." Verily, Allah will judge between them concerning that wherein they differ. Truly, Allah guides not him who is a liar, and a disbeliever.” (2)

Ibn Kathir رحمه الله said: “Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ is affirming His Oneness and Exclusivity in creation, control, and dominion, to point to (the fact) that He is the only (true) deity, and that worship is only befitting to Him alone with no partner. This is why He سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ told His Messenger Muhammad ﷺ to say to the Polytheists (*Mushrikun*) who worshiped others with Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ — those who affirmed Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ Lordship (*Rububiyyah*) and admitted that He has no partner in it, yet associated partners with Him in worship (*Ilahiyyah*). So they worshiped others with Him, while admitting that those they worship did not create anything, did not own anything, or have exclusive control over anything.”

Hence, both Imam Al-Baghawi رحمه الله and Ibn Kathir رحمه الله pointed to the Polytheism (*Shirk*) of the Quraish in Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ worship (*Tawheed Al-Uluhiyah*) hundreds of years before Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab رحمه الله.

6. What Are the Different Categories of Monotheism (*Tawheed*)?

The scholars approached categorizing Monotheism (*Tawheed*) differently, but the most famous and familiar division has the three categories. However, there are other categories as follows:

(1) Ma'alim At-Tafsir by Al-Baghawi

(2) Quran 39:3

The Two Categories

Some of the scholars, amongst them Ibn Tamiya رحمته الله, said that Monotheism (*Tawheed*) could be divided into two categories:

1. **Knowledge and Affirmation (*Tawheed Al-Ma'rifah Wa'l-Ithbaat*):** This includes believing in Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى existence and His Lordship and His Names and Attributes.

It means believing that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is the only One Who creates, the Sovereign, the Sustainer, the Giver of life and death, and to believe in *Al-Asma' Wa'l-Sifaat Wa'l-Sifaat*, which means affirming what Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has affirmed for Himself of Names and Attributes, and denying any Attributes that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has said are not His, without denying any of His Attributes or likening any of His Attributes to the created beings.

2. **Object and Aim (*Tawheed Al-Qasd Wa'l-Talab*):** It includes believing in the Divine Nature of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

Belief in Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Divinity and Worship (*Uloohiyyah*) means to single Him out in our worship; and one must devote their actions, whether done by the heart, tongue, and limbs, to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Since no one is like Him, it comes to His Divine Essence, Names, Attributes, and Actions. Hence, none is to be worshiped but Him.

The Three Categories

As for those who divided Monotheism (*Tawheed*) into three categories, they split the first category from the “two categories” division system—which is “Oneness of Knowledge and Affirmation” (*Tawheed Al-Ma'rifah Wa'l-Ithbaat*)—into two further categories as follows:

They separated Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Names and Attributes from His Actions of Lordship as follows:

1. **Oneness of Divine Lordship (*Tawheed Al-Rububiyyah*):** It includes belief in the existence of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.
2. **The Oneness of the Divine Nature (*Tawheed Al-Uloohiyyah*) or Oneness of Worship (*Tawheed Al-Ibadah*).**
3. **The Oneness of the Divine Names and Attributes (*Tawheed Al-Asma' Wa'l-Sifaat*)**

The Four Categories

Some scholars added Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** existence as an additional category. So, they divided Monotheism (*Tawheed*) into four categories:

1. Belief in Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** existence.
2. Belief in Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Lordship.
3. Belief in the Names and Attributes of Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**.
4. Belief in Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** worship.

As we see, there is nothing wrong with this categorization if it does not point to anything false, and there is nothing wrong with the terminology. This categorization is only to make it easier to understand. The more time passes, the fewer people understand, and the scholars need to make things easier and simpler.

7. Which Category of Tawheed did we use in the *Right Belief Series*?

We decided to follow the two-category division of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) in the *Right Belief Series*. Although I would advise those who teach children to adopt the four-category division of Monotheism (*Tawheed*). It is also very beneficial when you address atheists since one begins presenting the five evidence of Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** existence.



Chapter Five
Grave Worshipers Oppose
the Messenger ﷺ

Allah's Messenger ﷺ affirmed the primary wisdom of Muslims visiting the graves. It is an admonition of death and a reminder of the Hereafter (*Akhirah*). The Prophet ﷺ said, "I forbade you from visiting the graves, but you may now visit them, for it reminds you of the Hereafter (*Akhirah*)." (1)

Some Narrations (*Ahadith*) are confirming the permissibility of visiting the grave. These Narrations (*Ahadith*) are generalized and are not restricted to a specified day and time. Many Muslims mistakenly assume that the sole purpose behind visiting the graves is to make Supplication (*Dua'*) for the departed. However, in principle, we can always make Supplication (*Dua'*) for the dead without going to their graves.

The grave visitors must adhere strictly to specific rules and etiquettes. Following are some basic rules: (2)

1. They should treat the engraved Muslims kindly when visiting them by greeting them (*Salam*), making Supplication (*Dua'*) for them, and asking for their forgiveness. Among the Supplications (*Dua'*) that they may recite is: "Peace be upon you O people of the dwellings, believers and Muslims. If Allah wills it (*In Sha Allah*), we will join you. I ask Allah to keep us and you safe and sound." (3)
2. It is permissible to raise the hands facing the direction of the Kaa'bah (*Qiblah*) and not the grave, when reciting this Supplication (*Dua'*), because of a Narration (*Hadith*) reported by Aishah رضي الله عنها where she recounted seeing the Prophet ﷺ making Supplication (*Dua'*) for the deceased at the Muslims' graveyard of Al-Baqi. She mentioned that he faced the *Qiblah* and raised his hands while making Supplication (*Dua'*). (4)
3. It is forbidden to sacrifice animals at the gravesite and then distribute the meat there. Anas رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There is no slaughtering of animals on graves in Islam." (5)
4. It is forbidden to make Circumambulation (*Tawaf*) around the grave. Circumambulation (*Tawaf*) is only done around Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى house, the *Kaa'bah* in Makkah, and should not be done around the Prophet's ﷺ or pious people's graves.

(1) Sahih Muslim

(2) Mukhtasar Ahkam Al-Jana'iz by Al-Albani

(3) Sahih Muslim

(4) Sahih Muslim

(5) Sunan Abu Daud

5. We must refrain from saying anything that will anger the Lord or show dissatisfaction with His destiny, such as saying, "Why did you take my beloved?"
6. We must refrain from praising the engraved, saying that he is for sure in Paradise (*Jannah*).
7. It is forbidden to walk between the graves of the Muslims wearing shoes. Uqbah Ibn Amir رضي الله عنه said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'If I were to walk on hot coals or a sword, or if I were to mend my shoes using my feet, that would be better for me than if I were to walk on the grave of a Muslim. And it makes no difference to me if I was to relieve myself amid the graves or in the middle of the marketplace [i.e., both are equally bad].'" (1)

Grave Worshipers' Violations

The grave worshipers violated the Prophet's ﷺ commands and advice regarding the graves and visiting the graves. The followings are some major violations:

1. They Failed to Understand Monotheism (*Tawheed*).

The grave worshipers failed to understand the Universal Declaration of Faith (*The Kalimah*). *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* first negates and dismisses the presence of a deity completely, then gives absolute affirmation of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى being the only One who is worthy of worship and obedience. Grave worshipers affirm the second part partially, without dismissing and negating the first part.

The grave worshipers utter the Universal Declaration of Faith (*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*). However, they reject the essence of its meanings. So, you will find them saying it with their tongues while their hearts deify (idolizes) other than Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. They will associate them with Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى exclusive love, veneration, fear, hope, reliance, and Supplication (*Dua*). However, when they are under distress or face a calamity, they will invoke them.

Scholars throughout history emphasized the meanings of the Universal Declaration of Faith (*The Kalimah*) and what it comprises. They clearly stated that it is an utterance followed by actions by the heart, tongue, and limbs. If someone utters the Universal Declaration of Faith (*The Kalimah*) while not adhering to the commands that entail or allow the forbidden, it will not benefit him. Then what about those who spoke it and perpetuated its nullifiers?

(1) Sahih Ibn Majah, Al-Albani

2. Turning the Graves into Places of Worship.

Another sign of grave worshipers' defiance to the crystal-clear instructions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is to desert the Mosques (*Masajid*) of Allah ﷻ and activate their worship around graves and shrines of their dead saints (*Awliya*). So, all acts of worship, veneration, Supplication (*Dua*'), which should take place in the houses of Allah ﷻ, are done around the graves and shrines.

We see many of them are in a state of weeping and fearfulness and lowliness and humbleness in such a way that that would not transpire on a Friday's Congregational Prayer (*Salah*) and when standing in the night for Prayer (*Salah*) and after the Prayer (*Salah*) has finished. They ask the engraved for the forgiveness of sins and for relief from distresses and for salvation from the Hellfire (*Jahannam*) and that they discharge the heavy burdens (of sin or crime) from them. The followings are just a few examples of the prophetic warning against doing that:

Aishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا **said:** "Umm Salamah mentioned to the Prophet regarding a church she had seen in the land of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) which had within it pictures [of people]. So, the Prophet said: "When there used to die a righteous man or slave from amongst them, they would build over his grave a place of worship—and they would make in it these pictures. They are the worst of creatures in the sight of Allah." (1)

Aishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا **also said:** "When Allah's Messenger was close to death, he would cover his face with a cloth, and when it became difficult for him to breathe, or he would collapse, he would uncover it once again. So, while in that state, he said: "May the curse of Allah be upon the Jews and Christians because they took the graves of their Prophets as places of worship." So, he warned against what they had done. Was it not for that warning, we would have raised his grave—but we feared that it would be taken as a place of worship." (2)

Jundub Ibn Abdullāh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ **said:** "I heard the Prophet five days before his death saying: "Indeed those who came before you would take the graves of their Prophets as places of worship (as Mosques). Do not take graves as places of worship, for indeed I forbid you from that." (3)

Ibn Al-Qayyim رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ **said:** "The reason Satan (Shaytan) incites veneration of the graves and building structures over them and taking them as places of worship is that it is from the basic principles of Polytheism (*Shirk*) and is its root to take the graves as places of worship." (4)

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sahih Muslim

(3) Sahih Muslim

(4) Ighathatul Lahfan Min Masaid As-Shaytan 1/330

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمته **stated:** "From the fundamentals of Polytheism (*Shirk*) with Allah is taking the graves as places of worship." (1)

Ash-Shawkani رحمته **said:** "This innovation has become a means of misguidance, especially the layman from the masses. When they visit the grave, they see how elevated and covered with costly garments and added that the illumination of lanterns over it emerges from that deceased individual's belief. Satan (Shaytan) will not leave him until he eventually calls upon the engraved along with Allah, and thus he falls into Polytheism (*Shirk*)." (2) (3)

3. Excessively Praising the Engraved.

Grave worshipers violate most of the established conditions by scholars as the boundaries to allow praising someone. They praise the engraved with lies and fabrications, which generally leads many Muslims to idolize the deceased. Furthermore, they honor their pity and consciousness of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, which is not allowed to do since only Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى knows who is pious and who is not.

The Prophet ﷺ warned us against excessively praising him as Christians did with Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. Umar Ibn Al-Khattab رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Do not praise me as the Christians praised the son of Mariam (Mary). I am but His slave, so say the slave of Allah and His Messenger." (4)

The Prophet ﷺ had asked his followers to never call him with words of praise and veneration which do not suit a human being. Yet, the grave worshipers refuse to obey the Prophet's ﷺ commands and perpetuate his prohibitions and contradict him with the most significant contradiction. They regard calling the Prophet ﷺ with the words he used as Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Slave and Messenger as an act of disobedience. Consequently, they elevate and claim similar things about him to what the Christians claim regarding Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. Hence, they implore, and supplicate to him, ask him for forgiveness of sins and to be relieved of distresses.

The grave worshipers' exaggerations of the engraved go beyond all boundaries of the beliefs of whomever they seek to revere. They call those in whom they believe in bringing harm or benefit and elevate them above the standards of slavery. They often exaggerate in praising them so much, that they set them equal to Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Oneness (*Rububiyyah*).

(1) Majmu' Fatawa 27/223

(2) Al-Isti'adhah bil-Ghafor min Bid'ah Bina al-Masajid wal-Qibab 'alal-Quboor p.48.

(3) The original reference (As-Sayl al-Jarraar 1/367)

(4) Sahih Al-Bukhari

4. They Misinterpret the Quran.

Since the grave worshippers' plan is to promote and advance such a culture, unfortunately, they misinterpret some ambiguous Quranic texts to support their cause. Layman Muslims become victims of their faulty interpretations of the Quranic scripture. Hence, they condone and approve of building Mosques (*Masajid*) over the graves of righteous people or places connected to their lives. Although, it is something Islam warned against in a rebuking manner.

The story of the *People of the Cave* is the most famous Quranic text to support their specious argument that this is allowed to construct domes and shrines in the gravesites of the so-called righteous people. The favorite Verse is often used by many who propagate the grave worship cultures. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿قَالَ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِم مَّسْجِدًا﴾ [سورة الكهف: 21]

“(Then) those who won their point said (most probably the disbelievers): ‘We verily, shall build a place of worship over them.’” (1)

What is meant by the party who won the debate? They are not the religious adherents. Instead, they are the leaders and influential people of that time, and that they said these words. Furthermore, suppose they are the religious adherents; in this case, we must answer the following question: Must we adhere to previous nations' laws?

‘Yes’ and ‘No’ are two answers to the above question: Yes, if there is nothing in our revelation that contradicts it. However, if there is evidence that opposes it, then we are not allowed to follow it. Regarding this case, we do have many Narrations (*Ahadith*), which we quoted throughout this chapter warning us against doing that.

For instance, Jundub Ibn Abdullāh رضي الله عنه said, "I heard the Prophet five days before his death saying: "Indeed those who came before you would take the graves of their Prophets as places of worship (as mosques). Do not take graves as places of worship, for indeed I forbid you from that." (2)

5. Setting Trips to Other Than the Three Mosques (*Masajid*).

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Do not set out on a journey except for three Mosques (*Masajid*): *Al-Masjid Al-Haram* (Makkah), my Mosque (Madinah) and the *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa* (Jerusalem)." (3)

(1) Quran 18:21

(2) Sahih Muslim

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari

Based on the above Narration (*Hadith*), it is not allowed to travel from our localities heading to another place intending to visit a Mosque (*Masjid*), or standalone gravesite, or within a Mosque (*Masjid*) except for the three above-mentioned Mosques (*Masajid*).

Now, grave worshipers may justify their visits to the tombs of their venerated saints by saying we visit their gravesites to remember death, and this is something the Prophet ﷺ regarded as permissible.

We can answer this by differentiating the permitted, innovated, and polytheistic gravesite visits.

1. **The Permitted Visits:** The grave visitor must adhere strictly to specific rules and etiquettes, which we presented at the beginning of this chapter. The visitor intends to supplicate for the deceased.
2. **The Innovated Visit:** The grave visitor intends and expects his worship and Supplications (*Dua'*) next to the tombs of their venerated saints for them to be accepted and multiplied in reward.
3. **The Polytheistic Visit:** This is when the deceased is invoked, and needs are sought from him—and this occurs more often with women.

6. Making Pictures (*Tasaweer*) Around the Graves.

Violating the command not to erect pictures and statues (making *Tasaweer*) around the gravesites must incite us to mention what happened to the people of Prophet Nuh (Noah) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, as we detailed in chapter one of this part of the book after their five righteous men passed away. Satan (Shaytan) left his *Jinn* form and took on a human form and urged them to erect statues and images of these pious men in their meeting places so that they can be reminded of what they used to say, and that would prompt them to perform acts of worship. The people followed Satan's (Shaytan) instructions. The effect of their adherence to Satan's (Shaytan) guidance led the next generations to worship these five men.

Picture-making is strictly prohibited, and it becomes a heinous act if the intent behind the images is the worship of others alongside Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى, such as the worship of the five righteous men from the time of Prophet Nuh (Noah) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. They were later taken as objects of worship and were worshiped by the Polytheists (*Mushrikun*) of Makkah. Their names were: Wadd, Suwā, Yaghuth, Ya'uq, and Nasr.

7. Mimicking the Non-Muslims.

One way to mislead people and divert them away from the worship of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is to build shrines over the graves, take them as places of worship, and venerate them.

Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "You will follow the ways of those nations who were before you, span by span and cubit by cubit (i.e., inch by inch) so much so that even if they entered a hole of a masstige, you would follow them." We said, "O Allah's Messenger! (Do you mean) the Jews and the Christians?" He said, "Whom else?" (1)

One of the condemned acts which the Prophet ﷺ warned Muslims against was mimicking of the non-Muslims. He considered the imitators from being among the people they imitated and adopted their ways.

Abd-Allah Ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever imitates a people is one of them." (2)

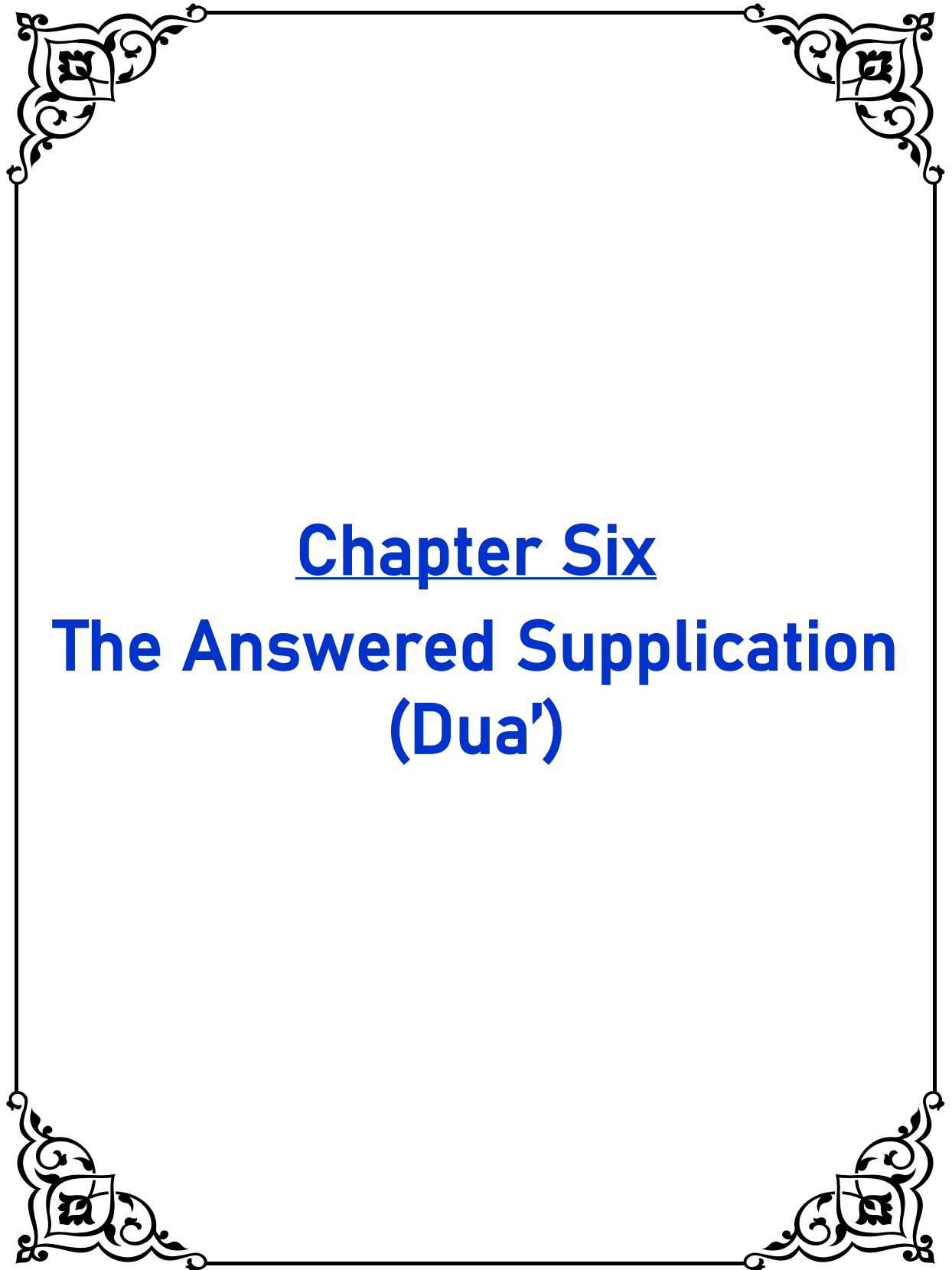
Designating the graves as places of worship is one of the acts in which Muslims resemble the *People of the Book*. Such an act the Prophet ﷺ strictly prohibited just five days before his death, and he again cautioned against such actions in the sternest warning as occurs in the following Narration (*Hadith*). Aishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said during his illness from which he did not get up: "Allah's curse is upon the Jews and the Christians; they took the graves of their Prophets as places of prayer." (3)



(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sunan Abu Daud

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari



Chapter Six
The Answered Supplication
(Dua')



Many Muslims often utter the following statement, "I made Supplication (*Dua*'), and Allah did not answer it." According to an authentic Narration (*Hadith*), no Supplication (*Dua*') we make will go unanswered unless the Supplication (*Dua*') itself contains unlawful requests. Hence, Allah ﷻ will surely answer it whenever we make a valid Supplication (*Dua*'). However, the answer may be one of three. We ask Allah ﷻ for something, which Allah ﷻ will answer right away, which becomes a means of joy, happiness, and gratefulness.

Allah ﷻ will withhold what we ask for since we do not recognize its harmful effects. Instead, Allah ﷻ will provide us with something better on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), or Allah ﷻ will deflect something bad from us equal to the value of the Supplication (*Dua*').

Our Certainty (*Yaqeen*) in Allah's ﷻ Divine Wisdom and Eternal Knowledge should keep despair away and incite us to exercise patience since Allah ﷻ does what is best for us, and if we are given what we asked, it will become means of our harm.

To validate our Supplication (*Dua*'), we shouldn't ask Allah ﷻ to facilitate sinning or sever our kinship ties. Other causes that bring about a response to our Supplication (*Dua*') are those that center around belief in Allah ﷻ and actualize our faith by submitting to Allah ﷻ by complying with His commands and avoiding His prohibitions. Furthermore, the things that prevent the answer to our Supplications (*Dua*') are giving up the actualization of one's belief and submission. Therefore, consuming what is forbidden and committing acts of disobedience are among the things which prevent the answer to one's Supplications (*Dua*') and which negate one's own responding to Allah ﷻ.

In addition to fulfilling the causes of getting our Supplication (*Dua*') answered and avoiding the reasons which prevent the answering of our Supplication (*Dua*'), we should strive to observe the correct manners and etiquette of an accepted Supplication (*Dua*').

Etiquettes and Manners of an Accepted Supplication (*Dua*')

1. Ablution (*Wudu*), Kaa'bah's Direction (*Qiblah*), Raising the Hands and Saying *Ameen*

The following Narrations (*Ahadith*) advise a set of instructions and we should do our best to fulfill them. They are as follows:

- **Perform Ablution (*Wudu*) before Supplication (*Dua*)**

Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ, after the battle of Hunayn, called for water, performed Wudu, then raised his hands and said: “O Allah! Forgive Ubayd Ibn Amir!” (1)

- **Facing the Direction of Kaa'bah (*Qiblah*) during Supplication (*Dua*)**

Abdullah Ibn Zayd رضي الله عنه narrated: “The Prophet ﷺ left Madinah to this Prayer (*Salah*), seeking rain. So, he Suppliated (made *Dua*) and asked for rain, then he faced the *Qiblah* and turned his cloak inside-out.” (2)

In another Narration (*Hadith*), it is reported that when the Quraish tormented the Prophet ﷺ, he faced the Kaa'bah and made a Supplication (*Dua*) against them.” (3)

- **Raising the hands when permissible**

Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه is reported as saying, “When asking for something from Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى, you should raise your hands opposite to your shoulders; when asking for forgiveness you should point with one finger; and when making an earnest Supplication (*Dua*) you should spread out both your hands.” (4)

Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari رضي الله عنه narrated, “The Prophet ﷺ made the Supplication (*Dua*), and I saw him raise his hands until I could see the whiteness of his armpits.” (5)

Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Indeed, Allah is Shy and Beneficent. His is Shy when His slave raises his hands to Him (in a Supplication) to return them empty, disappointed!” (6)

- **Saying *Ameen* after Supplication (*Dua*)**

When a person is listening to another person make Supplication (*Dua*), it is recommended that he say '*Ameen*,' which means 'O Allah! Please accept (Supplication).'

It is stated that the phrase '*Ameen*' is one of the specialties of this nation. Prophet ﷺ said, “The Jews do not envy you for any matter as much as they envy you for *Ameen*, and for giving Salutations (*Salam*) to one another.” (1)

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(4) Sunnan Abu Daud

(5) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(6) Sunnan Abu Daud

2. Supplicating with a Sincere Heart

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿هُوَ الْحَيُّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾
[سورة غافر: 65]

"He is the Ever-Living; there is no deity except Him, so call upon Him, [being] sincere to Him in religion. [All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds." (2)

When we implore Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, we must call upon Him while having an active and truthful heart, mind, and soul that gushes sincerity. The question is how to generate Sincerity (*Ikhlas*)?

- **Manners of initiating our Supplication (*Dua'*)**

We should always begin our Supplication (*Dua'*) with "Praise be to Allah" (*Al-Hamdullilah*) and sending Salutations (*Salawaat*) upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Saying "Praise be to Allah" (*Al-Hamdullilah*) means praising Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and giving thanks to Him for His existing bounties. In addition, we should send Salutations (*Salawaat*) upon the Prophet ﷺ who taught us how to invoke Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, in order to elevate the rank of the Prophet ﷺ.

Fadalah Ibn Ubayd رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When one of you has prayed, then let him begin with praising Allah and Glorifying Him, then let him send Salutations (*Salawaat*) upon the Prophet. After that, he may make any Supplication (*Dua'*) that he wishes." (3)

- **We must be mindful**

We should realize Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى ability to hear and answer our request. In essence, the intent behind making Supplication (*Dua'*) is to call upon Him with a sincere heart while mindful with earnestness. Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Make Supplication (*Dua'*) to Allah in a state that you are confident that your Supplication (*Dua'*) will be responded to and know that Allah does not respond to a Supplication (*Dua'*) that originates from a negligent, inattentive heart." (4)

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Quran 40:65

(3) Sahih Abu Daud

(4) At-Tirmidhi, and Al-Hakim

Abdullah Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Hearts are like vessels, some more attentive and capacious than others. When you supplicate Allah, you should be certain of being answered, and know that Allah does not answer a Supplication (*Dua*) that comes from a careless and inattentive heart.” (1)

- **Nothing can stop Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى from answering you**

We must be sure in our belief that nothing can prevent Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى from doing anything He wishes to do. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿لَا يُسْئَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْئَلُونَ﴾ [سورة الأنبياء: 23]

"He cannot be questioned as to what He does, while Allah will question them." (2)

Furthermore, regardless of whatever we are asking, it will never decrease Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى provision. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿وَأَنْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عِنْدَنَا خِزْيَانَةٌ وَمَا نُنزِلُهُ إِلَّا بِقَدَرٍ مَّعْلُومٍ﴾ [سورة الحجر: 21]

"And there is nothing, but with Us are the stores thereof. And We do not send it down except with a known measure." (3)

Abu Dharr رضي الله عنه reported a Narration (*Hadith*) in which Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said, "O My slaves, were the first of you and the last of you, human of you and the Jinn of you to rise up in one place and make a request from Me, and were I to give everyone what they requested, that would not decrease what I have any more than a needle decreases the sea if put into it." (4)

- **A determined and firm Supplication (*Dua*)**

We must be determined and firm when we ask Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى for something. For example, we should not follow our Supplication (*Dua*) with "If Allah wills it" (*In Sha Allah*).

Anas Ibn Malik رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “When one of you makes Supplication (*Dua*), let him be firm and determined in his Supplication (*Dua*), and let him not say, 'O Allah! If You will, please forgive me, for none can force Allah to do anything.'” (5)

(1) Musnad Ahmad
(2) Quran 21:23
(3) Quran 15:21
(4) Sahih Muslim
(5) Sahih Al-Bukhari

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Ask Allah with Certainty (*Yaqeen*) that He will answer your Prayers (*Salawaat*) and know that Allah will not accept the Supplication (*Dua*) from an unmindful person.” In another wording, the Prophet ﷺ said, “When you ask Allah, ask with confidence.” (1)

- **Invoke Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* alone**

The Prophet ﷺ said to Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنهما, who was a young boy at the time while he was riding behind him on the same mount, “If you ask, ask only Allah and if you seek help, seek help only from Allah. And know that if all the nations were to gather to benefit you, they would benefit you only with something that Allah had already prescribed for you, and if they gather to harm you, they will break you only with something that Allah had already prescribed for you. The pens have been lifted, and the ink dried.” (2)

- **Shedding tears while making Supplication (*Dua*)**

A sign of the presence of sincerity while making Supplication (*Dua*) is crying and shedding tears. It brings about humility in front of Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* and shows the importance of one’s request. It displays the great need that the slave has from his Lord and that he can never be without His aid and help.

Abdullah Bin Umar رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ recited the Verse (*Ayah*) in which Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عليه السلام is invoking Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*,

﴿ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَضَلَّكَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ فَمَنْ تَبِعَنِي فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَإِنَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴾
[سورة إبراهيم: 36]

“O my Lord, they [the idols] have indeed led astray many among Mankind. But whoever follows me, he verily is of me. and whoever disobeys me, still you are indeed Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.”(3)

In another Verse (*Ayah*), Prophet Isa (Jesus) عليه السلام is invoking Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*,

﴿ إِن تَعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَبْدُكَ وَإِن تَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴾ [سورة المائدة: 118]

“If you punish them, they are Your slaves, and if You forgive them, verily You-only You are the Almighty, the All-wise.” (4)

(1) At-Tirmidhi

(2) At-Tirmidhi

(3) Quran 14:36

(4) Quran 5:118


The Prophet ﷺ then raised his hands and said, “O Allah! My Community! My Community! (*Allahumma! Ummati! Ummati!*),” and then he started crying, out of concern for his followers, just like Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام were concerned for their followers. (1)

3. Continuation, Persistence, and Repetition

We must make sure to Supplicate (make *Dua*’) with these three manners:

- **Continuation of Supplications (*Dua*)**

An-Nouman Ibn Bashir رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reported: The Prophet ﷺ said, "Supplication (*Dua*’) is worship itself." Then, the Prophet ﷺ recited the Verse (*Ayah*),


 وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ
 [سورة غافر: 60]

"Your Lord said: Call upon Me, and I will respond to you. Verily, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell in humiliation." (2) (3)

We must realize that whenever we supplicate, we are establishing His remembrance and worship. Hence, we should not limit Supplicating (making *Dua*’) to times of hardships and calamities. We must constantly remember Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى in all circumstances.

Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى responds to him at the time of trouble and distress, and (should) increase Supplication (*Dua*’) at ease.(4)

- **Persistence and Patience**

We must be patient for our Supplication (*Dua*’) to be accepted, as hastiness is one of the causes for its rejection or disapproval. We must attend to our Supplication (*Dua*’) with perseverance and persistence.

Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The Supplication (*Dua*’) of any worshiper will continue to be responded to, if he does not ask for a sin or breaking the ties of

(1) Sahih Muslim

(2) Quran 40:60

(3) At-Tirmidhi

(4) At-Tirmidhi

kinship, and if he is not hasty.' It was asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, and what does it mean to be hasty?' He answered, 'A worshiper says, 'I have supplicated and supplicated, and I don't believe that Allah accepted it,' so he gives up hope of being answered and leaves Supplication (*Dua*').'"(1)

Umar Ibn Al-Khattab رضي الله عنه said, "Acceptance of my Supplication (*Dua*') does not concern me. What concerns me is being inspired to Supplicate (make *Dua*'). If I am inspired on how Supplication (*Dua*') is made, acceptance will accompany it."

Our Supplications (*Dua*') will be answered in three ways according to an authentic Narration (*Hadith*): it can be delivered in this world, saved for us in the Hereafter (*Akhirah*), or will become the cause to avert us from a calamity. Then why stop supplicating (make *Dua*')? Why get frustrated?

- **Repetition at least three times**

It is preferable to repeat your Supplication (*Dua*') three times as it is more likely to be answered. It shows a sense of urgency in obtaining what is asked for. The act of repeating a Supplication (*Dua*') three times is narrated in many authentic Narrations (*Ahadith*).

Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه narrated that when the Prophet ﷺ finished his Prayer (*Salah*); he raised his voice and supplicated (made *Dua*') against the Quraish leaders who had persecuted him. When they placed the abdominal contents of a camel on his back while in Prostration (*Sajdah*), he repeated it three times whenever he made a Supplication (*Dua*'). So, he then said, "O Allah! Upon you is (the retaliation) of the Quraish" (3 times).

4. Exploit the Means to an Answered Supplication (*Dua*')

There are certain means which we should pursue to get our Supplications (*Dua*') answered:

- **Good deeds**

Qasim Bin Abd رضي الله عنه said: "I said to Anas Bin Malik رضي الله عنه: 'O Abu Hamzah, pray to Allah for us.' He said: 'Supplication (*Dua*') is elevated by good deeds.'"

There is a story of three men, who each supplicated (made *Dua*') to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى by mentioning a good deed they had done earlier in their lives, which saved them from the stranding cave. (2)

(1) Sahih Muslim

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

- **Avoid disobediences**

Just as doing good deeds is a reason for the acceptance of our Supplication (*Dua*'), similarly, abandoning good deeds is a reason for the rejection of our Supplication (*Dua*').

Hudhaifah Ibn Al-Yaman رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “By Him, in whose hand is my soul, you should enjoin good and forbid evil or else it is likely that Allah will send a punishment upon you and then you will invoke Him and you will not be answered.” (1)

So, for example, how could those who have constantly neglected and abandoned Morning Prayers (*Salat Al-Fajr*) in the Mosque (*Masjid*) expect that their Supplication (*Dua*') will be answered?

- **Avoid consumption of the Unlawful and Forbidden (*Haram*)**

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Allah the Almighty is pure and accepts only that which is pure. Allah has commanded the faithful to do that which he commanded the Messengers, and the Almighty has said: ‘O Messengers! Eat of the pure things and do right.’ And Allah the Almighty has said, ‘O you who believe! Eat of the pure things wherewith We have provided you.’

Then he mentioned [the case of] a man who having journeyed far was disheveled and dusty and spreads out his hands to the sky [saying] “O Lord! O Lord!” His (the traveler’s) food is unlawful, his drink unlawful, his clothing unlawful, and he is nourished unlawfully; so how can he be answered?” (2)

- **Acknowledging one’s sins**

Know your sins (faults) and seek Forgiveness (*Istighfar*) for them and know and acknowledge the benefits and blessings you have been given and thank Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى for them. Part of the etiquette of Supplication (*Dua*') is to acknowledge one’s shortcomings and sins in front of one’s Creator and expressing sincere regret for them. It is also worthwhile to acknowledge all of Allah’s سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى mercy bestowed upon you.

The Prophet ﷺ taught his Community (*Ummah*) the best way to ask for Forgiveness (*Sayyid Al-Istighfar*) which acknowledges the favor of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى upon oneself. The best Supplication (*Dua*') in which a person can ask for forgiveness contains a pure and sincere acknowledgment of one’s deficiencies and sins. The Prophet ﷺ said, “The *Sayyid Al-Istighfar* is that a person says: ‘O Allah! You are my Lord; there is no one worthy of worship except You. You created me, and I am Your slave. And I am (following) Your covenant and Promise as

(1) Sunan At-Tirmidhi

(2) Sahih Muslim

much as I can. I seek Your refuge in the evil that I have done. I acknowledge Your favors upon me, and I acknowledge my sins. So, forgive me since no one forgives sins except You!”

So, when one raises his hands to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**, expecting a response from Him, one should also ponder over one’s own relationship with Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**, and the shortcomings that one possesses. In this way, the person should recall his many sins and feel his own humility; that is, he should remember that he is asking the One whom he has disobeyed, and sinned against, and not fulfilled his rights upon Him. Let him taste his impudence when he asks Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** for more, without fulfilling the basic deeds that are obligatory upon him.

- **Invoking Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** by His Names and Attributes**

Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا﴾ [سورة الأعراف:180]

“And to Allah belongs the beautiful names, so invoke Him by them.” (1)

Buraidah **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ** reported that the Prophet **ﷺ** heard a man saying, ‘O Allah! I ask You; I bear witness that there is no god but You, the One, the As-Samad (the One upon Whom all creatures depend). He begets not, nor was He begotten; and there is none like unto Him.’ The Prophet **ﷺ** said, ‘You have asked Allah by His Greatest Name. When one asks Him by this Name, He gives, what one desires, and when supplicated by this Name He answers.’ (2)

Ibn Mas’ud **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ** said, "Allah does not accept Supplication (*Dua*) from the vein, the one who boasts and the one who is not serious, (He accepts only) from a person who praises and asks from his heart." (3)

- **Supplicate for others in their absence**

One of the most profound signs of the excellence of one’s Faith (*Iman*) is to love for others that which you love for yourself.

Anas Bin Malik **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ** narrated that the Prophet **ﷺ** said, “None of you [truly] believes until he loves for his brother that which he loves for himself.” (4)

(1) Quran 7:180

(2) At-Tirmidhi

(3) Shu`b Al-Iman by Al-Bayhaqi

(4) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

Hence, just as we aspire to be guided, forgiven, and blessed, we should also choose the same for our fellow Muslims. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿وَأَسْتَغْفِرْ لِدُنْيِكَ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ﴾ [سورة محمد: 19]

“Ask forgiveness for your sin and also for the believing men and women.” (1)

One is recommended to remember the Muslims around the globe in his invocation.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever seeks Forgiveness (*Istighfar*) for the believing men and women, then a good deed will be written for him for every single believing man and woman (that he supplicates for).” (2)

Abdallah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-As رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The Supplication (*Dua*) that gets the quickest answer is the one made by one Muslim for another in his absence.” (3)

Abu Darda رضي الله عنه reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “No Muslim Supplicates (makes *Dua*) for his brother behind his back but that the Angel says: And for you the same.” (4)

5. Adherence to the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*)

Aishah رضي الله عنها narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever innovates in this matter of ours, something which is not part of it, it will be rejected.” (5)

Having sincerity when supplicating is just one condition, but adhering to the way of the Prophet’s ﷺ Tradition (*Sunnah*) is the second condition of acceptance. Below are some of the instructions which place our Supplications (*Dua*) in conformity with the Tradition of the Prophet ﷺ (*Sunnah*):

- **Supplicate with a moderately low voice**

We should Supplicate (make *Dua*) in a low and moderate voice. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

(1) Quran 47:19
(2) Al-Tabarani
(3) Sunan Abu Daud
(4) Sahih Muslim
(5) Sahih Muslim

﴿ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ [سورة الأعراف: 55-56]

“Invoke your Lord with humility and in secret. He does not like the aggressors.” (1)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى also said,

﴿وَأَذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ وَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ﴾ [سورة الأعراف: 205]

“And mention your Lord by your tongue and within yourself, humbly and with fear without loudness in words, in the morning and the afternoon and be not of those who are neglectful.” (2)

Once, a Prophet’s ﷺ Companion (*Sahabi*) was engaging in the remembrance of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى loudly while on a trip. The Prophet ﷺ said, “O people! Be gentle on yourselves, for you are not calling someone who is deaf or absent. Rather, you are calling the One Who hears everything, Ever-Close.” (3)

- **Avoid rhymed Supplications (*Dua'*)**

Unfortunately, when they supplicate, many Muslims overdo it when it comes to using excessive rhyming of words and going out of their way to match word patterns in each sentence since this does not befit the humility that should accompany their Supplication (*Dua'*). However, if such rhyming is not excessive, then it is allowed.

While giving his students advice, Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه reported, “...And beware of poetry and rhyming in your Supplication (*Dua'*), for verily I encountered the Prophet and his Companions (*Sahabah*) avoiding this.” (4)

- **Avoid transgressing when supplicating**

While we supplicate, we should not dictate a detailed or scenario of how we wish Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى to answer our appeals. For instance, when asking for the different rewards of Paradise

(1) Quran 7:55-56

(2) Quran 7:205

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(4) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(*Jannah*), we should keep it simple. Let us just ask Allah ﷻ for Paradise (*Jannah*), since if we are granted it, we will have all that is present in it.

Abi Nu'mah رضي الله عنه narrated: “Abdullah Bin Mughaffal رضي الله عنه heard his son saying (while Supplicating), ‘O Allah! I ask You for the white palace on the right of Paradise (*Jannah*) if I were to enter it.’ So, he said, ‘Dear son, ask Allah for Paradise and seek refuge from the Hellfire (*Jahannam*), for I have heard the Messenger of Allah saying, ‘There will come in this nation people who will transgress (or exceed) in Ablution (*Wudu*) and Supplication (*Dua*’).” (1)

- **Do not Supplicate for prohibited and impossible things**

We should avoid all types of transgressions when Supplicating (making *Dua*’). For instance, appealing to Allah ﷻ for Forbidden and Unlawful (*Haram*) things whether for this world or the Hereafter (*Akhirah*). A person should realize his place and status in front of his Creator and beware of exalting himself to where he thinks he can ask for what he is prohibited from.

One should also avoid Supplicating (making *Dua*’) about pre-determined things. For example, a woman should not make a Supplication (*Dua*’) of being transformed into a man, or a short person should not make ask Allah ﷻ to make him taller.

- **Avoid Supplicating against ourselves, families, wealth, and children**

Muslims shouldn’t Supplicate (make *Dua*’) for other people’s destruction, failure, and inflictions for no reason. We should always remember our Messenger’s ﷺ story of Tai’f: “Then the Angel of the mountains called me, greeted me, and said: ‘O Muhammad, Allah listened to what your people had said to you. I am the Angel of the mountains, and my Lord (*Rabb*) has sent me to you so that you may give me your orders. (I will carry out your orders). If you wish I will bring together the two mountains that stand opposite to each other at the extremities of Makkah to crush them in between.’ But Messenger of Allah said, ‘I rather hope that Allah will raise from among their descendants’ people who will worship Allah the One and will not ascribe partners to Him (in worship).” (2)

It is possible that a person in a state of severe anger curses and Supplicates (make *Dua*’) against himself, his family and friends, or his wealth. It is an act that does not befit a Muslim, and the Prophet ﷺ warned against this.

Jabir رضي الله عنه narrated that a man cursed his animal. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Who is this who cursed his animal?” The man replied, “It is me, O Messenger of Allah.” The Prophet said, “Get down from it for a cursed one must not escort us. Do not Supplicate (make *Dua*’) against

(1) Sunan Abu Daud

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

yourselves, children’s servants, wealth, for it might correspond to an hour/time during which all Prayers (*Salawaat*) are answered, and your Supplicating (making *Dua*’) will be answered.” (1)

No one wishes to inflict Allah’s *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* curse and anger upon his loved ones, so we should be careful what we say in a state of rage to not cause pain and grief, not only upon our loved ones but also upon ourselves.

- **Not to ask for a sin or break ties of kinship**

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Any Muslim who Supplicates (makes *Dua*’) to Allah in which his Supplication (*Dua*’) does not contain a sin or breaking of kinship, Allah will give him one of three things: either his Supplication (*Dua*’) will be immediately answered or, it will be saved for him in the Hereafter, or it will turn away an equivalent amount of evil (from him).” The Companions (*Sahabah*) said, “...so we will ask for more.” He replied, “Allah is more (generous).”(2)

6. To Supplicate (*Make Dua*’) Plentifully and for All Matters

When we Supplicate (make *Dua*’), we should supplicate plentifully, and for all matters:

- **Supplicate Plentifully**

Prophet Soliman (Solomon) *عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام* was exceedingly wise and prosperous when he asked Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*. He asked Him for a unique dominion which would give no one like it after him till the Day of Judgment (*Yawm al-Qiyamah*). Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* said on his tongue,

﴿ قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَهَبْ لِي مُلْكًا لَا يَنْبَغِي لِأَحَدٍ مِّنْ بَعْدِي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ﴾ [سورة ص: 35]

He (Soliman) said: "My Lord! Forgive me and bestow upon me a kingdom such as shall not belong to any other after me: Verily, You are the Bestower." (3)

A person should ask for everything that he desires if it is permissible, for he is asking the Most Generous of all those who are generous and the Most Beneficent of all those who are beneficent.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “When one of you wishes for something, then let him increase (his wishes), for verily he is asking his Lord, the Most Exalted and High.” (4)

(1) Sahih Muslim, and Sunan Abu Daud

(2) Musnad Ahmad

(3) Quran 38:35

(4) Adh Ibn Humayd in his Muntakhab

The Prophet ﷺ also said, “When one of you asks something (from Allah), then let him be plentiful (in what he asks for), for indeed he is asking his Lord.” (1)

- **Supplicate for all matters**

Sometimes, we assume that we should only Supplicate (make *Dua*) and call upon Allah ﷻ if we ask things of great significance, which is not correct. However, we should supplicate for every matter, big or small, significant, or insignificant.

It is because everything occurs by Allah’s ﷻ will, so if Allah ﷻ does not will it, it will not happen, no matter how trivial the case may be.

Aishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا said, “Ask Allah for everything, even if it is only a shoelace because if Allah does not make it easy, it will not be possible.” (2)

7. Supplicate for both the World (*Dunya*) and the Hereafter (*Akhirah*)

Our Supplications (*Dua*) must be adjusted between both this World (*Dunya*) and the Hereafter (*Akhirah*). Allah ﷻ said,

﴿فَإِذَا قُضِيَتْ مَنَسِكَكُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آئِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِن خَلْقٍ ﴿٢٠١﴾ وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آئِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةٌ وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿٢٠٢﴾﴾ [سورة البقرة: 200-201]

“And there are men who say: "Our Lord! Give us good in this world, good in the Hereafter, and defend us from the torment of the Fire!" These will have a share of what they earned, and Allah is swift in Reckoning.” (3)

Abdullah Ibn Mas’ud رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah bestows the worldly possessions of this World (*Dunya*) to those whom He loves as well as those whom He does not love, but Allah only grants the religion (*Iman*) to whom He loves." (4)



(1) Ibn Hiban

(2) Sunan At-Tirmidhi

(3) Quran 2:201-202

(4) Musnad Ahmad and Mustadrak Hakim



PART TWO
Worship Your Lord

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has bestowed upon humanity His Mercy and Kindness by sending His final Messenger Muhammad ﷺ to remind humanity of the Universal Declaration of Faith in Monotheism (*Tawheed*) i.e., 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh.'

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى revealed Monotheism's (*Tawheed*) final mandate as an inclusive culmination of the previous revelations to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who was the true manifestation of prophethood to mankind. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾
[سورة سبأ: 28]

“We have not sent you but to all mankind as a warner and bearer of glad tidings, but most people do not know.” (1)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى also said,

﴿ مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴾ [سورة الأحزاب: 40]

“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but the Messenger of God and the Seal of the Prophets; Allah has knowledge of everything.” (2)

Muslims must believe beyond any shadow of a doubt that the Quran is the final divine communication between heaven and earth. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the final Messenger, and he is sent to all of mankind. Since the Quran is the final message until the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), the message must be pure, perfected, preserved, flawless, and free of any ambiguities.

'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' is Preserved in Purity

As for the message being pure, Jabir Ibn Abdullah رضي الله عنه narrated that: “Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb came to the Prophet ﷺ with a book or scrolls that he had acquired from some of the *People of the Book*. He read it to the Prophet ﷺ. So, the Prophet ﷺ became angry and said, "Are you hesitant regarding it, O son of Al-Khattāb? By the One in whose Hand is my soul, I have certainly been sent with pure and clear proof. Do not ask them (*People of the Book*) about

(1) Quran 34:28

(2) Quran 33:40

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

anything, for they may inform you of something true and you may reject it; or they may inform you of something false, and you may believe it. By the One in whose Hand is my soul, even if Musa (Moses) were alive, he would have no choice but to follow me." (1)

'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' is Complete and Encompassing

As for being complete, the Prophet ﷺ said some Verses (*Ayat*) on the day of Arafah, “This day, those who disbelieved have given up all hope of your religion, so fear them not, but fear Me. This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.” (2)

As the Prophet ﷺ said: “I have not left anything that would bring you closer to Allah ﷻ except that I have commanded you to do it. And I have not left anything that would distance you from Allah ﷻ while bringing you closer to the Hellfire (*Jahannam*), except that I have forbidden you from doing it.” (3)

No one, except the deviated people, could be diverted from it. Al-Irbad Ibn Sariyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reported: The Prophet ﷺ said, “I have left you upon a clear path, its clarity is the same by night or day. No one deviates from it after me, but he will be ruined.” (4)

'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' (Worship Your Lord) or *Tawheed-ul-Uluhiyyah* is the subject of Volume II of the *Right Belief Series*. I begin presenting 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' (Worship Your Lord) in Volume II, which is the most crucial subject in Islam and is the manifestation of *Know Your Lord* Volume I. It is a fact that the correct and sound knowledge of Allah (Knowing Your Lord) must lead to (Worshiping Your Lord), which is actualized through 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh.'

However, before I begin, I want to remind myself and you with the statement of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ who said, "If what I said is correct, then it is from Allah. If it is mistaken, it is from myself and Satan (Shaytan). Allah and His Messenger are innocent of it." (5)

We will present the subjects of Part III of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' (Worship Your Lord) in twelve chapters and a conclusion as follows:

Chapter One: Lā ilāha illa Allāh in the Quran

Chapter Two: Lā ilāha illa Allāh in the Prophetic Tradition (Sunnah)

Chapter Three: Reclaiming Lā ilāha illa Allāh

(1) Musnad Ahmed Sahih by Al-Albani

(2) Quran 5:3

(3) Musnad Ahmed Authenticated by Al-Albani

(4) Sunan Ibn Mājah authenticated Al-Albani

(5) Sahih Abu Daud, Al-Albani

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

Chapter Four: Lā ilāha illa Allāh – Pillars

Chapter Five: Loyalty (Al-Wala’) & Opposition (Al-Bara’)

Chapter Six : Lā ilāha illa Allāh – Conditions

Chapter Seven: Muhammad ﷺ The Messenger of Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى

Chapter Eight: Worship – Pillars & Conditions

Chapter Nine: Polytheism (Shirk) in Allah’s Worship

Chapter Ten: Shielding the Fortress of Monotheism (Tawheed)

Chapter Eleven: Lā ilāha illa Allāh – Nullifiers

Chapter Twelve: Lā ilāha illa Allāh – Benefits

Conclusion



Chapter One
Lā ilāha illa Allāh in the
Quran

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

Monotheism (*Tawheed*) (*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*) in Allah's *سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى* Worship (*Tawheed-ul-Uluhiyyah*) is to single out Allah *سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى* alone, the sole God worthy of our worship and submission. The Universal Declaration of Faith (*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*) is then its actualization.

'*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' has many equivalents that mean exactly or nearly the same, such as, The Testimony of Faith (*Shahadah*), The Declaration of Faith (*Kalimah*), and the Word of *Tawheed*; it is the best, the most beneficial, and a strong covenant between Allah *سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى* and us.

Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is the most critical pillar of Faith (*Iman*). It is the pillar upon which Islam is built. It is the greatest of our needs; through it, we know, love, rely upon, fear, and hope in Allah *سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى*. It is the substance that nourishes our souls and keeps our hearts alive, residing in delight, tranquility, and serenity.

Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is the first thing we should learn before learning the meanings of the Quran. Jundub Bin Abdullah *رضي الله عنه* said: "We were with the Prophet ﷺ, and we were strong youths, so we learned *Tawheed* before we learned Quran. Then we learned Quran, and our faith increased thereby." (1)

Hence scholars of Interpretation (*Tafsir*) explained the following part of the Verse (*Ayah*) in Surat An-Nur. "Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His Light is as (if there were) a niche. Within it a lamp, the lamp is in glass, the glass as it were a brilliant star, lit from a blessed tree, an olive, neither of the east (i.e., neither it gets sun-rays only in the morning) nor of the west (i.e., nor it gets sun-rays only in the afternoon, but it is exposed to the sun all day long), whose oil would almost glow forth (of itself), though no fire touched it. Light upon Light! Allah guides to His Light whom He wills. And Allah sets forth parables for humanity, and Allah is All-Knower of everything." (2)

Al-Awfi *رضي الله عنه* narrated from Abdullah Ibn Abbas *رضي الله عنه* that "Light upon Light" meant the Light of Faith (*Tawheed*) and the light of a person's deeds.

As-Suddi *رضي الله عنه* said: "Light of the Fire and the Light of the oil: when they are combined, they give Light, and neither can give Light without the other. Similarly, the Light of the Quran (commands) and the Light of Faith (*Tawheed*) give Light when they are combined, and neither can do so without the other."

(1) Sunan Ibn Majah
(2) Quran 24:35

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

Once we understand Monotheism (*Tawheed*) and it has settled in our hearts, we will receive the commands and prohibitions that the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) generate with acceptance, compliance, submission, sincerity, love, and truthfulness.

Aishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, the mother of the Believers, said the first thing that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى revealed from the Quran focused on Monotheism (*Tawheed*). It mentioned the description of Paradise (*Jannah*) and the Fire (*Jahannam*). When the people embraced Islam, the Verses (*Ayat*) regarding legal and illegal things were revealed. If the first revelation would have been: ‘Do not drink alcoholic drinks,’ then people would have said, ‘We will never leave alcoholic drinks,’ and if there had been revealed, ‘Do not commit illegal sexual intercourse,’ then they would have said, ‘We will never give up illegal sexual intercourse.’ (1)

The Quran's focal point and the central theme is the Universal Declaration of Faith (*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*), while the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) is the practical display of it. This chapter will share selected Quranic Verses (*Ayat*) and Narrations (*Ahadith*) where ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ was referenced according to the understanding of the first three generations of Muslims (*Al-Salaf Al-Salih*). The Prophet ﷺ praised their perception and application of the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*).

Abdullah Ibn Mas’ud رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reported: The Prophet ﷺ said, “The best people are those of my generation, then those who come after them, then those who come after them. Then, there will come a people after them whose testimony precedes their oaths, and their oaths precede their testimony.” (2)

Since a word in Arabic refers to any meaningful articulation which can be displayed in a word, sentence, or paragraph, you will notice in many of these Verses (*Ayat*) where Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى referred to ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ as one word.

The Most Trustworthy Handhold

Sometimes, believers find themselves in dark basements, feeling anxiety and insecurity, experiencing unbearable anguish, looking for an escape from the gloom, desperately needing to grip on a solid and trustworthy handhold, which will protect, and help them endure the trials and tribulations. In two places in the Quran, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى regarded ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ as the most trustworthy handhold, which will never break if one grasps it. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said in Surat Al-Baqarah,

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِرْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾

[سورة البقرة: 256] ﴿عَلِيمٌ﴾

“Let there be no compulsion in religion. Truth has been made clear from error. Whoever rejects false worship and believes in Allah has grasped The Most Trustworthy Handhold’ (Lā ilāha illa Allāh), that never breaks. And Allah hears and knows all things.”(1)

Also in Surat Luqman,

﴿وَمَنْ يُسَلِّمْ وَجْهَهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ﴾ [سورة لقمان: 22]

“And whosoever submits his face (himself) to Allah, while he is a Muhsin (good-doer, i.e., performs good deeds totally for Allah’s sake without any show-off or to gain praise or fame and does them in accordance with the Prophetic Tradition (Sunnah) of Allah’s Messenger Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold (Lā ilāha illa Allāh (none has the right to be worshiped but Allah)]. And to Allah return all matters for decision.” (2)

The scholars of Interpretation (*Tafsir*) explained the meaning of the most trustworthy handhold in various ways, all of which indicate the same purpose. Abdullah Ibn Abbas, Sa’eed Ibn Jubayr and Al-Dahhaak رضي الله عنه said that it means *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*. Others said it is the Quran, Faith (*Iman*), and Islam. (3)

The most trustworthy handhold is also mentioned in a Narration (*Hadith*) reported by Abdullah Ibn Salam رضي الله عنه, who once saw a dream and told the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about it. He said, "I saw myself in a garden that is vast and full of richness and lushness. In the middle of the garden, a pillar of iron is based on earth, and its top was in the sky and at the top of it, there was a handhold. It was said to me: ‘Climb it.’ I said: ‘I cannot.’ Then a helper came to me, and he pushed me up from behind. So, I climbed until I was at the top of the pillar, and I took hold of the handhold. It was said to me: ‘Hold it tightly.’"

I woke up, and it was in my hand. I told the Prophet ﷺ about it, and he said: "That Garden is Islam, and that pillar is the pillar of Islam, and that handhold is the most trustworthy handhold. You will remain a Muslim until you die." (4)

(1) Quran 2:256

(2) Quran 32:22

(3) Tafsir Ibn Kathir (1/684)

(4) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

The Uppermost Word

In two places, the first in the Quran and the second in the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*), Allah ﷻ regarded 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' as the “uppermost word.”⁽¹⁾

In the following verse, Allah ﷻ affirms the helpers and supporters of His uppermost word, *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, of receiving His assistance and support. The Prophet ﷺ and his Companion (*Sahabi*) Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ exhausted their human means to migrate for the sake of the uppermost word, *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, and were in their hideout in the cave of Thawr on their way to Madinah. Allah ﷻ described their desperate and helpless condition. However, Allah's ﷻ Divine Intervention was at hand to deliver them since they were supporting and aiding the Universal Declaration of Faith (*Kalimah*), and the uppermost word 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh.' Allah ﷻ said,

﴿إِلَّا نُنصِرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيَ اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَى
وَكَالِمَةَ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾ [سورة التوبة:40]

“If you do not support him, Allah has already supported him, when those who disbelieved expelled him, and he was the second of two in the cave. He said to his friend, “Do not be sad, Allah is with us.” Then Allah made His tranquility descend on him, and He supported him with forces you did not see, and He made the word of those who disbelieve the lowest, while Allah’s Word is the Highest. Allah is Mighty and Wise.” (2)

Ibn Kathir رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, “When the disbelievers drove him out, the second of the two; During the year of the Hijrah, the idolators tried to kill, imprison or expel the Prophet, who escaped with his friend and Companion, Abu Bakr Bin Abi Quhafah, to the cave of Thawr. They remained in the cave for three days so that the pagans who were sent in their pursuit, returned (to Makkah), and they proceed to Al-Madinah. While in the cave, Abu Bakr was afraid the pagans might discover them for fear that some harm might touch the Messenger.

The Prophet kept reassuring him and strengthening his resolve, saying, O Abu Bakr! What do you think about two, with Allah as their third, Imam Ahmad recorded from Anas that Abu Bakr said to him, "I said to the Prophet when we were in the cave, 'If any of them looks down at his feet, he will see us.' He said, 'O Abu Bakr! What do you think about two with Allah as their third?' (3) This is why Allah said, 'Then Allah sent down His Sakinah upon him and sent His aid

(1) Quran 9:40

(2) Quran 9:40

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

and triumph to His Messenger, and strengthened him with forces which you saw not, the Angels, and made the word of those who disbelieved the lowermost, while the Word of Allah that became the uppermost.”

Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه commented, "The word of those who disbelieved' is Polytheism (*Shirk*), while 'The Word of Allah' is '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.'" (1)

In the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*), Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari رضي الله عنه said, "The Messenger of Allah was asked about a man who fights because of courage, or out of rage for his honor, or to show off. Who among them is in the cause of Allah?' The Prophet said, 'He who fights so that Allah's Word is superior, then he fights in Allah's cause.'" (2)

Furthermore, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ regarded *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* as the uppermost branch of Faith (*Iman*) in the following Narration (*Hadith*) reported by Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه, who said, "Faith (*Iman*) has over seventy branches—or over sixty branches—the uppermost of which is the declaration: 'None has the right to be worshiped but Allah,' and the least of which is the removal of harmful object from the road, and modesty is a branch of Faith (*Iman*)." (3)

The Call of Truth

'*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is 'The Call of Truth,' which means that you implore and invoke Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى alone with no partners. Also, you call upon Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى with the Universal Declaration of Faith i.e, '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.' Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is all-sufficient because it is the Call of Truth. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿لَهُ دَعْوَةُ الْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُمْ بِشَيْءٍ إِلَّا كَبْسِطٍ كَفَيْهِ إِلَى الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُغَ فَاهُ وَمَا هُوَ بِبَالِغِهِ ۗ وَمَا دَعَا الْكٰفِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلٰلٍ﴾
[سورة الرعد: 14]

“For Him (Alone) is the Word of Truth (Lā ilāha illa Allāh). And those whom they (polytheists and disbelievers) invoke, answer them no more than one who stretches forth his hand (at the edge of a deep well) for water to reach his mouth, but it reaches him not, and the invocation of the disbelievers is nothing but an error (i.e., of no use).” (4)

Ibn Kathir رحمه الله explained the above verse: “Ali Bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه said that Allah's statement 'For Him is the call of Truth' is in reference to Monotheism (*Tawheed*) (*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*). Also, according to Ibn Jarir At-Tabari رحمه الله, Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه, Qatadah رضي الله عنه, and Malik

(1) Tafsir Ibn Kathir Surat At-Taubah (9:40)

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(4) Quran 13:14

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

ﷺ, who narrated it from Muhammad Bin Al-Munkadir رضي الله عنه, said that ‘For Him is the Call of Truth’ meaning, ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh.*’ (1)

Abu Sa’id Al-Khudri رضي الله عنه narrated that Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said: “Musa (Moses) said: ‘O my Lord (*Rabb*), teach me something through which I can remember You and Supplicate (make *Dua*) to You.’ Allah answered: ‘Say, O Musa (Moses), ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh.*’ Musa (Moses) said: ‘O my Lord (*Rabb*), all your slaves say these words.’ Allah said: ‘O Musa (Moses), if the seven heavens and all they contain other than Me (Ghairy) and the seven earths as well, were all put in one side of a scale and ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh* put in the other, the latter would outweigh them.’” (2)

When we are going through a severe calamity, *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* is the best way to invoke Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, as in the Supplication (*Dua*) of Prophet Yunus (Jonah) عليه السلام beneath the three darkness types: of the night, the sea, and the belly of the whale. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿وَذَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغْلَضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾
فَأَسْتَجِبْنَا لَهُ، وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْغَمِّ، وَكَذَلِكَ
نُجِّي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾ [سورة الأنبياء: 87-88]

“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): *La ilaha illa Anta* [none has the right to be worshiped but You (O Allah)], *Glorified (and Exalted) are You* [above all that (evil) they associate with You]. Truly, I have been of the wrong-doers. So, We answered his call and delivered him from the distress. And thus, we do deliver the believers (who believe in the Oneness of Allah, abstain from evil and work righteousness).” (3)

Also, the Prophet ﷺ advised us to use *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* when we are distressed. Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه reported: The Prophet ﷺ would say at a time of distress, “There is no god but Allah, the All-Knowing, the Forbearing. There is no god but Allah, Lord of the Great Throne. There is no god but Allah, Lord of the heavens, the earth, and the Noble Throne.” (4)

(1) Tafsir Ibn Kathir Surat Ar-Ra`ad Verse 14

(2) Ibn Hibban, and Al-Hakim declared it Sahih.

(3) Quran 21:87-88

(4) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

The Goodly Word

'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' is The Goodly Word (1), which is like a goodly tree whose root is firmly fixed and its branches are very high up reaching the sky. This goodly tree will produce the necessary fruit at the right time: Such as, the fruit of patience (*Sabr*) at the times of calamity, the fruit of gratitude (*Shukr*) at the times of blessings (*Barakah*), and the fruit of Repentance (*Taubah*) asking forgiveness (*Istighfar*) at the times of falling short regarding Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** commands. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ﴿٢٤﴾ تُؤْتِي أُكْلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَمَثَلُ كَلِمَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ كَشَجَرَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ اجْتُثَّتْ مِنْ فَوْقِ الْأَرْضِ مَا لَهَا مِنْ قَرَارٍ ﴿٢٦﴾ ﴾ [سورة إبراهيم: 24-26]

“See you not how Allah sets forth a parable? - A Goodly Word ‘Lā ilāha illa Allāh’, as a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed, and its branches (reach) to the sky (i.e., very high). Always giving its fruit, by the Leave of its Lord and Allah sets forth parables for humankind so that they may remember. And the parable of an evil word is that of a corrupt tree uprooted from the surface of earth having no stability.” (2)

Ibn Kathir **رحمته الله عليه** said in his Interpretation (*Tafsir*): “Ali Bin Abi Talhah **رحمته الله عليه** reported that Abdullah Ibn Abbas **رحمته الله عليه** commented that Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** statement, ‘a parable: a goodly word,’ refers to testifying to *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* (None has the right to be worshiped but Allah) while ‘as a goodly tree,’ refers to the believer, and that ‘Whose root is firmly fixed,’ indicates that *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* (None has the right to be worshiped but Allah) is firm in the believers' heart, and its branches reach to the sky with which the believer's works are ascended to heaven. Similar is said by Ad-Dahhak, Sa'id Bin Jubayr, Ikrimah, Mujahid and several others. They stated that this parable describes the believer's deeds, good statements, and good actions. The believer is just like the beneficial date tree, always having good actions always ascending, by day and by night.

Abdullah Bin Umar **رحمته الله عليه** said, "We were with the Messenger of Allah when he asked, “Tell me about a tree that resembles the Muslim, the leaves of which do not fall in summer or winter and gives its fruit at all times by the leave of its Lord." Ibn Umar said, I thought of the date palm tree, but felt shy to answer when I saw that Abu Bakr and Umar did not talk. When they did not give an answer, the Messenger of Allah said “It is the date palm tree.”

Abdullah Ibn Abbas **رحمته الله عليه** said that ‘as a goodly tree’ is a tree in Paradise (*Jannah*). Allah said next, ‘Giving its fruit at all times.’ It is said that it means by day and by night. And they say

(1) According to Ibn Abbas (Ref. Ibn Kathir Surat Ibrahim)

(2) Quran 14:24-26

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

that describes the believer as a tree that always has fruits during summer and winter, by night and by day. This is the parable of the believer whose good works always ascend to heaven by day and by night and ‘by the leave of its Lord,’ thus earning perfection and becoming beneficial, plentiful, pure and blessed.

One very important fruit is the fruit of steadfastness, and *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* happens to be the means to steadfastness since Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** described it to be the firm standing word. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ وَيَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ﴾ [سورة إبراهيم: 27]

“Allah will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm in this world, and in the Hereafter. And Allah will cause the wrongdoers to go astray, and Allah does what He wills.” (1)

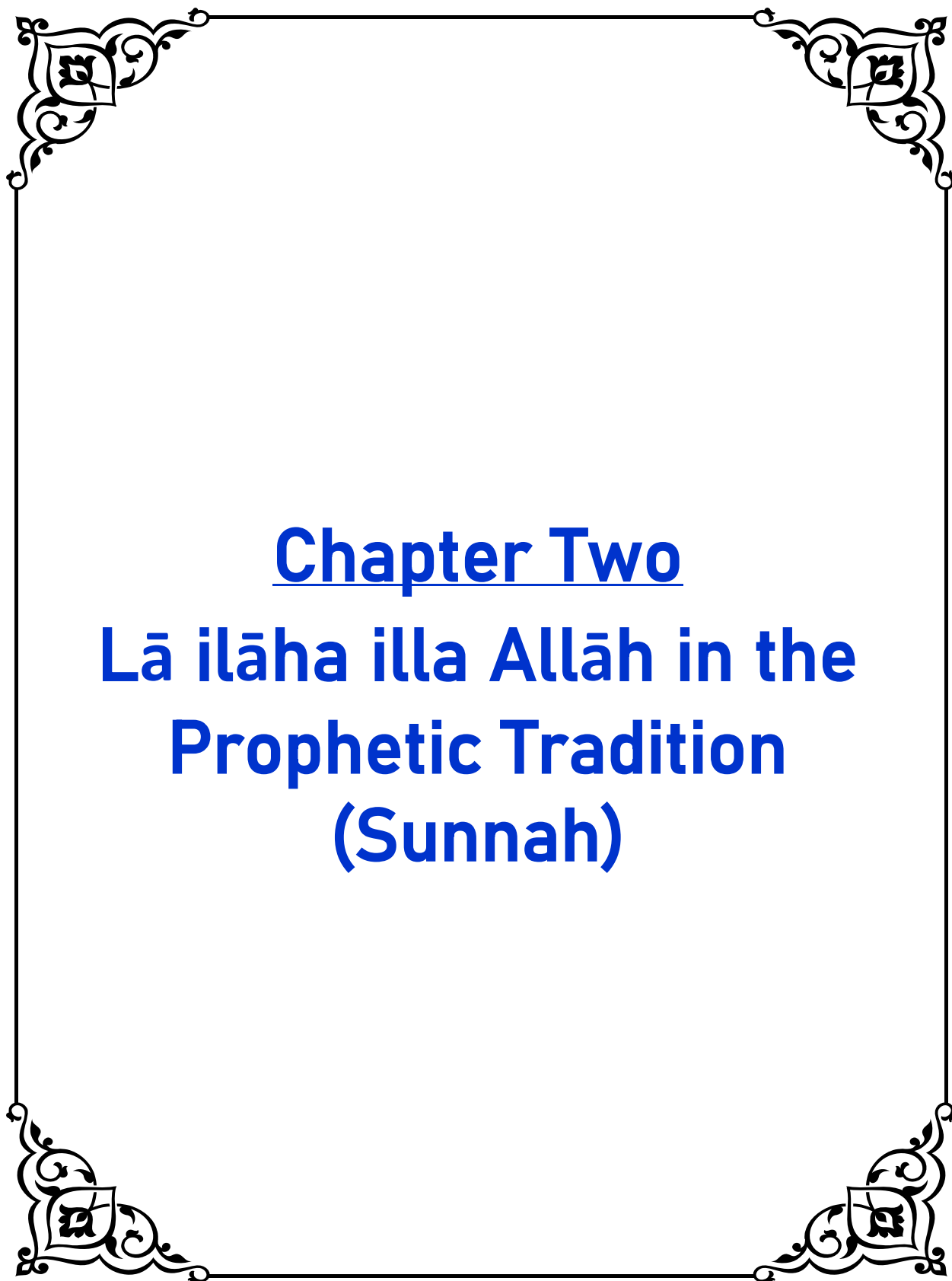
It is The Firm Standing Word; through it, a believer receives Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Firmness in this world and the Hereafter (*Akhirah*). Stability in this world is in the face of calamities, hardships, while knowing it is a test by Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**. As for firmness in the Hereafter (*Akhirah*) when the two Angels question us in the grave right after burial, Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** will keep firm those who believe with The Word That Stands Firm (*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*) in this World (*Dunya*) and in the Hereafter (*Akhirah*). (2) (3)



(1) Quran 14:27

(2) Sunan Ibn Majah

(3) According to many scholars of Tafsir (Ref. Ibn Kathir Surat Ibrahim)



Chapter Two
**Lā ilāha illa Allāh in the
Prophetic Tradition
(Sunnah)**

'*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is the reason for which the balances of justice are set up, records of deeds are registered, the day of Paradise (*Jannah*) and Hell (*Jahannam*) is appointed, creatures are divided into Believers (*Mu'mineen*) and disbelievers (*Kafirun*), pious and evildoers, and the religion of Islam is established. The Word of *Tawheed* is Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** right over all His creatures. (1)

The Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) emphasizes the significance and tremendous benefits of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' in this World (*Dunya*) and the Hereafter (*Akhirah*) if we understand its meanings, prerequisites, obligations, and nullifiers.

Monotheism (*Tawheed*) was the focus of all the previous Messengers and Prophets to humanity from Prophet Adam **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام** till the last Messenger, Prophet Muhammad **ﷺ**. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ﴾ [سورة النحل:36]

"Verily we have sent to every nation a Messenger saying worship Allah and avoid the worship of false gods." (2)

As we mentioned in the previous chapter, the Quran emphasized Monotheism (*Tawheed*) to the extent that scholars suggested that the main subject of the Quranic scripture is Monotheism (*Tawheed*). The most remarkable chapter of the Quran, Surat Al-Fatihah, focuses on Monotheism (*Tawheed*) which we recite at least seventeen times daily in the Obligatory Prayer (*Salah*). The most significant Verse (*Ayah*) in the Quran is Ayat-ul-Kursi, the chapter that equals a third of the Quran is the conveyor of the motto of Monotheism (*Tawheed*), "Say Allah is One and Only."

Likewise, the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) pointed out sayings and actions which can instill Monotheism (*Tawheed*) into our hearts and maintain it. The Prophet **ﷺ** taught us to begin our day by reciting specific chapters which focus on Monotheism (*Tawheed*). It is recommended to recite Surat Al-Kafirun and Al-Ikhlās while observing the two *Sunnat* Units (*Rakahs*) of the Morning Prayer (*Salat-ul-Fajr*) and reciting these two chapters in the three units of *Salat-ul-Witr*. (3)

(1) Al Fawa'id by Ibn Al Qayyim

(2) Quran 16:36

(3) Sahih Muslim

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

The Prophet ﷺ asserted that if we are to die on Monotheism (*Tawheed*), we will enter Paradise (*Jannah*) with Allah's *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* permission. When the Jewish boy accepted Islam, the Prophet ﷺ said, "All praise is for Allah who saved this boy from the Fire (*Jahannam*)."⁽¹⁾

The Prophet ﷺ mentioned one of today's widespread negations of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) during his last illness, which reveals its danger when he said just five days before his death, "The curse of Allah be upon the Jews and the Christians for they took the graves of their Prophets as places of worship."⁽²⁾

The First and Last Requirement

Since the Universal Declaration of Faith '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is the most important pillar of Islam and the foundation of the religion, the Messenger ﷺ named it the first pillar of Islam. On the authority of Abdullah *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ*, the son of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ*, who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, "Islam has been built on five [pillars]: testifying that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing the Prayer (*Salah*), paying the Obligatory Charity (*Zakah*), making the Pilgrimage (*Haji*) to the House (*Kaabah*), and Fasting in *Ramadan*."⁽³⁾

It is also the first requirement to become a Muslim, and the first point in Islam must begin with when inviting people to Islam (*Dawah*). Abdullah Ibn Abbas *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ* reported: When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent Mu'adh *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ* to Yemen, he said to him: "Verily, you are coming to a people among the *People of the Book*, so call them to testify there is no God worthy of worship except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. If they accept that, then teach them that Allah has obligated five Prayers (*Salawat*) each day and night. If they adhere to that, then teach them that Allah has bound charity to be taken from the rich and given to the poor (*Zakah*). If they accept that, beware not to take from the best of their wealth. Be on guard from the Supplication (*Dua*) of the oppressed, for there is no barrier between it and Allah."⁽⁴⁾

'*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is also the last requirement before we die. Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* commanded us not to die but as Muslims, and a sign of this is to utter it at the deathbed. Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* said,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ [سورة آل عمران: 102]

“O you who believe! Fear Allah (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. [Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(4) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

remember Him always], and die not except in a state of Islam (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allah.” (1)

Abu Sa’eed Al-Khudri رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Prompt your dying people to recite: ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ (There is no true god worthy of worship except Allah).” (2) The meaning of the dying people are those who are about to die, not the dead.

Mu’adh Ibn Jabal رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “He whose last words are ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ (There is no true god except Allah) shall enter Paradise (*Jannah*).” (3)

The Heaviest in the Scale

‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ is the greatest thing to make one's scales heavier on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), if we know its meanings, pillars, nullifiers, and act upon it. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿ فَأَمَّا مَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ، ﴿٦﴾ فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَاضِيَةٍ ﴿٧﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ، ﴿٨﴾ فَأُمُّهُ هَاوِيَةٌ ﴿٩﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا هِيَ ﴿١٠﴾ نَارُ حَامِيَةٍ ﴾ {سورة القارعة: 6-11}

“Then as for him whose balance (of good deeds) will be heavy, He will live a pleasant life (in Paradise). But as for him whose balance (of good deeds) will be light, He will have his home in Hāwiyah (pit, i.e. Hell). And what will make you know what it is? (It is) a fiercely blazing Fire!” (4)

Abdullāh Bin Amr Bin Al-Ās رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: “When death visited Allah’s Prophet Nuh (Noah), he said to his son: “I shall narrate to you the will. I command you with two things and I forbid you from two things: I command with *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*. Surely if the seven heavens and the seven earths were placed on a pan of a scale, and *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* was placed on the other pan of the scale, they would give in to *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*...” (5)

Another Narration (*Hadith*) that shows the significance of *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* is narrated by the same Companion (*Sahabi*) who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Allah will select a man from my Community (*Ummah*) before all creatures on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), and He will display to him ninety-nine records, each of which will be as long and wide as the sight can reach. Then He will say, “Do you deny anything from this? Were My

(1) Quran 3:102

(2) Sahih Muslim

(3) Sahih Abu Daud, Al-Albani

(4) Quran 101:6-11

(5) Al-Adab Al-Mufrad, by Al-Bukhari

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

guardian scribes unjust to you?” He will say, “No, O my Lord.” Allah will say, “Do you have any excuse?” He will say, “No, O my Lord.” Allah will say, “Yes, you do, for there is a good deed for you with Us, and on this Day, you will not suffer from any injustice.” Then a card containing, “I testify that there is no god worthy of worship, but Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger,” will appear. Then Allah will say, “Witness your scales.” He will say, “O my Lord, what is this card (supposed to do in comparison) with these records?” Allah will say, “No injustice will be done to you.” Then the records will be put on a scale and the card on the other scale, and the records will become light and the card heavy, as nothing is heavy (when compared) with the Name of Allah.” (1)

Abu Salam رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Well done! Well done! Five things how heavy they will weigh in the scale: *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, *Allahu Akbar*, *Subhan Allah*, *Al-Hamdulillah*, and a righteous son who dies and his parents seek the reward of Allah ... Well done! Whoever meets Allah believing in them (the following) will enter Paradise (*Jannah*): if he believes in Allah, the Last Day (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), Paradise (*Jannah*) and Hell (*Jahannam*), resurrection after death, and the Reckoning.” (2)

A Means to Forgiveness

Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is like the rock on which all sins will turn into ashes on a windy day even if they are as much as earth filled, or as many as the foam of the sea.

Anas رضي الله عنه narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: “Allah the Almighty said: O son of Adam, so long as you call upon Me and ask of Me, I shall forgive you for what you have done, and I shall not mind. O son of Adam were your sins to reach the clouds of the sky and were you then to ask forgiveness of Me, I would forgive you. O son of Adam, were you to come to Me with sins nearly as great as the earth and were you then to face Me, ascribing no partner to Me, I would bring you forgiveness nearly as great as it?” (3)

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “There is no God worthy of worship but Allah, and Allah is the greatest. There is no God but Allah without any partner, there is no God but Allah. To Him belong dominion and praise, there is no God but Allah. There is no power or might but in Allah. Whoever says these words in a day or a night or a month, then he dies in that day or night or month, his sins will be forgiven.” (4)

(1) Sunnan At-Tirmidhi

(2) Musnad Ahmad

(3) Sunan At-Tirmidhi and Ahmed

(4) As-Sunan al-Kubrā lil-Nasā’ī

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

Mu'adh Bin Jabal رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “There is no soul that died bearing witness to *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, and that I am the Messenger of Allah, from the heart with Certainty (*Yaqeen*), but Allah will forgive it.” (1)

Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbali رحمه الله stated that Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is a condition to obtaining forgiveness and it is the greatest condition. Whoever lacks Monotheism (*Tawheed*) will not obtain forgiveness, and whoever comes to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى with Monotheism (*Tawheed*) has come with the greatest means of earning forgiveness. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا﴾ [سورة النساء: 48]

“Indeed, Allah does not forgive that other should be worshiped along with Him (*Shirk*), but He forgives whatever is less than that to whom He wills.” (2)

Whoever comes with Monotheism (*Tawheed*) and as much as the earth full of sins, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will meet him with as much forgiveness. However, it must be known that this is Allah’s سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى decision; if He wills, He may forgive him, or He may take him to account for his sins. However, the result is that such a person (who has actualized and died upon *Tawheed*) will not reside forever in the Fire (*Jahannam*). Rather, he will be taken out and allowed to enter Paradise.

Some scholars have said that the one who actualizes Monotheism (*Tawheed*) will not be thrown into the Fire (*Jahannam*) as the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) will be, nor will he reside therein as Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) will. So, if the Monotheism (*Tawheed*) of a slave is complete and he is sincere to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى in it and fulfills all its conditions with his heart, tongue, and limbs, or with his heart and tongue at the time of his death, then that would necessitate for him complete forgiveness for whatever previous sins he may have committed. It would also prevent him from entering the Fire (*Jahannam*).

So, whoever actualizes Monotheism (*Tawheed*) with his heart completely empty of everything but Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى out of love, honor, respect, fear, hope, and reliance; then that would remove his sins and misdeeds even if they were as much as the foam of the sea. Perhaps they would even be exchanged for good deeds in their place as has been mentioned in the narrations of bad deeds being replaced with good ones. Undeniably, this Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is the greatest of all cures. Even in its most basic form, were it to be joined with a mountain of sins and bad deeds, it would surely replace them all with good deeds. (3)

(1) Sunan Ibn Majah

(2) Quran 4:48

(3) Taken from “Jami’ Al- ‘Ulom wal-Hikam” Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbalee

The Renewal of Faith (*Iman*)

It is established by clear pieces of evidence from the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) that a person's Faith (*Iman*) fluctuates in strength; sometimes strong, and sometimes weak. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴾
[سورة الأنفال:2]

“And when His Verses are recited to them, they [the Verses] increase their Faith (*Iman*).”
(1)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى also said,

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَزِيدُوا إِيمَانًا مَعَ إِيمَانِهِمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ جُنُودُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴾ [سورة الفتح:4]

“It is He who sent down tranquility into the hearts of the Believers, in order that faith be added to their Faith (*Iman*).” (2)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى also said,

﴿ الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ﴾
[سورة آل عمران:173]

“Those to whom people said: ‘A great army is gathering against you; hence you should fear it, but such only increased their faith and they said: ‘For us Allah is sufficient’; He is the Perfect Disposer of affairs.” (3)

Furthermore Faith (*Iman*) may wear out in the hearts. Abdullah Ibn Amr رضي الله عنه reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Verily, the faith of one of you will wear out within him, just as a shirt becomes worn out, so ask Allah to renew faith in your hearts.”(4)

‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ is the means to renew faith in our hearts before it wears out when we go back to it and fulfill its conditions, and obligations.

(1) Quran 8:2

(2) Quran 48:4

(3) Quran 3:173

(4) Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn by Imam Al-Hakim

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Renew your faith.” They said, “O Messenger of Allah, how can we renew our faith?” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Say often ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ which means There is no one worthy of worship except Allah.” (1)

The Best of Remembrance (*Dhikr*) of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى

We can depict the greatness of *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* as a means of remembering Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى through the conversation between Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and Prophet Musa (Moses) عليه السلام:

"Musa (Moses) said: 'O my Lord, teach me something by which I can remember You and supplicate to You.' Allah answered: 'Say, O Musa (Moses), *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* (none has the right to be worshiped but Allah).' Musa (Moses) said: 'O my Lord, all your slaves say this.' Allah said: 'O Musa (Moses), if the seven heavens and all of their inhabitants besides Me, and the seven earths were in a pan (of a scale), and *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* was in (another) pan, *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* would outweigh them.'" "By Him in Whose hand is my soul! If the heavens and the earth and all that are in them and everything that is in between was brought and placed in one pan of the scale, and the witnessing that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah was placed in the other, the latter would outweigh the former." (2)

When we utter the Universal Declaration of Faith (*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*), we reflect upon its meanings, pillars, conditions, and virtues. We also stay away from what contradicts it. Thus, we will surely get to taste the sweetness of the remembrance of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى which one finds in the hearts and will give us more than what we ask for.

'*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is the best type of the Remembrance of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى (*Dhikr*) according to the following Narration (*Hadith*): “The best Remembrance of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى (*Dhikr*) is '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' and the best Supplication (*Dua*) is 'Praise be to Allah' (*Al-Hamdu Lillah*).” (3)

A Means to Earn the Prophet's ﷺ Intercession (*Shafa'ah*)

'*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is the means to be amongst the most blessed people on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*).

People in this world, when they violate the laws and get caught right away, look for an advocator, and probably a resourceful person to find someone to intercede to let them off the hook. What about the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*)? The Prophet ﷺ can be there for us

(1) Musnad Ahmad Hasan (fair) according to Ahmad Shakir

(2) Mustadrak 'alá al-Shāhīḥayn by Imam Al-Hakim

(3) Sunan At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah

to intercede on our behalf, but what does it take to earn the right to have the Prophet's ﷺ Intercession (*Shafa'ah*) on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*).

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه inquired from the Prophet ﷺ: "O Messenger of Allah, who will be the most fortunate of people to receive your Intercession (*Shafa'ah*) on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*)?" The Prophet replied: "O Abu Hurairah, I knew, because of your love of what I say, that no one other than you would ask me of this. The most fortunate of people to receive my Intercession (*Shafa'ah*) on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) are those who said: *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* purely and sincerely from the heart." (1)

In another Narration (*Hadith*), the Prophet ﷺ said: "O Mu'adh Ibn Jabal! No one witnesses that there is no god but Allah and that I am Allah's Messenger truthfully from his heart except Allah has made him unlawful for the Fire." Mu'adh said: "O Messenger of Allah, shall I not tell the people so that they will be glad?" He replied: "If you do, they will rely on it (and leave everything else)." (2)

Imam Muslim رحمته الله said: "Mu'adh narrated it at the time of his death to avoid sinning (by keeping it to himself)."

The Freedom from Hellfire (*Jahannam*) and the Key to Paradise (*Jannah*)

'*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' will do one of the following three things on Judgment Day (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*):

1. Firstly, to enter Paradise (*Jannah*) without accountability or punishment.
2. Secondly, to enter Paradise (*Jannah*) after questioning but no punishment.
3. Thirdly, which is the least is that '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' will be the reason why a disobedient Muslim will exit Hellfire (*Jahannam*).

'*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is the means to freedom from Hell (*Jahannam*). Utban Bin Malik Al-Ansari رضي الله عنه who was one of the men of the tribe of Bani Salim said that Allah's Messenger ﷺ came to him and said, "If anybody comes on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) who has said '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' sincerely, with the intention to win Allah's pleasure, Allah will make the Hellfire (*Jahannam*) forbidden for him." (3)

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sahih Muslim

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari

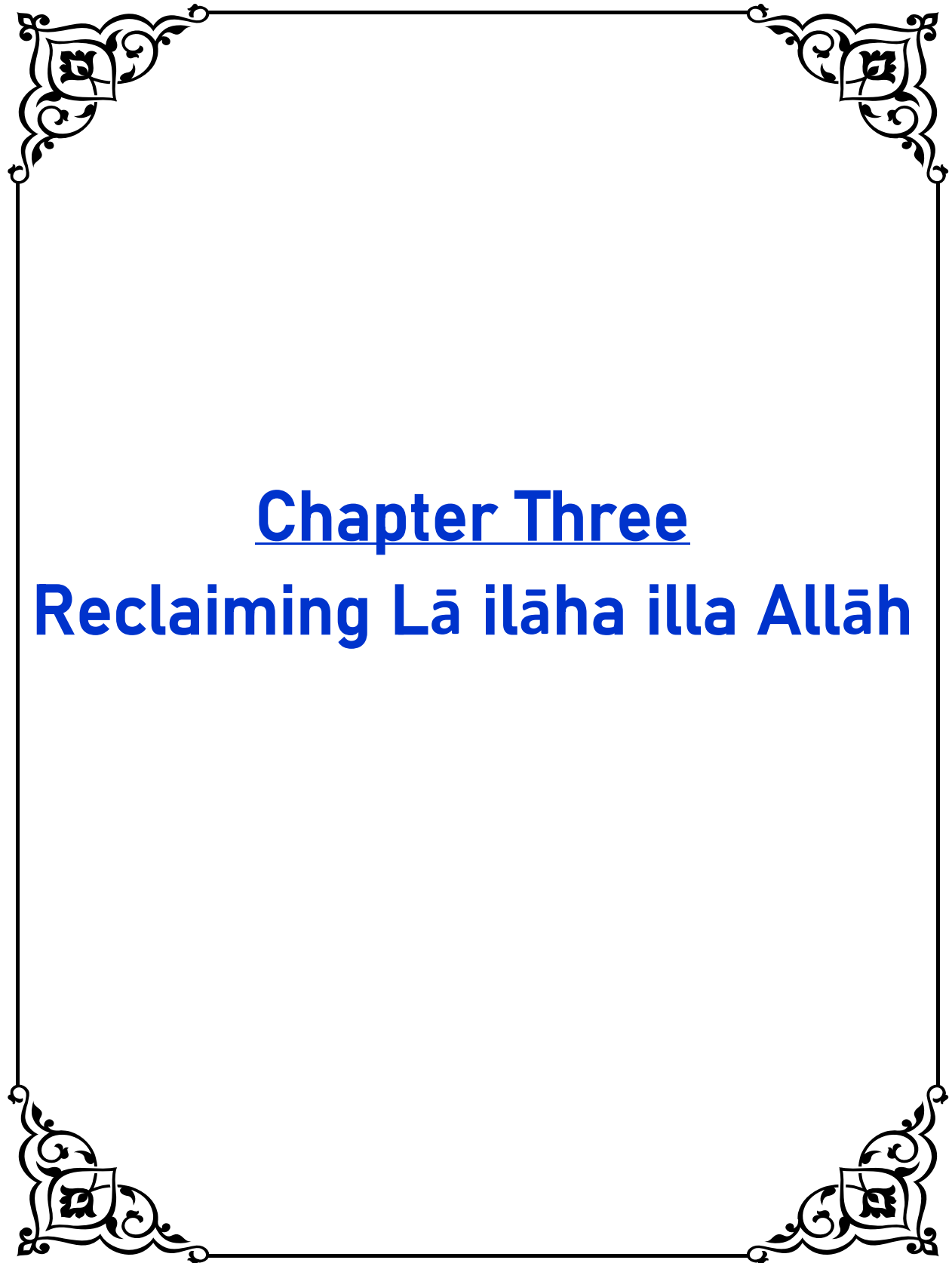
Lā ilāha illa Allāh

'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' is the key to Paradise (*Jannah*). Uthman رضي الله عنه reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "He who died knowing that there is no God, but Allah will enter Paradise (*Jannah*)."⁽¹⁾

As we begin presenting more of the chapters of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' (*Worship Your Lord*), let us invoke Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Call upon Him by His beautiful Names and lofty Attributes to make this work a beneficial contribution to the revival of our Community (*Ummah*). May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى makes this work a means to liberate our Community (*Ummah*) from oppression and injustice, and a leading cause to restore our position amongst humanity as the best Community (*Ummah*). A correct understanding of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is necessary to enable Muslims to acknowledge it, and to live according to it.



(1) Sahih Muslim



Chapter Three
Reclaiming Lā ilāha illa Allāh

Suppose we ask an English-speaking Muslim to say the meaning of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' in English. Most of them, except few who are well-grounded in the subject of the Islamic Belief System (*Aqeedah*), will translate it as follows: "There is no God but Allah." Furthermore, one finds the same translated version of the Universal Declaration of Faith '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' in many books, blogs, and websites.

The answer reflects a lack of understanding of the actual meanings of the words of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.' Then what about other relevant topics such as, the prerequisites, obligations, and nullifiers? Many Muslims are completely unaware of such terms. Our lack of understanding of the Testimony of Faith (*Shahadah*) will lead to the absence of the most important concept in the whole world in our lives, except on the tongues as lip-service.

Al-Hafiz Al-Hakami رحمته الله said, "The importance of the Declaration of Faith (*Kalimah*) has nothing to do with the number of its words, nor indeed with its memorization. How many people have acknowledged it and lived according to it yet still could not tell you how many words it contains? How many people have learned these words by heart to rattle them off as quickly as lightning, but still fall into many things that contradict them? Success is only by the hand of Allah." (1)

The Importance of the Correct Understanding

The correct understanding of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' will enable us to identify the right path to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى during this second strangeness of the religion of Islam in an informed and correct manner.

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Islam began as a something strange and it will return to being strange, so blessed are the strangers." (2)

All thanks and praise be to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, we still have in-depth, authentic, in-hand, and detailed knowledge of the same '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' which impacted a humiliated group of people in the middle of the desert in the Arabian Peninsula to change the course of human history. The call of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' was the cause for the birth of a great civilization, which elevated all Muslims in stature, only because they were upright to this word in both acknowledgment and action.

(1) Ma'arij Al-Qubul

(2) Sahih Muslim

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

We must look back into the people's condition when Allah ﷻ sent Prophet Muhammad ﷺ with the call of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh.' Al-Miqdad Ibn Al-Aswad رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ describes this condition under which the Companions (*Sahabah*) of the Prophet ﷺ lived at the time. He said, "By Allah, none of the previous Prophets was sent into more challenging conditions than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. His was a time of profound weakness and ignorance when people could not have imagined religion's existence better than that of the worship of idols." (1)

The Prophet ﷺ brought the wake-up call that raised them from amongst the dead and elevated their ranks amongst the nations. 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' was the source of dignity and honor for the Community (*Ummah*) in this world. Tariq Ibn Shihab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reported: Umar Ibn Al-Khattab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, "Verily, we were a disgraceful people and Allah honored us with Islam. If we seek honor from anything besides that with which Allah honored us, Allah will disgrace us." (2)

When Muslims understood the true meanings and obligations of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh,' for centuries they led humanity because of this word 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh.' Through it, the Muslims liberated many people from the worship of people to the worship of the Lord of the people. Through it, Muslims guided many nations out of the darkness of Polytheism (*Shirk*) into the light of Monotheism (*Tawheed*). Through it, Muslims freed many people from the strictness of this world into the vastness of the Hereafter (*Akhirah*). Through it, Muslims made justice for all prevail over oppression and injustice.

Unfortunately, this great word 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh,' with all the meanings and requirements it entails, has been absent in Muslims' life, except a few. The absence of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' turned the Muslim Community (*Ummah*) despite their many numbers into a dish that invited nations to eat of it. Narrated by Thawban رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The people will soon summon one another to attack you as people when eating invite others to share their dish." Someone asked: "Will that be because of our small numbers at that time?" He replied: "No, you will be numerous at that time but you will be scum and rubbish like that carried down by a torrent, and Allah will take the fear of you from the breasts of your enemy and last Enervation (*Al-Wahn*) into your hearts." Someone asked: "What is Enervation (*Al-Wahn*)?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied, "Love of the world and dislike of death." (3)

Among the many signs of this weakness or Enervation (*Al-Wahn*), is which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ refers to Muslims imitating other nations. They are mixing up the pure principles of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' with the heresy of human beings and philosophies of Ignorance (*Jahiliyyah*), and preferred worldly gains over living by and propagating 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' which resulted in losing both this World (*Dunya*) and the Hereafter (*Akhirah*).

(1) Abu Na'im in al-Hilyah

(2) Al-Mustadrak 214 Grade: Sahih (authentic) according to Al-Albani

(3) Sunan Abu Daud

The Meanings of *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*

Why is the meaning of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' in English as "There is no one worthy of worship except Allah" and not "There is no God but Allah?"

The meaning of the word '*ilah*' without the (ال), which is in the Testimony of Faith is god or deity; anything or anyone worshiped, or revered, by the people. There are many false gods and Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى called them '*Taghoot*' in the Quran. They are worshiped beside Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى or in association with Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, but all of them are in fact false.

As Muslims, it is accurate that we do not worship them; they are false deities; they do not deserve any worship because they were created. But they are still called gods because people worshiped them. For example, the Hindu gods like Ganesh or Brahma, the Christians worship Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, the Parsees in Iran worship fire which is their god, and so on, and some worship the sun, the moon, and Satan (Shaytan).

We understand why we need to add "worthy of" to our understanding of four words in the Testimony of Faith, to exclude any object, person, or entity that may be worshiped from the declaration. Hence, we say there is none worthy of worship except the One who deserves this worship, and that's Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

'*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is explained using another Arabic phrase: "*La Ma'booda bi haqqin illa Allah.*" To break this sentence down: *La Ma'booda* (there is no object of worship) *bi haqq* (which deserves to be worshiped), and *illa Allāh* (except Allah). It means, "There is nothing taken as a god by the people who in truth worthy of worship except Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى."

Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Lordship Doesn't Make us Muslims

Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Lordship is the belief that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى alone has created the universe, that He alone is its Provider and Sustainer, and that He has complete ownership and power over His creation. In other words, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is one and unique regarding His actions, such that no creature shares His power in creating and managing the universe.

Unfortunately, many Muslims assume that the confirmation of *Rububiyyah* (The Creation, Sovereignty, and provisions) is enough for them to become Muslims and believers of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) without implementing the *Uluhiyyah* (Allah's Worship). In fact, the real meanings and applications of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) are absent from the everyday life of Muslims due to this distorted understanding. We say to them Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Lordship alone does not make us Muslims because of the following reasons:

1. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said in the Quran that He is the Best of all creators,

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

﴿ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النَّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظْمًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظْمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ ﴾ [سورة المؤمنون: 14]

"Then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot, and We made the clot into a lump [of flesh], and We made [from] the lump, bones, and We covered the bones with flesh; then We developed him into another creation. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators." (1)
Allah [سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى](#) said,

﴿ أَدْعُونَ بَعْلًا وَتَذَرُونَ أَحْسَنَ الْخَالِقِينَ ﴾ [سورة الصافات: 125]

"Do you call upon the (idol of) Ba'l and abandon the Best of Creators?" (2)

Of course, this does not mean that other gods create. Instead, it means some people shape and make objects from existing things. They are neither called shape makers nor more, but Allah [سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى](#) still called them Creators.

2. The disbelievers never denied Allah [سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى](#) the Creator.

Instead, they affirmed the fact that Allah [سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى](#) is the Creator, but they rejected His worship. Therefore, all the Messengers were sent with 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' (there is no one worthy of worship except Allah), and not "No Creator except Allah." Allah [سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى](#) said,

﴿ وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ [سورة لقمان: 25]

"And if you (O Muhammad) ask them: "Who has created the heavens and the earth," they will undoubtedly say: "Allah." Say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allah!" But most of them know not." (3)

3. Only Monotheism (*Tawheed*) in Allah's [سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى](#) Lordship, which the creation is part of, does not make anyone a Muslim.

Allah's [سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى](#) Lordship is indeed necessary as an introduction to Allah's [سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى](#) worship. However, if a Muslim comes on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) with only the affirmation of Allah's [سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى](#) Lordship, it will not benefit him, because he never actualized this belief in Allah's [سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى](#) Lordship into worship, which is 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' (there is no one worthy of worship except Allah).

(1) Quran 23:14

(2) Quran 37:125

(3) Quran 31:25

Why Allah ﷻ Alone Deserve Our Worship?

Suppose we ask why is Allah ﷻ the only *Ilah*, god, or deity worthy of worship in truth. The answer is that Allah ﷻ is the one who created everything, owns everything, and provides for His creations, and no one is equal to Him in terms of His Names and Attributes, and Actions. Consequently, He is the Only one who deserves our worship and submission. Look at this rational argument where Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ هَلْ مِنْ شُرَكَائِكُمْ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ مِثْلَ مَا سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴾
[سورة الروم: 40]

“Allah is He Who created you, then provided food for you, then will cause you to die, then (again) He will give your life (on the Day of Resurrection). Is there any of your (so-called) partners (of Allah) that do anything of that? Glory be to Him! And Exalted be He above all that (evil) they associate (with Him).” (1)

Look at the flow of the following Verses (*Ayat*) where Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ يُكَوِّرُ اللَّيْلَ عَلَى النَّهَارِ وَيُكَوِّرُ النَّهَارَ عَلَى اللَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۗ أَلَا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ ﴿٥﴾ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَأَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ ثَمَنِينَ ۗ أَرْوَجَ يُخَلِّقُكُمْ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ خَلْقًا مِّنْ بَعْدِ خَلْقٍ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ ثَلَاثٍ ۗ ذَٰلِكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ ۗ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَآَنِي تُصِرُّونَ ۗ ﴾ [سورة الزمر: 5-6]

"He has created the heavens and the earth with truth. He makes the night to go in the day and makes the day go in the night. And He has subjected the sun and the moon. Each running (on a fixed course) for an appointed term. Verily, He is the All-Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving * He created you (all) from a single person (Adam); then made from him his wife [Hawwa' (Eve)]. And He has sent down for you of cattle eight pairs (of the sheep, two, male and female; of the goats, two, male and female; of the oxen, two, male and female; and the camels, two, male and female). He creates you in the wombs of your mothers, creation after creation in three veils of darkness, such is Allah your Lord. His is the kingdom, La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshiped but He). How then have you turned away?" (2)

Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه once asked the Prophet ﷺ, 'Which is the greatest sin in the eyes of Allah?' He ﷺ, replied, 'That you ascribe a rival, associate, or partner to Allah, whereas He created you.' I said, 'That is indeed a great sin.' (3)

(1) Quran 30:40

(2) Quran 39:5-6

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

The firm and absolute belief in Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Lordship means to believe with Certainty (*Yaqeen*) that Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** is the Lord who creates, owns, provides, and the One who can benefit us, or ward off evil from us, leading us to single out Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** in our worship. The scholars referred to this by saying, "Monotheism (*Tawheed*) in Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Lordship necessitates result in His Monotheism (*Tawheed*) in worship, while Polytheism (*Shirk*) in Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Lordship is an introduction to Polytheism (*Shirk*) in His worship.

When we affirm Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Lordship (*Rububiyyah*), then it must lead to His Worship (*Uluhiyah*), which is the practical application of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' (There is no one worthy of my worship except Allah). By testifying that Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** is the one who created me, provides for me, gave me the life I have, cause me to die one day, He will raise me on Judgment Day (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), and I am hoping He will forgive my sins, and save me from Hell (*Jahannam*) and admit me into Paradise (*Jannah*); it must lead to worshiping Him alone, with no partners.

Lā ilāha illa Allāh Implies the Three Types

When we call people to worship Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**, we are inviting them to 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh.' We usually are urging them to negate, leave out the worship of any objects, and affirm the three types of Monotheism (*Tawheed*). For example, when Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام** was calling his father to 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh,' he was asking him to worship the One true God. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لَا يَسْمَعُ وَلَا يُبْصِرُ وَلَا يُغْنِي عَنْكَ شَيْئًا ﴿٤٢﴾﴾ [سورة مريم: 42]

“When He said to his father, “O my father, why do you worship what can neither hear, nor see, nor benefit you in any way?” (1)

You can see the call to 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' which comprises the three types of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) in a concise statement by Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام**. He referred to the three types of Monotheism (*Tawheed*):

1. **Worship:** Why do you worship (*Uluhiyyah*)
2. **Names and Attributes:** That which hears not, sees not (*Asma Wa Sifa't*)
3. **Lordship:** they (idols) cannot avail yourself, about the (*Rububiyyah*)

(1) Quran 19:42

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

Now, test yourself and extract the three types of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) from the following Verse (*Ayah*) where Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

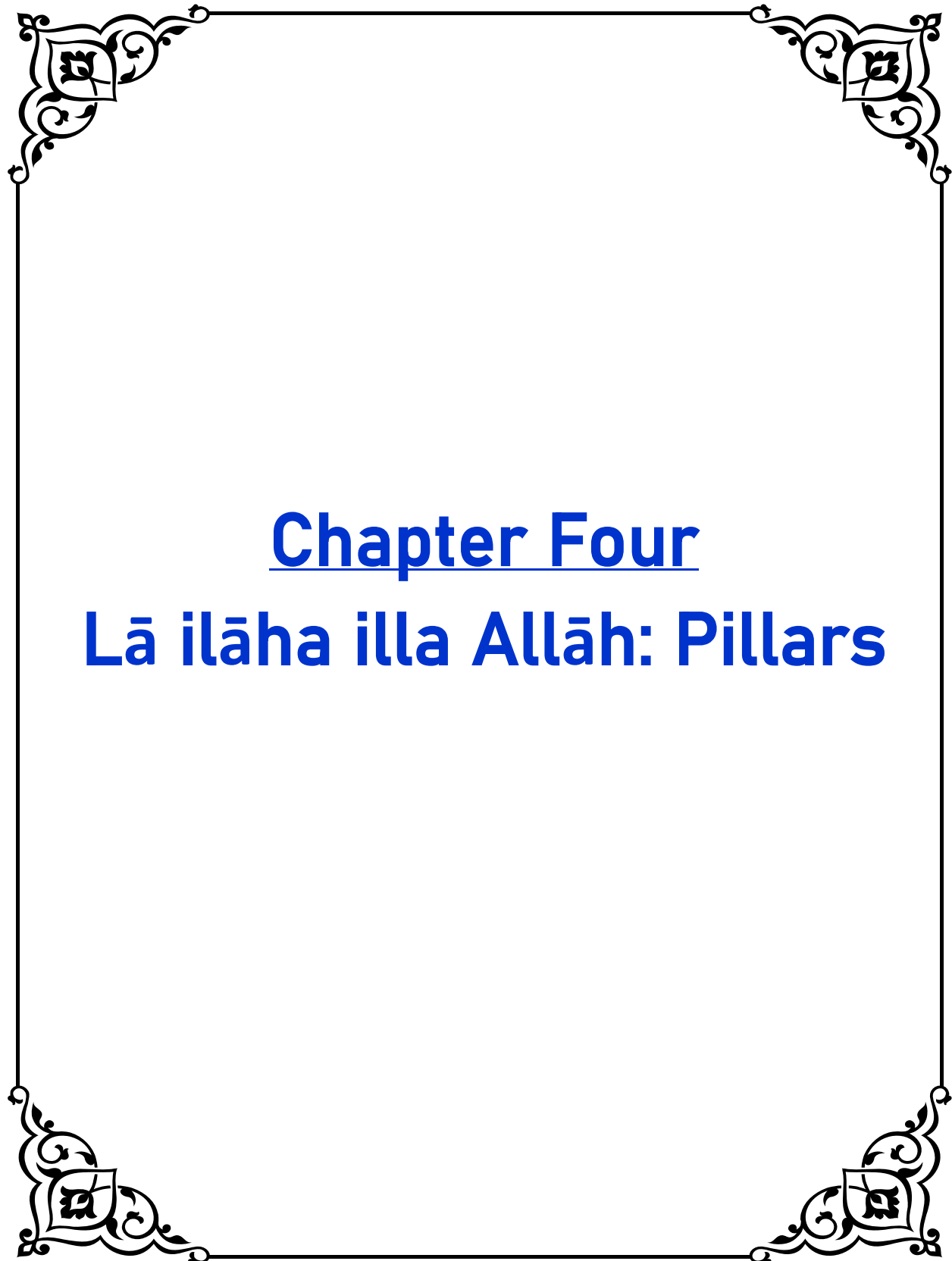
﴿ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَاعْبُدْهُ وَاصْطَبِرْ لِعِبَادَتِهِ هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُ سَمِيًّا ﴾ [سورة مريم: 65]

“Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, so worship Him (Alone) and be constant and patient in His worship. Do you know of any who is like Him? (of course, none is similar or coequal or comparable to Him, and He has none as partner with Him). [There is nothing like unto Him and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer].” (1)

To conclude, the firm belief of the heart that Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** is the Creator, the Provider, and there is no one equal to Him in terms of His Names, Attributes, and Actions must eventually lead to Monotheism of Intention (*Tawheed of Niyyah*) and pursuant action, or the worship of Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**. All types of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) are actualized through the declaration ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh.*’



(1) Quran 19:65



Chapter Four
Lā ilāha illa Allāh: Pillars

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

The term “*Arkan*” literally means “Pillars” and is the plural of *Rukn*. It basically means the essential elements. It is the compulsory part in the way of obligation, meaning that the one who does it completed the act, and the one who fails to do it, the action, or saying is void.

'*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is built upon two Pillars (*Arkan*): The first is to negate all objects of worship which are made rivals, equals, associates, or partners to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and affirming one's decisive, and absolute belief (*Iman*) in Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى in all His Actions of Lordship (*Rububiyyah*), His Names and Attributes (*Al-Asma Wa Sifat*), and in His worship (*Uluhiyyah*).

So, if a Muslim affirms that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is to be worshiped and obeyed without negating the worship and obedience from others beside Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and he does this intentionally and based on knowledge, then he has nullified his Islam, and he is no longer a Muslim. Because we must come with all aspects, both negation and affirmation and encompass them with belief, sayings, and actions.

Believing and affirming in Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and then worshiping others, has no benefit. You must come with the negation and the affirmation. We reiterate not to forget that when we use the term Pillar (*Rukn*) in Islam, we are talking about a fundamental principle or practice that in no way can be neglected or compromised. It is part of the act's structure, and on it, the act sits. If the Pillar (*Rukn*) is absent, invalid, or nullified, then the act is invalidated.

Evidence of the Two Pillars (*Arkan*)

There are many pieces of evidence to establish the two Pillars (*Arkan*) which construct the Universal Declaration of Faith (*Kalimah*), and they are as follows:

1. The Shahadah

The way the Universal Declaration of Faith (*Kalimah*) is formed is evidence, as '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is translated to “There is none worthy of worship except Allah,” and consists of:

A. Lā ilāha: Negation

The first pillar obliges the one who bears witness to '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*,' to deny, negate, abandon, resent, reject, and oppose all objects of worship which are made rivals to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى; in addition to proclaiming with the firm, and decisive belief, the adherents to these rivals as Disbelievers (*Kafirun*).

Disclaimer: We need to remember that this firm belief and proclamation regarding the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) does not dismiss being kind, merciful, just, and fair towards them if they are not combatants.

The denial and rejection include attributing divinity to all other things and affirms it as a quality that belongs to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** alone. The opposition and rejection include false deities, unauthorized intermediaries, wrong authorities, and a tyrant who demands that you worship and adore him, like an intermediary, whether family, community, or property, distracts you from faith.

Ibn Taymiyyah **رحمه الله** said: "The heart will not find complete happiness except by loving Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** and striving towards what is dear to Him. It is not possible to achieve this love except by rejecting all things that compete with it. This is what the words, 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh,' (There is no god worthy of worship except Allah) means; this is the spirit of the religion of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) **عليه السلام** and that of every other Prophet." (1)

B. illa Allāh: Affirmation

After we negate all objects of worship (*Taghoot*), we simultaneously produce the second Pillar (*Rukn*), and that's Affirmation of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh.' We must affirm our absolute, firm, and decisive belief in three types of Monotheism (*Tawheed*): Lordship (*Rububiyyah*), Names and Attributes (*Al-Asma wa Sifat*), and Worship (*Uluhiyyah*).

In the first Pillar (*Rukn*), we negated attributing divinity to all other things, and in the second Pillar (*Rukn*), we affirmed it as a quality which belongs only to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**. It's as if the negating Pillar (*Rukn*) cancels out one thing and the affirming Pillar (*Rukn*) affirms another. We opposed all those who rejected 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh,' those who worshiped created things, obeyed false authorities, and took unauthorized intermediaries between them and Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**.

In the second Pillar (*Rukn*), we affirm our loyalty to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**, His Messenger **ﷺ**, the adherents to His religion, and to the Tradition of His Prophet **ﷺ** (*Sunnah*).

To reiterate, if anyone fails to reject and disbelieve in all that is worshiped, followed, or obeyed, besides Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**, has not become a Muslim, and his Testimony of Faith (*Kalimah*) and Prayer (*Salah*) will not benefit him. In other words, if someone says that he affirms and not negates, then he is not Muslim.

(1) Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-Fatawaa, vol 28, p.32. Riyadh.

2. The Two are Always Mentioned Together

The two Pillars (Negation and Affirmation) of ‘Lā ilāha illa Allāh’ are always proven together, hand in hand in both the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*). Many Verses (*Ayat*) and Narrations (*Ahadith*) provide evidence in support of this concept.

For example, the people of the cave withdrew and disassociated from the Polytheists (*Mushrikun*), the objects they worshiped, the rituals they practiced, and the place where they practiced them. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿وَإِذِ اعْتَرَزْتُمُوهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَأَوْا إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنْشُرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيَهَيِّئْ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مَرْفَقًا﴾
[سورة الكهف:16]

“And when you withdraw from them, and that which they worship, except Allah.”(1)

The companions of the cave did not only separate themselves from the disbelievers, but the things which they used to worship beside Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ called it *I'tizaal* (withdraw), meaning to withdraw from them, and declare (proclaim them as disbelievers) from both in and out. You must negate and affirm with heart, tongue, and action.

The way of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) ﷺ is like the way of the people of the cave. Allah ﷻ said on the tongue of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) ﷺ,

﴿وَأَعَزَّلْتُكُمْ وَمَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَأَدْعُوا رَبِّي عَسَىٰ أَلَّا أَكُونَ بِدُعَاءِ رَبِّي شَقِيًّا﴾
[سورة مريم:48]

“And I will withdraw from you, and from what you pray to instead of Allah. And I will pray to my Lord, and I hope I will not be disappointed in my prayer to my Lord.” (2)

Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) ﷺ expressed the negation part with the heart, on the tongue, and in action. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿فَدَكَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ إِذْ قَالُوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرءُؤُا مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّىٰ تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدَهُ ۗ إِلَّا قَوْلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ لَأَسْتَغْفِرَنَّ لَكَ وَمَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۗ رَبَّنَا عَلِّمْنَا لَكَ مَا تَكُنَّا نَكْتُبُكَ وَأَلِّمْنَا وَلِيَّتِكَ ۗ﴾
[سورة الممتحنة:4]

(1) Quran 18:16

(2) Quran 18:48-49

“There has already been for you an excellent pattern in Ibrahim (Abraham) and those with him, when they said to their people, "Indeed, we are disassociated from you and from whatever you worship other than Allah. We have denied you, and there has appeared between us and you animosity and hatred forever until you believe in Allah alone" except for the saying of Ibrahim (Abraham) to his father, "I will surely ask forgiveness for you, but I have not [power to do] for you anything against Allah. Our Lord, upon You we have relied, and to You we have returned, and to You is the destination.” (1)

Another piece of evidence: Allah **سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِرْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾ [سورة البقرة: 256]

“Whoever disbelieves in Taghoot and believes in Allah then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.”(2)

Ibn Kathir **رحمه الله** said in relation to the above Verse (*Ayah*), “This means whoever rejects the false rivals to Allah, the idols, and everything that the Satan (Shaytan) calls people to worship besides Allah and then makes Allah the only One worthy of worship in all matters, and bears witness that there is no god but Allah he has ‘grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold’ meaning that he has become firm upon the best and the straight path and he has come to grasp the religion from its strongest way. The use of the word hand-hold indicates something that is fixed, will not ever break which has been tied firmly.” (3)

3. The Conversation Between Prophet **ﷺ** and Ibn Abass **رضي الله عنه**

As for the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*), obviously the Prophet **ﷺ** would not neglect the most important aspect of the religion, evident by the conversation between the Prophet **ﷺ** and Amr Ibn Abbas **رضي الله عنه**, when he asked the Prophet **ﷺ** the following question: "What do you invite people to do?" The Prophet **ﷺ** answered him by saying: "To worship Allah without attributing any partners to Him, to break the idols, to visit relatives." (4)

What to Negate?

When we utter *Lā ilāha*, which is the first half of the Universal Declaration of Faith (*Kalimah*), it means there is no god, and we negate the following first pillar that rejects the following four main categories:

(1) Quran 60:4
 (2) Quran 2:256
 (3) Tafsir Ibn Kathir Surat Al-Baqarah Verse 256
 (4) Sahih Muslim

1. **The False Deities (gods):** People invoke them to bring benefits and ward off evil.
2. **The Taghoot:** Everything that is worshiped besides Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**, while being pleased with this worship.
3. **The Rivals:** Everything which takes a believer away from the religion of Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**, such as the children, the wealth, status, and the like.
4. **The Legislators of Man-Made Laws:** People who legislate laws which makes the lawful (*Halal*) as unlawful (*Haram*) or “Haramization,” or to make the unlawful as lawful, which we call as “Halalization.”

What to Affirm?

When we utter *illa Allāh*, the second half of the Universal Declaration of Faith (*Kalimah*), we affirm the following four main categories:

1. Affirm that **Sincere Intention, Purpose, and Determination** in acts of worship and righteous deeds are done for the sake of Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**.
2. Affirm that **Love, Reverence, and Veneration, Exaltation, and Glorification** belong only to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**.
3. Affirm that, **Reverential Fear and Practical Hope** belong only to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**.
4. Affirm that **Disavowal, Innocence, Disassociation**, from Polytheism (*Shirk*), its objects, and adherents.

What is At-Taghoot?

The Arabic word “*Taghoot*” is derived from the root ط-غ-ت which denotes to cross the limits, overstep boundaries, to rebel. *Taghut/Taghout/Taghoot* (طَاغُوت) is an Arabic term that is specifically used to denounce everything that is worshiped instead of or besides Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**. *At-Taghoot* (الطَّاغُوت) can also refer to idols, a tyrant, an oracle or an enemy of Islam and Muslims. (1)

The word *Taghoot* is mentioned eight times in the Quran, which explains the meaning of one who exceeds the limit. In some contexts, *Taghoot* means "Any power or being that rebels against Allah and demands loyalty and obedience." (2)

(1) The Three Principles - Muhammed Ibn Abdul Wahab

(2) The Three Principles - Muhammed Ibn Abdul Wahab

A believer will never believe in Allah ﷻ unless he rejects and disbelieves in the *Taghoot*. The proof for this is in Allah's ﷻ saying,

[سورة البقرة: 256] ﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ﴾

“There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. The right course has become clear from the wrong. So, whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing.”(1)

One cannot have faith in Allah ﷻ unless he first disbelieves in the *Taghoot* because the two opposites cannot be together in the hearts. Monotheism (*Tawheed*) and Polytheism (*Shirk*) are two opposites, just like Faith (*Iman*) and Disbelief (*Kufr*). So, one must remove Polytheism (*Shirk*) before having Monotheism (*Tawheed*), and must remove disbelief before having belief. One must expel all worship offered to other than Allah ﷻ first, and then establish worship to Allah ﷻ alone afterward. (2)

The Five Heads of Taghoot

The word *Taghoot* is quite general. Hence, everything that is worshiped besides Allah ﷻ, while being pleased with this worship, whether it is something revered and worshiped, someone followed, or someone obeyed in the absence of obedience to Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, then that is considered *Taghoot*. The plural of *Taghoot* is *Tawaagheet*, and there are many of them, but their heads are five. (3)

1. Satan (Shaytan): He calls people to worship other than Allah ﷻ

Satan (Shaytan) is the head of Disbelief (*Kufr*) on earth and is the one who conspires with Polytheism (*Shirk*). The narrative of the beginning, the account of Prophet Adam ﷺ and Satan (Shaytan), is clear evidence of Satan's (Shaytan) inherited, declared enmity towards Prophet Adam ﷺ and his offspring. His role in corrupting humanity is manifest and has no intervals.

Some human actions, ideas, and objects are inspired by Satan (Shaytan) and the Satanic forces from his race, the *Jinn* race, as well as human race, such as killing, fornication, adultery, alcohol consumption and substance abuse, gambling, theft, robbery, bribery, false testimony, undutiful to parents, and divorce. However, Satan (Shaytan) will not rest until he reaches his ultimate objective: getting as many human beings as possible to be sunk in Polytheism (*Shirk*) and Disbelief (*Kufr*). Allah ﷻ said,

(1) Quran 2:256

(2) The Three Principles Muhammed Ibn Abdul Wahab

(3) Quran 36:60

﴿أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يٰبَنِي آدَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ﴾ [سورة يس:60]

"Did I not command you, O children of Adam, that you should not worship the Devil. Verily, he is a plain enemy to you." (1)

In the story of Barsisa (The Worshiper) with Satan (Shaytan) is evident that his higher aims and objectives are to take us to Polytheism (*Shirk*) and Disbelief (*Kufr*) through any means he can, and he will be quite patient in executing his scheme. Hence, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى warned us against his deceiving steps. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿يٰأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ﴾
[سورة البقرة: 208]

"Oh ye who believe! Enter into Islam wholeheartedly, and follow not the footsteps of Satan (Shaytan); for he is to you an avowed enemy." (2)

Ibn Jarir رحمته الله said in his Interpretation (*Tafsir*) that Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه interpreted the sixteenth and seventeenth Quranic Verses (*Ayat*) of Surat Al-Hashr that reads,

﴿كَمَثَلِ الشَّيْطٰنِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنسٰنِ اكْفُرْ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّنكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ فَكَانَ عَاقِبَتُهُمَا أَنَّهُمَا فِي النَّارِ خٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَذٰلِكَ جَزَاؤُ الظَّٰلِمِينَ﴾ [سورة الحشر: 16-17]

“Their allies deceived them like Satan (Shaytan) when he says to man: "Disbelieve in Allah." But when (man) disbelieves in Allah, Satan (Shaytan) says: "I am free of you, I fear Allah, the Lord of the 'Almin (mankind, Jinn and all that exists)!" So, the end of both will be that they will be in the Fire, abiding therein. Such is the recompense of the Zalimun (i.e., polytheists, wrongdoers, disbelievers in Allah and His Oneness).” (3)

Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه said: “Once upon a time, there was a woman grazing sheep and goats. She had four brothers. She (for some reason) used to spend the night at a monk's cell. The monk committed adultery with her, and she got pregnant. Satan (Shaytan) came to him and said: Kill the woman and then bury her for you are a reputable and highly respected man (i.e., don't risk your reputation for such a simple woman). The monk killed her and then buried her. Thereupon, Satan (Shaytan) visited her four brothers in a dream while they were asleep and said to them: the monk committed adultery with your sister, and because she got pregnant, he killed her and

(1) Quran 36:60

(2) Quran 2:208

(3) Quran 59:16-17

buried her in such-and-such location. In the morning, one of them said: "By Allah! Last night I dreamt of something, and I do not know whether to relate it to you or keep it to myself?" They said: Relate it to us. He did so, and one of them said: By Allah! I saw the same dream.

Another said the same. And the fourth one said the same thing. They agreed that there must be something profound about that dream. They went to the king and appealed for his help against the monk. The king's troops came to arrest him, and he was taken away. On the way, Satan (Shaytan) went to the monk (and whispered in his ears): I set you up. No one else can save you from this. Prostrate yourself before me just for once, and in return, I will deliver you from this. Thereupon, the monk prostrated himself before Satan (Shaytan). When they presented themselves before the king, Satan (Shaytan) said to him: I am free of you! Finally, the monk was killed." Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه said, "It is the interpretation of above Verses (*Ayat*) in Surat Al-Hashr." (1)

2. The tyrant and an oppressive ruler: He who changes Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى rulings. (2)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ
وَالنُّجُومُ مُسَخَّرَاتٌ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ ۗ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ [سورة الأعراف: 54]

“Indeed, your Lord is none other than Allah, who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and then ascended His Throne; Who causes the night to cover the day and then the day swiftly pursues the night; Who created the sun and the moon and the stars making them all subservient to His command. Lo! His is the creation, and He has the right to command. Blessed is Allah, the Lord of the universe.” (3)

Judgment and legislation belong to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى alone. His is the creation and the command regarding what to do with which He created. *Al-Hakimiah* (Right to Legislate) is an ingredient of Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Lordship (*Tawheed Ar-Rububiyah*). So just as He, the Highest has no partner in His Dominion and controlling the affairs of the creation, likewise, He has no partner in the judgment (*Hukm*) and legislation (*Shari'ah*).

Since Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is the Creator, He knows His creations perfectly. Hence Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will legislate the necessary laws and guidelines to operate and deal with the different elements of the universe. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

(1) Tafsir Ibn Jarir At-Tabari Surat Al-Hashr

(2) Islamqa.org with abridgment

(3) Quran 7:54

﴿أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ﴾ [سورة الملك: 14]

“Would He not know, He Who has created, when He is All-Subtle, All-Aware?” (1)

Every Muslim must have an absolute conviction that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is One in His Judgment (*Hukm*) and His Legislation (*Shari'ah*); meaning, only He is the Ruling Judge, and only He has the right to declare what is lawful and unlawful regarding beliefs, sayings, and actions, in addition to setting up a system of punishment to punish those who do not abide by His Laws. Anyone who defies Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى right of absolute rule is a *Taghoot*, especially the rulers, or those given authority to legislate to people through democracy and voting.

There are too many Verses (*Ayat*) from the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) to emphasize this point. However, the following would suffice:

﴿مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءُ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِنْ الْحُكْمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ أَمَرَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ ذَلِكَ الَّذِينَ الْقِيمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾﴾ وَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَهُمْ أَبُوهُمْ مَا كَانَ يُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا حَاجَةً فِي نَفْسٍ يَعْشُونَ فَضْنَهَا وَإِنَّهُ لَذُو عِلْمٍ لِمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾﴾

[سورة يوسف: 40-68]

"The Hukm (Legislating, Commands, and Judgment) is for none but Allah. He has commanded that you worship none but Him, that is the (true) straight religion, but most men know not." (2)

Imam Al-Baghawi رحمه الله said in his Interpretation (*Tafsir*), "Indeed the (Right of) ruling, commanding, and prohibiting is for none but Allah."

In another Verse (*Ayah*), Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿مَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا يُشْرِكُ فِي حُكْمِهِ أَحَدًا﴾ [سورة الكهف: 26]

"...and He makes none to share in His Judgment and His Rule." (3)

Ibn Jarir At-Tabari رحمه الله explained this Verse (*Ayah*) in his Interpretation (*Tafsir*), saying, "Allah will never let His creation be a partner in His ruling and judgment. He is indeed the only

(1) Quran 67:14

(2) Quran 12:40

(3) Quran 18:26

One Who rules (legislates) and judges. He manages them (the creations) in whatever way He wills" The following Verses (*Ayat*) show the Polytheism (*Shirk*) of worshiping others besides Allah in His Judgment and Legislation, there is absolutely no difference between the One who prostrates to idols and the One who commit Polytheism (*Shirk*) with Allah in His Judgment and Legislation as both are Polytheists (*Mushrikun*). (1) Allah ﷻ said,

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَن يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ ۗ وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَن يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا﴾ [سورة النساء:60]

"Have you not seen those (hypocrites) who claim to have faith in that which has been revealed to you, and that which was revealed before you, and they wish to go for judgment (in their disputes) to the *Taghoot*, when they have been ordered to reject them? But the Devil wishes to lead them far astray." (2)

3. The one who judges by laws other than Allah's ﷻ laws

Allah ﷻ has the absolute right and might to rule over his creations, and He commanded us to establish His Divine Laws in ourselves and earth. He has forbidden us to rule with anything else, as is clear from several Quranic Verses (*Ayat*), especially the known Verses (*Ayat*) in Surat Al-Maidah, which Allah ﷻ revealed towards the end of the Prophet's ﷺ mission. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾ [سورة المائدة:44]

“And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are the *Kafirun* (i.e., disbelievers - of a lesser degree as they do not act on Allah's Laws).” (3)

Allah ﷻ said,

﴿وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ﴾ [سورة المائدة:45]

“And whosoever does not judge by that which Allah has revealed, such are the *Zalimun* (polytheists and wrong-doers - of a lesser degree).” (4)

Allah ﷻ said,

(1) Tafsir Ibn Jarir At-Tabari Surat Al-Kahf
 (2) Quran 4:60
 (3) Quran 5:44
 (4) Quran 5:45

﴿ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴾ [سورة المائدة: 47]

“And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed (then) such (people) are the Fasiqun (the rebellious i.e., disobedient (of a lesser degree) to Allah.” (1)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿ وَأَنْ أَحْكَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُصِيبَهُمْ بِبَعْضِ ذُنُوبِهِمْ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ ﴾ [سورة المائدة: 49]

“And so, judge (you O Muhammad) between them by what Allah has revealed and follow not their vain desires, but beware of them lest they turn you (O Muhammad) far away from some of that which Allah has sent down to you. And if they turn away, then know that Allah's Will is to punish them for some sins of theirs. And truly, most of men are Fasiqun (rebellious and disobedient to Allah).” (2)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿ أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴾ [سورة المائدة: 50]

“Do they then seek the judgment of (the Days of) Ignorance? And who is better in judgment than Allah for a people who have firm Faith.” (3)

Hence, judging or ruling according to something other than Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Divine Laws turn the person into a *Taghoot* since he is challenging Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى rights to rule over His creations. However, the term *Taghoot* does necessarily confirm apostasy on this individual because it all depends on the beliefs in his heart and the circumstances surrounding his approval of man-made laws vs. Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Divine Laws (*Shari'ah*).

Cases when *Taghoot* indicates Major Disbelief (*Kufr Al-Akbar*)

Major Disbelief (*Kufr Al-Akbar*) takes a Muslim out of the fold of Islam, and he becomes an apostate, a Disbeliever (*Kafir*). But first, we must confirm the condition of the perpetrator before we regard him as an apostate, and until we establish the evidence against him. We must make

(1) Quran 5:47

(2) Quran 5:49

(3) Quran 5:50

sure that he is committing or believing in this act with a willful intention. The following are the cases which takes a Muslim out of Islam:

1. Suppose, one issues laws and regulations other than those revealed by Allah ﷻ, then he committed Major Disbelief (*Kufr Al-Akbar*). Allah ﷻ said,

﴿أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ شَرَعُوا لَهُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا لَمْ يَأْذَنْ بِهِ اللَّهُ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةُ الْفَصْلِ لَفُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ﴾ [سورة الشورى: 21]

"Or have they partners with Allah (false gods), who have instituted for them a religion which Allah has not allowed?" (1)

Suppose, one rules by other than what Allah ﷻ legislated, denying, and rejecting Allah's ﷻ legislation, then he is guilty of Major Disbelief (*Kufr Al-Akbar*). Abdullah Ibn Abbas's رضي الله عنه commented on the Verse (*Ayah*) where Allah ﷻ said,

﴿وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾ [سورة المائدة: 44]

“And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are the Kafirun (i.e., disbelievers - of a lesser degree as they do not act on Allah's Laws.” (2)

2. Suppose one prefers the human law of falsehood to Allah's ﷻ legislation, whether in absolute terms or just in a few matters. He is guilty of Major Disbelief (*Kufr Al-Akbar*). Allah ﷻ said,

﴿أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ﴾ [سورة المائدة: 50]

“Do they then seek the Judgment of (the Days of) Ignorance? And who is better in judgment than Allah for a people who have firm Faith?” (3)

3. Suppose, one regards the rule of Allah ﷻ and the rule of falsehood as equal. Allah ﷻ said about that,

﴿فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أُنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [سورة البقرة: 22]

(1) Quran 42:21

(2) Quran 5:44

(3) Quran 5:50

“Then do not set up rivals unto Allah (in worship) while you know (that He Alone has the right to be worshiped).” (1)

4. Suppose, one believes that it is permissible to rule by something that contradicts the rule of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and His Messenger ﷺ, or he believes that it is not obligatory to rule according to what Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has revealed, or that the matter is optional. Then he has committed Disbelief (*Kufr*), which is contradictory to Faith (*Iman*). Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الرَّسُولُ لَا يَحْزُنُكَ الَّذِينَ يُسْكَرُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا سَمَّعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ سَمَّعُونَ لِقَوْمٍ آخِرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُوكُمْ يَحْزِنُونَ الْكَلِمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ يَقُولُونَ إِنْ أُوتِيتُمْ هَذَا فَخُذُوهُ وَإِنْ لَمْ تُؤْتَوْهُ فَاحْذَرُوا وَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنْ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُطَهِّرْ قُلُوبَهُمْ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾ [سورة المائدة: 41]

"O Messenger! Let not those who hurry to fall into disbelief grieve you, of such who say: 'We believe' with their mouths, but their hearts have no faith. And of the Jews are men who listen much and eagerly to lies - listen to others who have not come to you; they say, 'If you are given this, take it, but if you are not given this, then beware!'" (2)

5. If one does not rule according to what Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has revealed, out of stubbornness and arrogance, then he is a Disbeliever (*Kafir*) and has left Islam even if he does not deny the rule of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Stubbornness and arrogance may mean negligence and turning away. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ ۗ وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا﴾ [سورة النساء: 60]

"Have you seen those (hypocrites) who claim that they believe in that which has been sent down to you, and that which was sent down before you, and they wish to go for judgment (in their disputes) to the Taghoot (false judges, etc.) while they have been ordered to reject them. But Satan (Shaytan) wishes to lead them astray. And when it is said to them: 'Come to what Allah has sent down and to the Messenger,' see the hypocrites turn away from you (Muhammad) with aversion." (3)

(1) Quran 2:22

(2) Quran 5:41

(3) Quran 4:60-61

Cases when Taghoot indicates Minor Disbelief (*Kufr As-Saghir*)

Minor Disbelief (*Kufr As-Saghir*) does not take a Muslim out of the fold of Islam, yet he is still considered a sinner.

1. If one judges or passes a judgment according to non-divine laws, disregarding Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** laws, out of disobedience or on a whim, while still believing that it is obligatory to judge according to what Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** has revealed, then what he has done is a sinful and Forbidden (*Haram*) deed.
2. If a non-Islamic law governs one, and he refers to it out of choice, then he is a Disbeliever (*Kafir*) whose Major Disbelief (*Kufr Al-Akbar*) means that he has left Islam. But if he has no choice but to refer to this law and does so reluctantly, he is not a Disbeliever (*Kafir*), because if he had been able to resort to Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** rules, he would have done so, and he believes that this non-Islamic law is false.

4. The claimants of knowing of the Unseen

Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** Name the All-Knower, and the Attribute of Knowledge is one of Allah's Divine Essence which is unique and exclusive to Him. Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** absolute, inclusive, and detailed knowledge of all things always encompassed the knowledge of all things, Unseen and seen whether in the past, present, or the future.

Human knowledge is imperfect knowledge of place and time, and it has proceeded with ignorance, subject to forgetfulness and confusion. Furthermore, humans are prevented from knowing the Unseen. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ﴾ [سورة النمل: 65]

“Say, "None in the heavens and earth knows the unseen except Allah.” (1)

Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظِلْمَتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ﴾ [سورة الأنعام: 59]

"And with Him lie the keys to the Unseen, no one knows them but He. And He knows whatever there is in the land and the sea; not a leaf falls except that He knows about it.

(1) Quran 27:65

There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything fresh or dry, but that it is written in a Clear Record." (1)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿عَلِمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا ﴿٣٦﴾ إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَسْلُكُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصَدًا ﴿٣٧﴾﴾
[سورة الجن: 26-27]

"He alone is the All-Knower of the Unseen, and He does not disclose His Unseen matters to anyone. Except to a Messenger whom He has chosen, and then He makes a band of watching guards (Angels) march before him and behind him." (2)

Hence, the human and *Jinn* claimants of knowing the Unseen are after extra powers above their races through such a false claim. Such a claim will influence people to serve, love, revere, fear, and place their hopes in them. Therefore, they become *Taghoot*.

Also, the Prophet ﷺ warned us against attending to their fallacies and believing them in two authentic Narrations (*Ahadith*):

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever goes to a soothsayer, or a fortune-teller, and believes him, he has disbelieved in that which was revealed to Muhammad.” Since he is the one who asks a soothsayer a question, believing that he tells the truth and that he knows the Unseen, has committed an act of Disbelief (*Kufr*) because he has gone against the Quran. (3)

As for the second Narration (*Hadith*), “Whoever goes to a fortune teller and asks him about something, Allah will not accept his Prayer (*Salah*) for forty days.” (4)

5. The one who wishes to be worshiped beside Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى

Anyone who wants, wishes, seeks, pursues worship, and veneration and reverence beside Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is a *Taghoot* as well, but with one restriction, that he has a concealed inward inclination or displayed outward appeal.

There are Prophets, Messengers, and righteous people who are being worshiped against their will, and they have never permitted their followers to do that. Instead, they warned them against it before their death, such as Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Uzair (Ezra); the restriction of them

(1) Quran 6:59

(2) Quran 72:26-27

(3) Sahih Abu Daud, Al-Albani

(4) Sahih Muslim

wanting that is necessary. The following story is evident of it when Allah ﷻ revealed the following Verse (*Ayah*),

﴿إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ أَنْتُمْ لَهَا وَرَدُونَ﴾
[سورة الأنبياء: 98]

“Certainly, you and that which you are worshiping now besides Allah, are (but) fuel (Hasab) for Hell! (Surely) you will enter it.” (1)

Ibn Kathir رحمه الله said, "Allah is informing the people of Makkah, the idolators of the Quraish and those who followed their religion of idol worship: ‘I will place the idolators and their gods which they used to worship into the Hellfire (*Jahannam*), and they will be the fuel.’"

The fuel for Hellfire (*Hasab for Jahannam*) means firewood in the dialect of the people of Zanjiyyah. Mujahid, Ikrimah and Qatadah رحمه الله said: "Its fuel." Ad-Dahhak رحمه الله said: "The fuel of Hell (*Jahannam*) means that which is thrown into it." (2)

Allah ﷻ negated the possibility of them being true gods if they cannot save themselves from entering the Hellfire (*Jahannam*). Allah ﷻ said,

﴿لَوْ كَانَهُمْ آلِهَةً مَا وَرَدُوهَا وَكُلٌّ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾ [سورة الأنبياء: 99]

“If those had been gods, they would never have gone down to it, but in it they shall live for ever.” (3)

The Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) right away said, “What about Isa (Jesus) who worshiped besides Allah? Will he also be thrown in Hell (*Jahannam*) to be the fueling firewood?” Allah ﷻ tells us how the Quraish persisted in their Disbelief (*Kufr*) and stubborn arguments. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿وَلَمَّا ضُرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلًا إِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَقَالُوا يَا إِلَهَتُنَا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هُوَ مَا ضَرَبُوهُ لَكَ إِجْدَالًا بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُونَ﴾ { سورة الزخرف: 57-58}

“And when the son of Maryam (Mary) is quoted as an example, behold, your people cry aloud thereat. And say: “Are our gods better or is he Isa (Jesus)?” They quoted not the above example except for argument. Nay! But they are a quarrelsome people.” (1)

(1) Quran 21:98

(2) Tafsir Ibn Kathir with abridgement (Surat Al-Anbiya 98-99)

(3) Quran 21:99

Ibn Kathir رحمه الله said, (2) “Several Narrations (*Ahadith*) from Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, Ikrimah, As-Suddi, and Ad-Dahhak said, "The disbelievers of Quraish laughed, and they were astounded when they heard the Prophet ﷺ reciting the Verses (*Ayat*) in Surat Al-Anbiya regarding their idols being thrown in Hellfire (*Jahannam*) with them.

They further asked the Prophet ﷺ whether everyone worshiped instead of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will be in Hell (*Jahannam*) with those who worshiped Him, for we worship the Angels. The Jews worship Uzair (Ezra), and the Christians worship Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. The Prophet ﷺ said to them: “Everyone who likes to worship something other than Allah will be with the one whom he worshiped, for indeed they are worshiping the Satan (Shaytan) and whoever told them to worship that person.” (3)

Another Verse (*Ayah*) refers to the one displaying an outward expression of the desire to be worshiped besides Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى would turn him into a *Taghoot*. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿وَمَنْ يَقُلْ مِنْهُمْ إِنِّي إِلَهٌ مِّنْ دُونِهِ فَذَلِكَ نَجْزِيهِ جَهَنَّمَ كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ [سورة الأنبياء: 29]

"And whoever amongst them says: ‘Verily, I am a God besides Him (Allah)’, then this person's repayment will be the Hellfire. That is the way We recompense the wrongdoers.”(4)



(1) Quran 43:57-58

(2) Tafsir Ibn Kathir with abridgment Surat Al-Anbiya and Az-Zukhruf

(3) Muhammad Ibn Ishaq in his biography of the Prophet

(4) Quran 21:29



Chapter Five
**Loyalty (Al-Wala') &
Opposition (Al-Bara')**



Let us go back to the time of the Prophet ﷺ, despite the mounting opposition to a new call to Monotheism (*Tawheed*) in Makkah, yet there was a time when the chiefs of Quraish did not yet lose hope that they would reach some compromise with him. Therefore, from time to time, they would visit him with different proposals of compromising, so that they can end their dispute, which divided their community.

According to Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه, the chiefs of Quraish proposed to the Prophet ﷺ the following: "We shall give you so much of wealth that you will become the richest man of Makkah; we shall provide you whichever woman you like in marriage; we are prepared to follow and obey you as our leader, only on the condition that you will not speak ill of our gods. (1)

Another proposal: The chiefs of Quraish proposed that they worship Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى one year, and the following year Muslims should worship their idols. Thereupon, the following revelations came down,

﴿قُلْ يَتَّيِبُهَا الْكٰفِرُونَ ۝۱ لَا اَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ۝۲ وَلَا اَنْتُمْ عٰبِدُونَ مَا اَعْبُدُ ۝۳ وَلَا اَنَا عٰبِدُ مَا عٰبِدْتُمْ ۝۴ وَلَا اَنْتُمْ عٰبِدُونَ مَا اَعْبُدُ ۝۵﴾
 ﴿لَكُمْ دِيْنُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِيْنِ﴾ [سورة الكافرون: 6-1]

Say, “O disbelievers. I do not worship what you worship. Nor do you worship what I worship. Nor do I serve what you serve. Nor do you serve what I serve. To you your religion, and to me my religion.” (2)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى also said,

﴿قُلْ اَفَعَيَّرَ اللّٰهُ تَاْمُرُوْنِيْ اَعْبُدُ اَيْهَا الْجٰهِلُوْنَ﴾ [سورة الزمر: 64]

“Say to them: ignorant people do you bid me to worship others than Allah?” (3)

The chiefs of Quraish understood the nature of their request very well. They were merely trying to cancel out the first pillar of ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*,’ which related to negating what they worship, and oppose it. Their proposal went against the basics of the Testimony of Faith (*Kalimah*). The fact that there is only one God worthy of worship, which is Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, so

(1) Ibn Jarir At-Tabari, Ibn Abi Hatim

(2) Quran 109:1-6

(3) Quran 39:64

'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' can never be compromised under any circumstances. Allah ﷻ revealed Surat Al-Kafirun, in which He explicitly told the chiefs of Quraish that the Prophet ﷺ rejected their proposal and would not compromise the first Pillar (*Rukn*) of Islam.

Similar proposals have been presented to devout Muslims from time to time, to compromise the first part of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' because they know in the depth of their hearts that it is impossible to do away with Islam from the face of this earth. Hence what they are after is to make sure that Muslims are not speaking ill of their false deities.

Two Extremes

The concept of Loyalty and Opposition (*Al-Wala' Wa-Al-Bara'*) is perhaps one of the most controversial Islamic principles, according to non-Muslims, and many Muslims alike. It is always the pattern once it comes to subjects of great significance like this one.

You will often find two extremes. One is the excessive side, where they go overboard regarding their understanding and application while making no exceptions in consideration of the place, time, and the conditions of the people.

On the other hand, is the negligent side, giving little attention to such a crucial matter, which in a way, is a reaction to the first side's excessive approach in dealing with the subject. The negligent side downplays the importance of the issue, and they consider it imperative, unnecessary to disregarding crystal-clear pieces of evidence sometimes, manipulating and twisting it other times.

Consequently, the middle path, which is the truth about the subject matter of Loyalty and Opposition (*Al-Wala' Wa-Al-Bara'*), is lost. Hence, the Islamophobic groups and individuals find a fertile ground to advance their agenda of defaming and demonizing a whole religion and its adherents. They will propagate anti-Islam slogans such as "Islam does not like us," "Islam hates us," "Islam is an intolerant religion," "Islam teaches hatred," and the list goes on and on.

The subject of this chapter Loyalty and Opposition (*Al-Wala' Wa-Al-Bara'*), has a direct and undeniable relationship with the Negation (*Lā ilāha*) and Affirmation (*illa Allāh*). Loyalty and Opposition (*Al-Wala' Wa-Al-Bara'*) is, in fact, the foundation on which Monotheism (*Tawheed*) sits, and the pillars on which 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' stands. Therefore, we cannot ignore and disregard it even though the timing to speak or write about a subject of this nature does not do excellent service to the writer or the speaker. However, we go back to saying we must do it because it is the essence of the Testimony of Faith (*Kalimah*), and you cannot explain 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' without bringing it up.

I intend to present the subject strictly considering Negation (*Lā ilāha*), which is Opposition (*Al-Bara'*), and Affirmation (*illa Allāh*) which is Loyalty (*Al-Wala'*) without going into many details. I ask Allah ﷻ to guide us all to the truth.

Definitions of *Al-Wala'* and *Al-Bara'*

Linguistically

Al-Wala' means loyalty, love, support, help and follow.

Al-Bara' means to disassociate, resent, desert, and keep innocent of.

Technically

The technical meaning of *Al-Wala'* is to totally agree with the sayings, deeds, and beliefs which please Allah ﷻ and the people whom He likes. It is to love what Allah ﷻ loves and to be loyal to what Allah ﷻ approves of.

Al-Bara' is to disassociate, resent, dislike, disagree with, and oppose everything that Allah ﷻ hates and condemns. The concept of *Al-Bara'* however, does not imply injustice, cruelty, or any other unethical or inhumane behaviors which are not acceptable even towards an enemy of Allah ﷻ or something that Allah ﷻ hates.

Therefore, we can define both terms *Al-Wala'* and *Al-Bara'* as follows:

***Al-Wala'*:** To love Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, and to love what Allah ﷻ loves and to come to the assistance and support of His religion, also to love and associate with those who love Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, and those who strive to be obedient and adherent to His commands, and to come to their help.

***Al-Bara'*:** To dislike, resent and forsake, disown, and oppose what Allah ﷻ hates, and to oppose the adherents and propagators of ideologies and beliefs of those who hate and oppose Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, and to struggle against them.

Al-Wala' and *Al-Bara'* are both emphasized in Prophet Ibrahim's (Abraham) عليه السلام statement when he said to his father and his people,

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّنِي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴾ [سورة الزخرف: 26]

“When Ibrahim (Abraham) said to his father and his people, “I am innocent of what you worship.” (1)

Allah ﷻ said,

(1) Quran 43:26

﴿قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ إِذْ قَالُوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرءُؤُا مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةُ

وَالْبَغْضَاءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدُّهُ﴾ [سورة الممتحنة: 4]

“There is an excellent example for you in Ibrahim (Abraham) and those with him, when they said to their people, “We are quit of you and of what you worship apart from Allah. We have denounced you, and enmity and hatred have arisen between us and you, forever, until you believe in Allah alone.” (1)

Loyalty (*Al-Wala'*) and Opposition (*Al-Bara'*) in Light of Monotheism (*Tawheed*)

We explained in detail in the previous chapter that ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ consists of Negation of and Affirmation. Loyalty (*Al-Wala'*) and Opposition (*Al-Bara'*) are two major prerequisites of true Faith (*Iman*).

Loyalty (*Al-Wala'*) is a manifestation of sincere love for Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*, His Prophets, and His religion. On the other hand, Opposition (*Al-Bara'*) is an expression of hate and opposition towards falsehood and its adherents. It is by both love and hate; both the heart and the limbs are moved to act.

There is a direct relation between Loyalty (*Al-Wala'*) and the Affirmation, and Opposition (*Al-Bara'*) and the Negation:

- Loving Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*, His Messengers, His religion, and those adherents to it are the main requirements and the sources of Loyalty (*Al-Wala'*). Love for Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* inspires the believer's jealousy for the religion of Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* and elevates his concern. Hence, he will help and support Allah's *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* religion and its adherents, which is Loyalty (*Al-Wala'*).
- Hating everything Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* hates, including ideologies that oppose Monotheism (*Tawheed*), is the main requirement and the source of Opposition (*Al-Bara'*). Hate provokes obstruction, opposition, rejection, and disassociation with Disbelief (*Kufr*) and its adherents. But again, it is in no way an open invitation to cancel out justice, fairness in dealing with the believers in false deities even if they are combatants. Instead, Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* commanded us to act in love and to show mercy, kindness, excellence, and goodness towards the non-combatants.

(1) Quran 60:4

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

Love and hate are both related to the declaration of faith and constitute essential elements in it. The evidence of this from the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) is considerable. Below are some examples from the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*):

Allah ﷻ said,

{ قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ إِذْ قَالُوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرءُؤُا مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدُّهُ } [سورة الممتحنة: 4]

"There was a good example for you in Ibrahim (Abraham) and those with him when they told their people: 'Surely we disassociate ourselves from you and all that you worship besides Allah. We have done it with you. And there has arisen between us and your enmity and hate forever until you believe in Allah only.'" (1)

Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The strongest bond of Faith (*Iman*) is Loyalty (*Al-Wala'*) for Allah and Opposition (*Al-Bara'*) for His sake, love for Allah and enmity for His sake." (2)

Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbali رحمته الله compiled the statement of Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه who said, "Whoever loves for the sake of Allah, and hates for the sake of Allah, and whoever seals a friendship for His sake, or declares an enmity for His sake, will receive, because of this, the protection of Allah. No one may taste true faith except by this, even if his Prayers (*Salawaat*) and Fasts are many. People have come to build their relationships around the world's concerns, but it will not benefit them in any way." (3)

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمته الله said: "The Declaration that "there is no one worthy of worship except Allah," requires you to love only for the sake of Allah, to hate only for the sake of Allah, to ally yourself only for Allah's sake, to declare enmity only for the sake of Allah; it requires you to love what Allah loves and to hate what Allah hates." (4)

Three Misconceptions

The subject of this chapter Loyalty (*Al-Wala'*) and Opposition (*Al-Bara'*) is of great importance and utmost interest for both non-Muslims and many Muslims alike. Different reasons may cause their confusion such as:

(1) Quran 60:4

(2) Al-Tabarani Al-Kabir

(3) Jami al-Ulum wa'l-Hikam, p.30.

(4) Majmou Al-Fatawa

1. The concept of love and hate in Islam is totally misunderstood. We need to realize that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is the One who directs our hearts as He wills. He leads our hearts to love and resentment. The following Narration (*Hadith*) is a piece of profound evidence for this reality:

Abdullah Ibn Amr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Verily, the hearts of the children of Adam, all of them, are between the two fingers of the Merciful as one heart. He directs them wherever He wills.” Then, the Prophet ﷺ said, “O Allah, the Director of the hearts, direct our hearts to Your obedience.” (1)

Now that we have established that, we have no control over our hearts. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is the one Who directs our hearts. How do you expect Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى to direct our hearts to love someone who hates Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, His Messenger ﷺ, His religion, and the believers, while they are fighting, mocking, and scheming against Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, His religion, and the Believers (*Mumineen*)?

Obviously, the answer is ‘No,’ and in fact, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will direct the hearts of the believers to love the Believers (*Mumineen*) and resent the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*).

Again and again, in order not to be accused of inciting aggression, resentment is an act of the heart that we do not control but still does not give us the right to treat the opponents with injustice even if they are combatants.

Now let’s understand this Verse (*Ayah*) considering what we just mentioned:

﴿لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ أُولِيكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ وَيَدْخُلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾ [سورة المجادلة: 22]

"You (O Muhammad) will not find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad), even though they were their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred (people). For such, He has written Faith in their hearts and strengthened them with Ruh (proofs, light, and true guidance) from Himself. And We will admit them to Gardens (Paradise) under which rivers flow, to dwell therein (forever). Allah is pleased with them, and they with Him. They are the Party of Allah. Verily, it is the Party of Allah that will be successful." (2)

(1) Sahih Muslim

(2) Quran 58:22

2. The concept of tolerance is misunderstood as well. People usually mix up having mercy, kindness, goodness, and justice towards the peaceful adherents of wrong beliefs and practices and negating, opposing, disassociating, and resenting their beliefs and practices. Those are entirely two different areas. Tolerance is in interacting with them, and not in opposing their views and practices. A believer can still treat his opponents in beliefs with mercy, kindness, and fairness, while disassociating himself from their beliefs.
3. The terms “*Al-Hub fi Allah*” (loving for the sake of Allah), and “*Al-Bughd fi Allah*” (Hating for the sake of Allah), or “*Al-Mu'adat*” (Enmity), are sometimes used instead of *Al-Wala'* and *Al-Bara'* (Loyalty and Opposition).

Since, we have no control over our hearts, and Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is the one Who directs our hearts, hence loving for the sake of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى must be exclusive to the Believers (*Mumineen*), and hating for the sake of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will be directed towards the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*).

But again, and I do apologize for being repetitive, it does not mean that you cannot show goodness, mercy, kindness to a non-combatant Disbeliever (*Kafir*). As a matter of fact, we are required to do so from the prospective of calling them to Islam. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿لَا يَنْهَىٰكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ﴾
[سورة الممتحنة: 8]

“Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.” (1)

Ibn Qayyim رحمه الله said, "This Verse (*Ayah*) permits association with those who have not declared war against the Muslims and allows kindness towards them, even though they may not be allies." (2)

Now, it does not mean that you do not have to be just and fair to the combatant Disbelievers (*Kafirun*). Instead, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى encourages justice and fairness even towards an enemy. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ۗ أَعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ﴾ [سورة المائدة: 8]

(1) Quran 60:8
(2) Al Fawa'id

"Do not let the hatred of any people cause you to swerve from justice. Be Just: this is nearest to being God-conscious" (1)

Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** also said,

﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ
 إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۖ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىَٰ أَن تَعْدِلُوا ۗ وَإِن تَلَوْا أَوْ تُعْرَضُوا
 فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ۝﴾ [سورة النساء: 135]

“O you who have attained to Faith! Be ever steadfast in upholding equity, bearing witness to the truth for God's sake, even though it is against yourself or your parents and kinsfolk. Whether the person concerned be rich or poor, God's claim takes precedence over (the claims of) either of them. Do not, then, follow your desires, lest you swerve from justice, for if you distort (the truth), behold, God is indeed aware of all that you do!” (2)

Also, Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** encourages forgiveness and returning evil with good. He **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ السَّيِّئَةِ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَصِفُونَ﴾ [سورة المؤمنون: 96]

“Repel by (means of) what is best, (their) evils. We are most knowing of what you describe.” (3)

Be Resolute on the Following

Once these three misconceptions are defined, be fixed with the determination of the following:

- A. The concept of Loyalty (*Al-Wala'*) does not contradict or goes against justice (*Qist*), kindness (*Birr*), mercy (*Rahmah*), and excellence (*Ihsan*) towards others, irrespective of their religious affiliation and beliefs.
- B. The concept of Opposition (*Al-Bara'*) does not imply injustice, cruelty, or any other unethical or inhumane behaviors which are not acceptable even towards an enemy of Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** or something that Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** hates. It also does not imply that Muslims cannot forgive their enemies and those who do wrong to them from among non-Muslims,

(1) Quran 5:8
 (2) Quran 4:135
 (3) Quran 23:96

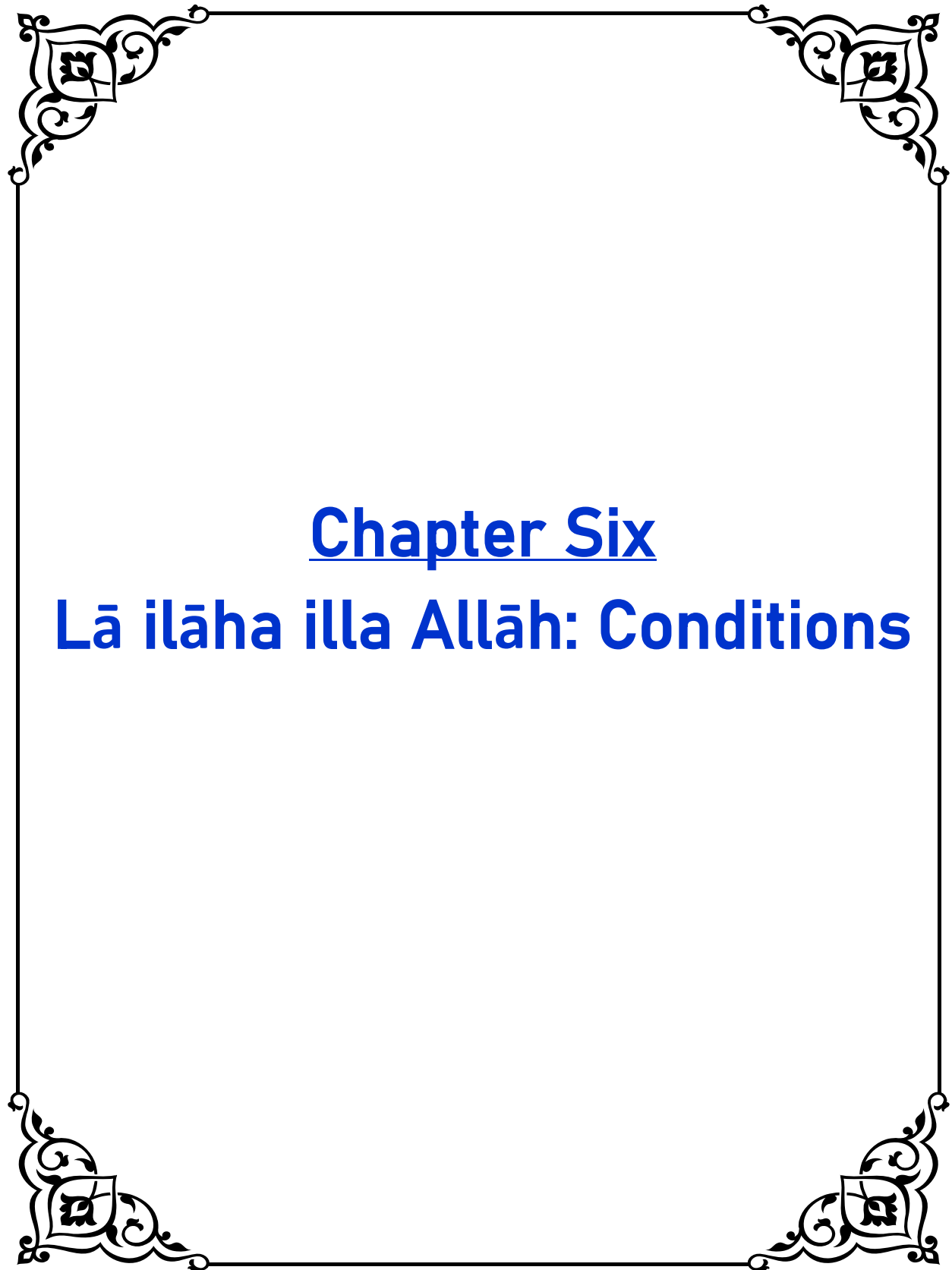
Lā ilāha illa Allāh

as it can be seen from the Tradition of the Prophet ﷺ (*Sunnah*) towards his enemies and the enemies of Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*.

Forgiveness was exemplified by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in many difficult situations such as forgiveness of war crimes committed by the Quraish (after the conquest of Makkah); and the forgiveness of the people of Ta'if when he went there to preach the message of Islam but instead of appreciating him, they stoned him.

He also overlooked the ill behavior of Jews (i.e., Banu Qaynuqa and Banu Nadir) in Madinah before expelling them after their betrayal.





Chapter Six

Lā ilāha illa Allāh: Conditions

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

There are seven conditions for ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ that every Muslim must learn and implement, and not only memorize. Muslims read the many Narrations (*Ahadith*) regarding the importance of saying ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*,’ especially at the time of death, and how much this will be of great help to the deceased.

Abu Sa’eed Al-Khudri رضي الله عنه narrated: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Prompt your dying ones to say ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.’” (1)

Mu’adh Ibn Jabal رضي الله عنه narrated: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: “If a person’s last words are ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*,’ he will be promised admittance into Paradise (*Jannah*).” (2)

Some Muslims read these narrations, and they mistakenly assume just saying ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ without fulfilling its seven conditions will suffice them. Besides, they believe that they will be able to say it at the deathbed when they did not fulfill the seven prerequisites. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ اجْتَرَحُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَنْ نَجْعَلَهُمْ كَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَوَاءً مَحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتِهِمْ سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ﴾ [سورة الجاثية: 21]

“Or do those who commit evils think We will make them like those who have believed and done righteous deeds - [make them] equal in their life and their death? Evil is that which they judge.” (3)

Ibn Kathir رحمه الله commented on this Verse (*Ayah*), “Whoever lives upon something, and The Three Principles Muhammed Ibn Abdul Wahab whoever dies upon something, will be resurrected upon it.” Meaning if this person who is about to die did not fulfill the condition of ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*,’ then in no way, he will be able to utter it at the deathbed. (4)

And this was the understanding of our predecessors, Al-Hasan Al-Basri رحمه الله was once asked, “Some people say that whoever says, ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ will enter Paradise (*Jannah*).” He replied, “Whoever says, it and fulfills its rights and obligations. He is referring to the seven conditions of ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.’” (5)

(1) Sahih Muslim

(2) Abu Daud classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Irwa’ Al-Ghaleel

(3) Quran 45:21

(4) Tafsir Ibn Kathir

(5) Quran 39:54

Wahab Ibn Munabbah رضي الله عنه was asked whether the words ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ were the key to Paradise (*Jannah*). ‘Certainly,’ he said, ‘but of course every key has teeth, so if you come with one that has teeth, the door will open, but if you don’t, it won’t.’ The teeth of this key are the prerequisites, and conditions of the Declaration of Faith (*Kalimah*).

Conditions of *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*

If we study the Verses (*Ayat*) of the Quran and the Tradition of the Prophet ﷺ (*Sunnah*), we will find the seven conditions of ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.’ We must do our best to satisfy these conditions before it is too late, and our testimony will be of no benefit whatsoever. The following are the seven conditions with a brief explanation for each one: **(1)**

1. Knowledge which negates Ignorance

The first condition which every Muslim must fulfill is to acquire the knowledge of ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.’ Every Muslim is obliged to learn about the six articles of Faith (*Iman*): the belief in Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, Angels, Books, Messengers, Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), and predestination (*Al-Qadar*). However, this knowledge must lead to the next step with certainty. It cannot be just for the sake of recognition and acknowledgment; instead, it must lead to confidence, conviction, and certainty.

The following Verse (*Ayah*) emphasized the virtues of knowledge of the articles of Faith (*Iman*), which lead to Certainty (*Yaqeen*). Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

{ شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ }
[سورة آل عمران: 18]

“Allah bears witness there is none worthy of worship except Him and the Angels and those given knowledge. He is always maintaining [creation] in justice. There is no deity worthy of worship except Him, the Exalted in Might, the Wise.” (2)

In the above Verse (*Ayah*), people of knowledge came third in the order, right after Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and His Angels, bearing witness that there is no one worthy of worship except Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. What status Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى granted the people of knowledge!

“Read” (*Iqra*) was the first word or command revealed in the Quran, and reading is one of the means to acquire knowledge. Because of the significance of knowledge, Imam Al-Bukhari رضي الله عنه

(1) ‘Ma’arij al-Qabool’ with Abridgment by Al-Hafiz Al-Hakami
(2) Quran 3:18

included in his book and named it “*The Book of Knowledge*.” One of these chapters was titled: “Knowledge comes before speech and action.” The proof is that Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ فَأَعْلَمَ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لَذُنُوبِكُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلِّبَكُمْ وَمَتَوَلِّكُمْ ﴾ [سورة محمد: 19]

“Then know that none has the right to be worshiped except Allah and seek forgiveness for your sin and the believers.” (1)

So, Allah ﷻ began with knowledge before speech and action.

One must have the necessary and general knowledge of what is meant by ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.’ One must understand what it is affirming and negating. One must know what it is he is testifying and what it concerns. A testimony about something that one does not have any knowledge about is unacceptable. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ إِيَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ [سورة الزخرف: 86]

“Save him who bears witness unto the truth knowingly.” (2)

Similarly, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever dies knowing that there is no one worthy of worship except Allah shall enter Paradise (*Jannah*).” (3)

The Knowledge of ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ and it’s concept of upholding Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is mandatory upon every Muslim. Everyone is required to know it. It is the reason we began the *Right Belief Series* with “*Know Your Lord*.”

2. Certainty (*Yaqeen*) which negates Doubt

The first condition must lead to the second condition. The second condition is to have Certainty (*Yaqeen*), which is the fruit of knowledge. In Islam, knowledge is not the objective; instead, learning is a means to have a firm and decisive belief and thus acting upon these beliefs. Therefore, the knowledge is useless if it does not lead to Knowledge of Certainty (*Ilm Al-Yaqeen*), as opposed to suspicious and Questionable Knowledge (*Ilm Al-Zhann*), uncertainty, and delusion.

So, to have Certainty (*Yaqeen*) in Allah ﷻ is to believe in His Actions of Lordship, His unique and inequivalent Names and Attributes, Him being the only One worthy of worship, and

(1) Quran 47:19

(2) Quran 43:86

(3) Sahih Muslim

obedience with no partners, and is a condition for the validity of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh.' Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ ﴾
[سورة الحجرات:15]

“Only those are the believers who have believed in Allah and His Messenger and afterward doubt not but strive with their wealth and their lives for the Cause of Allah. Those! They are truthful.” (1)

According to the beliefs of the three praised generations (*Al-Salaf Al-Salih*), our Faith (*Iman*) increases and decreases between three levels of Certainty (*Yaqeen*): the Knowledge of Certainty (*Ilm Al-Yaqeen*), to Visualization of Certainty (*Ain Al-Yaqeen*), and to the Truth of Certainty (*Haq Al-Yaqeen*). Please refer to chapter two in “*Know Your Lord*” for more details on this subject. (2) Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ وَإِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَالسَّاعَةُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا قُلْتُمْ مَا نَدْرِي مَا السَّاعَةُ إِنْ نَظُنُّ إِلَّا ظَنًّا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُستَقِينِ ﴾ [سورة الجاثية:32]

“And when it was said: "Verily! Allah's Promise is the truth, and there is no doubt about the coming of the Hour," you said, "We know not what the Hour is, we do not think it but as a conjecture, and we have no firm convincing belief (therein).” (3)

There are further three levels under the Knowledge of Certainty (*Ilm Al-Yaqeen*) and if our Faith (*Iman*) dips down into one of them willingly and knowingly, it will negate our Certainty (*Yaqeen*) in 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh.' These are suspicions, doubts, and illusions.

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ sent him with his shoes and said to him: 'Whoever you meet behind this garden that testifies 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' with Certainty (*Yaqeen*) in his heart then give him the glad tidings of Paradise (*Jannah*).' (4)

3. Acceptance which negates Rejection

The third condition of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' is acceptance. If a person fulfilled the first two conditions of Knowledge (*Ilm*) and Certainty (*Yaqeen*), the third condition must follow. The acceptance of whatever that testimony implies must be with the heart, tongue, and limbs. Whoever refuses to accept to say 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' with all its implications, even if he knows that it is accurate and is sure about its truth, is a Disbeliever (*Kafir*). This refusal to accept it is

(1) Quran 49:15

(2) Know Your Lord by Karim AbuZaid, Chapter 2

(3) Quran 45:32

(4) Sahih Muslim

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

sometimes due to pride, envy, or other reasons. In any case, the testimony is not invalid without its unconditional acceptance.

This condition also means that the Muslim believes in whatever is stated in the Quran or stated by the Prophet ﷺ, without any right to choose what he wants to accept and what he wants to reject. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ﴾ [سورة البقرة: 85]

“Do you believe in part of the Book and reject part of it? And what is the reward of those who do so save ignominy in the life of the world, and on the Day of Resurrection they will be consigned to the most grievous doom.” (1)

Allah ﷻ also said,

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا لِمُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَىٰ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُّبِينًا﴾ [سورة الأحزاب: 36]

“It is not for a believing man or believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter, to have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allah, and His Messenger has indeed strayed in plain error.” (2)

Often, we come across individuals who accepted ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ with their hearts, based on knowledge, to the extent that they developed Certainty (*Yaqeen*). Although they have Certainty (*Yaqeen*) in ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*,’ they still refuse to come in front of the community to declare it with the tongue. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّا لَتَارِكُوا آلِهَتِنَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَجْنُونٍ ﴿٣٦﴾ بَلْ جَاءَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَدَقَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾ [سورة الصافات: 35-38]

“Truly when it was said to them: ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*,’ (None has the right to be worshiped but Allah), 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?’” (3)

(1) Quran 2:85

(2) Quran 33:36

(3) Quran 37:34-36

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

Abu Talib, the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ said, “I know Mohammed's religion is the best, and had it not been for fear of being rebuked over leaving the way of my ancestors, I would have said ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh.*’” So, Abu Talib knew it, was certain about it, but he refused to say it even at the deathbed when the Prophet ﷺ asked him to say it.

When the time of the death of Abu Talib approached, Allah's Messenger ﷺ went to him and found Abu Jahl Bin Hisham and Abdullah Bin Abi Umaiya Bin Al-Mughira by his side. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said to Abu Talib, “O Uncle! Say: None has the right to be worshiped but Allah, a sentence with which I shall be a witness (i.e., argue) for you before Allah.” Abu Jahl and Abdullah Bin Abi Umaiya said, “O Abu Talib! Are you going to denounce the religion of Abdul Muttalib?”

Allah's Messenger ﷺ kept on inviting Abu Talib to say ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh.*’ In contrast, they (Abu Jahl and Abdullah) kept on repeating their statement till Abu Talib said as his last statement that he was on the religion of Abdul Muttalib and refused to say, 'None has the right to be worshiped except Allah.' (1)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, “I will keep on asking Allah's forgiveness for you unless I am forbidden (by Allah).” Allah ﷻ *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* then revealed a Verse (*Ayah*) concerning him. Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* said,

﴿ مَا كَانِ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أُولَىٰ قُرْبَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴾
[سورة التوبة: 113]

"It does not befit the Prophet and those who believe that they should invoke (Allah) for forgiveness for pagans even though they are of Kinship after it has become clear to them that they are companions of the fire." (2)

4. Submission which negates Abandoning

The fourth condition of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is submission and Compliance (*Inqiyad*). It implies the actual physical validation by deeds. It is one of the primary meanings of the word Islam itself, "the submission to the will and commands of Allah." Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* commands this in the Quran,

﴿ وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ ﴾ [سورة الزمر: 54]

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari
(2) Quran 9:113

“And turn in repentance and obedience with true Faith to your Lord and submit to Him.”
(1)

Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** has made it a condition of Faith (*Iman*) that one submits to the command of Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** and His Messenger ﷺ. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿ فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّى يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴾
[سورة النساء: 65]

“But nay, by your Lord, they will not truly believe until they make you [the Messenger of Allah] judge of what is in dispute between them and find within themselves no dislike of that which you decide and submit with full submission.” (2)

The condition of submission is referred to as obedience and compliance. All of these are interchangeable terms which mean the same thing if they are mentioned individually. However, they separate in their meanings once they appear together in the same sentence: submission by the heart, obedience, and compliance by the whole body. We need to remember that this condition includes the abandonment of disobedience. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿ وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ، ﴾ [سورة الزمر: 54]

“And turn in repentance and obedience with true Faith (Islamic Monotheism) to your Lord and submit to Him (in Islam).” (3)

It does not mean that the true believer never falls into sin. Indeed, true believers do commit sins. But if they admit that their act is a sin and is consistent with their obligation to submit to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**, then they have not violated the soundness of their testimony of faith ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh.*’

The true meaning of this condition is to have no reservations regarding fulfilling the commands of Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** and His Messenger ﷺ. When Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** and His Messenger ﷺ command you to do something, right away you must say “I hear and obey.”

The slogan of our servitude to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** is “we hear and obey.” We may indeed fall short in fulfilling some of the commands of Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** and His Messenger ﷺ. However, we must remember that Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** legislated Repentance (*Taubah*) to return to Him right away.

(1) Quran 39:54

(2) Quran 4:65

(3) Quran 39:54

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه said, "When Allah revealed the following Verse (*Ayah*): "To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it, Allah will bring you to account for it. Then He will forgive whom He wills and punish whom He wills, and Allah is over all things capable." The Companions (*Sahabah*) of the Messenger ﷺ were distressed by that. They came to the Messenger ﷺ and knelt and said: "O Messenger of Allah, we have been enjoined to do deeds that we can do, such as Prayer (*Salah*), Fasting, *Jihad*, and Charity (*Sadaqah*). But now, this Verse (*Ayah*) has been revealed to you, and we cannot bear [the weight of] its burden."

So, the Messenger ﷺ said: "Do you mean to say what the People of the two Revealed Books before you said: "We hear, and we disobey (*Sami'naa wa' Asaynaa*)?" Instead, it would be best if you said: "We hear, and we obey. [We seek] Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the [final] destination." When the people started saying that and it flowed smoothly upon their tongues, Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, abrogated it and so revealed: "Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity. It will have [the consequence of] what [good] it has gained, and it will bear [the consequence of] what [evil] it has earned. "Our Lord, do not impose blame upon us if we have forgotten or erred." (1)

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Allah has overlooked for my Community (*Ummah*) that which an individual utters to himself in his soul so long as he does not act upon it or speak with it." (2)

5. Truthfulness which negates Lying

Truthfulness is the fifth condition of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' which negates lying, falsehood, and it is to say the Testimony of Faith (*Kalimah*) whole-heartedly, and truthfully, and to make one's speech, and action in accordance with what is in one's heart. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿الْمَرْءُ ۖ أَحْسِبُ النَّاسَ أَنْ يَتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ﴾ [سورة العنكبوت: 2]

"Alif-Lam-Mim. 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 Allah will certainly make (it) known (the truth of) those who are sincere and will certainly make (it) known (the falsehood of) those who are liars (although Allah knows all that before putting them to test)." (3)

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(3) Quran 29:1-3

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

Truthfulness will distinguish the faithful adherents to 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' from those who say it as lip service like the Hypocrites (*Munafiqun*) who said it falsely. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَبِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨﴾ يُخَدِّعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَمَا يُخَدِّعُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾﴾
[سورة البقرة: 10] { فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ }

"And of mankind, there are some (hypocrites) who say: 'We believe in Allah and the Last Day' while in fact, they believe not. They (think to) deceive Allah and those who believe while they only deceive themselves and perceive (it) not! In their hearts is a disease (of doubt and hypocrisy), and Allah has increased their disease. A painful torment is theirs because they used to tell lies." (1)

Mu'adh Bin Jabal رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There is none who testifies that 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' and that 'Muhammad is His slave and Messenger' truthfully from his heart except that Allah prohibits him from entering the Fire (*Jahannam*)."⁽²⁾

Allah ﷻ made 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' a reason to be saved from the Fire (*Jahannam*) for the one who says this statement, conditional by saying it truthfully from his heart. Merely pronouncing it does not benefit the one who says it unless there is an agreement with the heart.

Narrated Shaddad Bin Al-Had رضي الله عنه that a man from among the Bedouins came to the Prophet ﷺ and believed in him and followed him, and then he said: "I will emigrate with you." The Prophet ﷺ told one of his Companions (*Sahabah*) to look after him.

During one battle, the Prophet ﷺ received some prisoners as spoils of war, and he distributed them, giving him (that Bedouin) a share. His Companions (*Sahabah*) gave him what had been allocated to him. He had been looking after some livestock for them, and when he came, they gave him his share. He said: "What is this?" They said: "A share that the Prophet has allocated to you." He took it and brought it to the Prophet ﷺ and said: "What is this?" He said: "I allocated it to you." He said: "It is not for this that I followed you. Rather I followed you so that I might be shot here – and he pointed to his throat – with an arrow and die and enter Paradise (*Jannah*)."
He said: "If you are sincere toward Allah, Allah will fulfill your wish."

Shortly after that, they got up to fight the enemy; then, he was brought to the Prophet ﷺ; he had pointed to. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Is it him?" They said: "Yes." He said: "He was sincere toward Allah, and Allah fulfilled his wish." Then, the Prophet ﷺ shrouded him in his cloak and out in front of him and offered the Funeral Prayer (*Salat Al-Janazah*). During his Supplication

(1) Quran 2:8-10

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(*Dua*'), he said: "O Allah, this is Your slave who went out as an immigrant (*Muhajir*) for your sake and was killed as a Martyr (*Shaheed*); I am a witness to that." (1)

6. Sincerity which negates Polytheism (*Shirk*)

The sixth condition of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is sincerity. Sincerity negates Polytheism (*Shirk*) whether Minor (*As-Saghir*) or Major (*Al-Akbar*). Mu'adh Ibn Jabal رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, "No one will say, "There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah" sincerely from his heart without Allah forbidding him the Fire (*Jahannam*)." (2)

Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمته الله remarked regarding sincerity concerning the words 'There is no one worthy of worship except Allah' that it must depend on your compliance with, and acceptance of, the obligations which this statement places upon you. These obligations are represented by the Islamic Law (*Shari'ah*), which itself is an elaboration of the Declaration of Faith (*Kalimah*). It means that you believe in whatever Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has revealed that you follow His commandments and avoid what He has forbidden. One who is truly sincere in this belief will abide by it completely. The complete protection of the Islamic Law (*Shari'ah*) is only assured by full compliance with it. Likewise, absolute security from punishment only comes from total obedience to it. (3)

The Prophet ﷺ said, "My Intercession (*Shafa'ah*) is for whoever bears witness that there is no god but Allah sincerely, whose heart believes his tongue, and whose tongue believes his heart." (4)

Ibn Rajab رحمته الله added: "As for those who give lip service to the words "There is no worthy of worship except Allah," but then follow Satan (Shaytan) in disobedience and contentiousness, their actions have made clear the emptiness of their words and the weakness of their belief. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بَغَيْرِ هُدًى مِّنَ اللَّهِ﴾ [سورة القصص: 50]

“And who goes farther astray than he who follows his desires without guidance from Allah?” (5)

We must purify our deeds by cleansing our intentions of all traces of reverence towards any created thing. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

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- (1) Sunan Al Nasai
 - (2) Sunan Ibn Majah
 - (3) Al-Fawa'id
 - (4) Sahih Muslim
 - (5) Quran 28:50

﴿أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الخَالِصُ﴾ [سورة الزمر:3]

“Is not to Allah that sincere faith is due?” (1)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى also said,

﴿وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقِيَمَةِ﴾ [سورة البينة:5]

“And they are not ordered to anything else other than to worship Allah, keeping the religion pure for Him, as men by nature upright.” (2)

Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah raises by my Intercession (*Shafa’ah*) whoever says, ‘There is no god worthy of worship except Allah’ from the depths of his heart with a complete purity of devotion.” (3)

Utban Ibn Malik رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Certainly Allah has forbidden the Fire (*Jahannam*) for anyone who says, ‘There is no god but Allah,’ and who seeks by these words only the pleasure of Allah.” (4)

7. Love which negates Hate

To love ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ is a condition for its correctness; to love that which it necessitates of commands and prohibitions, to love its adherents, meanwhile, to hate to violate its terms and obligations, and hates to be thrown into the Fire (*Jahannam*). Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ﴾
[سورة البقرة:165]

“And of humanity are some who take (for worship) others besides Allah as rivals (to Allah). They love them as they love Allah. But those who believe love Allah more (than anything else).” (5)

In the above Verse (*Ayah*), Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is telling us that a real sign of loving Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is to never associate anyone in worship with Him. Unlike the Polytheists (*Mushrikun*),

(1) Quran 39:3

(2) Quran 98:5

(3) Sahih Muslim

(4) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(5) Quran 2:165

the grave worshipers claim that they love Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Yet, they appoint rivals in worship with Him, who they love and revere more than Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿ قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴾
[سورة التوبة: 24]

"Say: If your fathers, your sons, your brethren, your wives, your tribe, the wealth you have acquired, merchandise for which you fear that there will be no sale or dwellings you desire are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and strive in His way: then wait till Allah brings His command to pass. Allah guides not wrongdoing folk." (1)

Anas Ibn Malik رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever has three traits within himself will find the sweetness of Faith (*Iman*): one who loves Allah and His Messenger more than anything else, one who loves a servant only for the sake of Allah, and one who hates to turn back to unbelief after Allah has saved him, just as he hates to be thrown into the Fire (*Jahannam*)." (2)

The Prophet ﷺ in the above Narration (*Hadith*) is giving us three signs. If we have these three signs, then we have the love for '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*,' a condition for its correctness. As a result of having this love, a believer will taste the sweetness of Faith (*Iman*). The first sign is to love Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and His Messenger ﷺ more than anything else. The second is to love the adherents of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' for the sake of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. The third is to hate to violate its obligations like you hate to be thrown in the Fire (*Jahannam*).

Another sign is to follow His Messenger ﷺ, follow his example, and accept his guidance. Al-Hasan Al-Basri رضي الله عنه mentioned: There were people who claimed the love of Allah, so Allah tried them with this Verse (*Ayah*): "Say (O Muhammad to mankind): 'If you (really) love Allah then follow me (i.e., accept Islamic Monotheism, follow the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition), Allah will love you and forgive you of your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.' Say (O Muhammad): 'Obey Allah and the Messenger.' But if they turn away, then Allah does not like the disbelievers." (3) (4)

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Everyone from my Community (*Ummah*) will enter Paradise (*Jannah*), except the one who refuses to enter." They

(1) Quran 9:24

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(3) Tafsir Ibn Kathir Surat Al-Imran Verses 31-32

(4) Quran 3:31-32

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asked: “O Messenger of Allah, who would refuse?” He said: “Whoever obeys me enters Paradise (*Jannah*) and whoever disobeys me has refused to come.” (1)

It should also be known that loving Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* cannot be complete except by loving what He loves and disliking what He dislikes. There is no way to understanding what Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* loves and is pleased with or what He hates and rejects except by following what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordered, and keeping away from what he prohibited.

Therefore, loving Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* necessitates loving the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, believing in him, and following him. This is why loving Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* is connected to loving the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and is mentioned in many places in the Quran. Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* said,

﴿ قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾

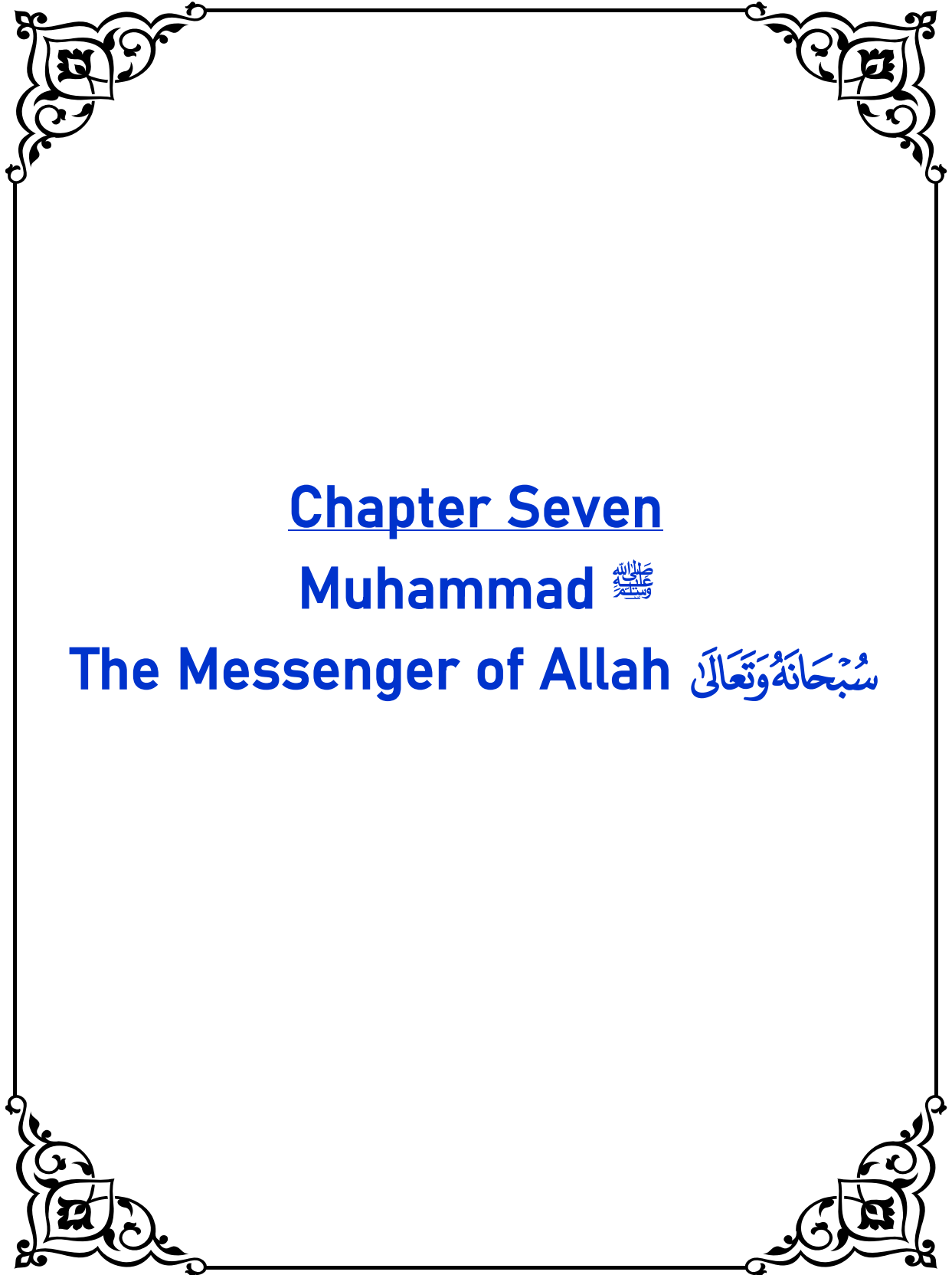
[سورة التوبة: 24]

“If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your kindred, the wealth that you have gained, the commerce in which you fear a decline and the dwellings in which you delight ... are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving hard and fighting in His Cause, then wait until Allah brings about His Decision (torment). And Allah guides not the people who are Al-Fâsiqûn (the rebellious, disobedient to Allah).” (2)

All of these are signs of the presence of the conditions of love. It is not conceivable to have love without its prerequisites being present.



(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari
(2) Quran 9:24



Chapter Seven

Muhammad ﷺ

The Messenger of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى



The declaration “*Muḥammadur-Rasūlu-llāh*” (Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) is the second part of the Testimony of Faith (*Kalimah*), and is as important as the first one. Both are integral part of the *Shahadah* and must be fulfilled. They simply cannot be separated. The first part can be interpreted with "There is no one worthy of worship except the Messenger of Allah," and the second part is "No one has the right to be followed except the Messenger of Allah."

When we testify that Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah, this testimony reflects our firm belief that Allah ﷻ chose Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to be His Messenger and to place His final message to mankind with him. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ﴾ [سورة الأنعام: 124]

“Allah knows best with whom to place His message.” (1)

When a Muslim articulates the Declaration of Faith (*Kalimah*) ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh Muḥammadur-Rasūlu-llāh*’ he basically means: “I bear witness that there is no one worthy of my worship except Allah, and I bear witness that Allah sent to me Prophet Muhammad to guide me, and to show me how to worship Allah.”

We have people who stray from Islam because they refuse to believe in the second part of the Testimony of Faith (*Kalimah*) which is “*Muḥammadur-Rasūlu-llāh*” (Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah). They only follow the previous Messengers, who were sent before Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Such as how the Christians stop at the message of Islam as far as Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Jews stop at the message of Islam as far as Prophet Musa (Moses) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. They are both called Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) in Islam. Allah ﷻ said regarding them,

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ - وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ - وَيَقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٥٠﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا﴾

[سورة النساء: 151]

“Indeed, those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers, and they wish that they differentiate between Allah and His Messengers, and they say, "We believe in some and we disbelieve in others." And they wish that they take between that a way. Those - they (are)

(1) Quran 6:124

the disbelievers truly. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a punishment humiliating.” (1)

Muslims utter the second part of the Testimony of Faith (*Kalimah*) *Muhammadur-Rasūlu-llāh* (Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah). Yet, sometimes they stray from the straight path and from Islam itself because they are not true to the second part of the Declaration of Faith (*Kalimah*) properly.

Nowadays, many Muslims violate the rights of the first part of the Declaration of Faith (*Kalimah*) ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ unknowingly, because they were systematically deprived of its knowledge. As for the second part, ‘*Muhammadur-Rasūlu-llāh*,’ many Muslims chose to go against the Tradition of the Prophet ﷺ (*Sunnah*) knowingly. Instead, they give precedence to the societal norms, cultural practices, their ancestor’s, their Imam’s, Scholar’s, and Shaykh’s way over the Tradition of Muhammad ﷺ (*Sunnah*). Allah ﷻ said,

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا نَقْدِمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ﴾ [سورة الحجرات:1]

“When Allah said to them; O you who believe! Do not put (yourselves) forward before Allah and His Messenger, and fear Allah. Verily! Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.” (2)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ – Conditions

Bearing witness that Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah ﷻ comes with certain conditions, exactly like the first part of the Testimony of Faith (*Kalimah*) ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ has conditions for its correctness and validity. The second part ‘*Muhammadur-Rasūlu-llāh*’ (Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) necessitates specific requirements for it to be valid.

1. Affirm that He ﷺ is Sent to all of Mankind

One must affirm that Allah ﷻ sent Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to all of mankind as the last Messenger, who came to deliver the same message of Monotheism (*Tawheed*), as the other Prophets and Messengers before him did. When we utter the second part of the Declaration of Faith (*Kalimah*) ‘*Muhammadur-Rasūlu-llāh*’ (Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah), we testify that Allah ﷻ sent the Prophet ﷺ to all of mankind until the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). Allah ﷻ said,

﴿قُلْ يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي﴾ [سورة الأعراف:158]

(1) Quran 4:150-151

(2) Quran 49:1

"Say [O Muhammad]: O Mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah." (1)

As for him delivering the same message as the Prophets and Messengers before him, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

{إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَى
وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا } [سورة النساء: 163]

“Indeed, we have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], as We revealed to Nuh (Noah) and the Prophets after him. And we revealed to Ibrahim (Abraham), Ismail (Ishmael), Ishaq (Isaac), Yaqub (Jacob), the Descendants, Isa (Jesus), Ayub (Job), Yunus (Jonah), Haroon (Aaron), and Soliman (Solomon), and Daud (David), we gave the book [of Psalms].” (2)

As for the proof for his being the seal of the Messengers, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿ مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴾
[سورة الأحزاب: 40]

“Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the Prophets and Allah is Ever All-Aware of everything Quran.” (3)

Consequently, it is obligatory upon everyone from the Prophet ﷺ until the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) to believe in and follow the Prophet ﷺ. It also implies that the Prophet's ﷺ teachings, which include both the Quran and his inspired Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*), are valid and obligatory upon mankind until the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). Some Muslims think that the Prophet's ﷺ message is outdated and does not suit the time, because it is almost 1500 years old. They must realize that they are going against their testimony and is blasphemous if someone holds this position knowingly and willfully; then they are out of the fold of Islam as well.

2. Affirm Everything the Prophet ﷺ Said

One must affirm everything Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said about His Messenger ﷺ with no exaggeration or negligence, including honesty and trustworthiness.

(1) Quran 7:158

(2) Quran 4:163

(3) Quran 33:40

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

The fact that Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** chose the Prophet ﷺ to convey His message implies some characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**, due to His Divine justice, wisdom, knowledge, and mercy, would not choose one who is treacherous or lying to be His Messenger. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** would not select anyone for such a critical mission whom He knew would not convey the message or who would use the position to his advantage.

Other examples of things which Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said about Prophet Muhammad ﷺ:

A. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** sent him as a witness, bearer of glad tidings, and a warner.

Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَهِيدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ﴿٤٥﴾ وَدَاعِيًا إِلَى اللَّهِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَسِرَاجًا مُنِيرًا ﴿٤٦﴾﴾
[سورة الأحزاب: 45-46]

“O Prophet (Muhammad)! Verily, we have sent you as a witness, and a bearer of glad tidings, and a warner. And as one who invites to Allāh [Islāmic Monotheism, i.e., to worship none but Allāh (Alone)] by His Leave, and as a lamp spreading light (through your instructions from the Qurān and the Tradition, the legal ways of the Prophet).” (1)

B. Despite being a Prophet, he is still a human being.

Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ اللَّهُ وَاحِدٌ ۚ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ ۚ أَحَدًا ﴿١١٠﴾﴾
[سورة الكهف: 110]

“Say (O Muhammad): "I am only a man like you. It has been inspired that your Ilāh (God) is One Ilāh (God, i.e., Allāh). So, whosoever hopes for the Meeting of his Lord, lets him work righteousness, and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord.” (2)

C. He has no knowledge of the Unseen (*Ghaib*) except that which Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** revealed to him.

Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

(1) Quran 33:45-46

(2) Quran 18:110

﴿قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ لَأَسْتَكْتَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوءُ إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ﴾
 ﴿لَقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ [سورة الأعراف: 188]

Say (O Muhammad): “I possess no power of benefit or hurt to myself except as Allāh wills. If I knew the Unseen (*Ghaib*), I should have secured an abundance of wealth, and no evil should have touched me. I am but a warner, and a bringer of glad tidings unto people who believe.” (1)

D. One must accept Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as an example of how to live and behave in a way that is correct and pleasing to Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ said,

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا﴾
 [سورة الأحزاب: 21]

"Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example to follow for him who hopes in (a good meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much." (2)

E. He is to be taken as an example and obeyed without reservation as he speaks in the Name of Allah ﷻ and following him is obeying Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ said,

﴿قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾
 [سورة آل عمران: 31]

"Say (O Muhammad): If you love Allah, then follow Allah and me will love you and forgive you your sins." (3)

In the following Narration (*Hadith*), there are three individuals who assumed that they could be better than the Messenger ﷺ but they were wrong. They wanted to do more than the Messenger of Allah ﷻ. One of them tried to Fast every day, and the second wanted to pray the Voluntary Night Prayer (*Tahajjud*) every single night. The third wanted to stay away from marriage to avoid being distracted by family and children from Allah's ﷻ worship. The Prophet ﷺ has said, "I swear by Allah that I am the most fearful of Allah and most conscious of Him than all of you. But I also [as part of my Tradition] fast and break my fast, pray and sleep

(1) Quran 7:188

(2) Quran 33:21

(3) Quran 3:31

[at night], and marry women. Whoever turns away from my Tradition (*Sunnah*) is not from me [that is, is not one of my true followers]." (1)

In the above Narration (*Hadith*), the Prophet ﷺ explained that he is the most fearful of Allah ﷻ. Therefore, there is no excuse for anyone not to follow his example and guidance. Hence, he also stated that the one who turns away from his practice and model is not from him. One cannot truthfully claim to believe in and accept Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and at the same time, refuse to take his life as the example that one must strive to emulate.

3. Absolute Obedience

One must obey the Prophet ﷺ and take him as a judge and accept his judgment in all matters without reservations.

A. The obedience to the Prophet ﷺ is an order from Allah ﷻ

Allah ﷻ said,

﴿وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا﴾ [سورة الحشر:7]

“And whatever the Messenger (Muhammad) gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, abstain from it. And fear Allah, verily Allah is severe in punishment.” (2)

Allah ﷻ said,

﴿مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا﴾ [سورة النساء:80]

“He who obeys the Messenger (Muhammad), has indeed followed Allāh, but he who turns away, then we have not sent you (O Muhammad) as a watcher over them.” (3)

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Whoever obeys me, he obeys Allah. And whoever disobeys me, he disobeys Allah. And whoever follows the ruler I appoint he follows me and whoever disobeys the ruler he disobeys me.” (4)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: “Everyone in my Community (*Ummah*) will enter Paradise (*Jannah*) except those who refuse. The Companions (*Sahabah*) said: "Oh, Allah's Messenger

(1) Sahih Muslim

(2) Quran 59:7

(3) Quran 4:80

(4) Sahih Al-Bukhari

who will refuse?" The Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever obeys me will enter Paradise (*Jannah*), and whoever disobeys me has refused to enter it." (1)

Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا فَضَّيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا سَلِيمًا ﴾
[سورة النساء: 65]

But Nay, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you judge in all disputes between them and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions and accept them with full submission. (2)

Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ ﴾ [سورة النساء: 80]

“And He who obeys the Messenger has indeed obeyed Allah.” (3)

B. We must believe that the laws (*Shari'ah*) which Allah ﷻ revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ have abolished and abrogated all previous legislation, including the Mosaic Law (Laws of Moses).

Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴾ [سورة آل عمران: 85]

"And whoever desires a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter, he shall be one of the losers." (4)

C. Firm Belief in Everything the Prophet ﷺ Told Us

One must believe in all matters that the Prophet ﷺ believes in and told us about. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ﴾ [سورة النجم: 3-4]

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari
(2) Quran 4:65
(3) Quran 4:80
(4) Quran 3:85

“He does not speak from his desire; it (his speech) is only a revelation inspired [to him].”
(1)

Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** also said,

﴿مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ﴾ [سورة النساء: 80]

“He who obeys the Messenger, obeys Allah.” (2)

Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿ءَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ [سورة البقرة: 285]

“The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and so do the believers.” (3)

One of these things which we must have firm belief in are the things which will occur in the future, or after we die, such as the signs of the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), the events of the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), Paradise (*Jannah*), and Hell (*Jahannam*) etc.

D. One Must Love the Messenger ﷺ

A complete Faith (*Iman*) requires that one loves the Prophet ﷺ more than anyone or anything else of this world. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ﴾ [سورة التوبة: 24]

“Say: If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your kindred, the wealth that you have gained, the commerce in which you fear a decline, and the dwellings in which you delight are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger, and striving hard and fighting in His cause, then wait until Allah brings about His Decision (torment). And Allah guides not the disobedient people.” (4)

(1) Quran 53:3-4

(2) Quran 4:80

(3) Quran 2:285

(4) Quran 9:24

The Prophet ﷺ has said about himself, “None of you truly believes until I am more beloved to him than his parents [lit. Father], his children [lit. son] and all of mankind.” (1)

And to do so, one must learn about him, study his Biography (*Seerah*) thoroughly. To develop the required love, honoring and respect for him, one must know about his morals, sacrifices for spreading Monotheism (*Tawheed*), and patience with his opponents, all increasing his appreciation of him. The more we learn about his life and characteristics, the more we will grow in love for him.

E. Affirm the Prophet's ﷺ Delivery of a Complete Message

One must believe that the Prophet ﷺ delivered Allah's ﷻ message faithfully just as he received it without any deficiency.

Imam Malik (2) said: "Whoever introduces innovation into Islam thinking that it is good, is implying that Muhammad ﷺ betrayed his mission because Allah ﷻ said,

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا﴾ [سورة المائدة:3]

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

Hence, if anyone claims that the Prophet ﷺ did not convey the entire message or compromised it in any way, then he implies that Allah ﷻ did not know who the correct or best person was to be a Messenger, which is apparent Disbelief (*Kufr*).

The Prophet ﷺ himself said, "I left you on a bright path whose night and day are alike. No one strays from it after me except the one who is destroyed."

The Prophet ﷺ conveyed all the guidance and revelation that he received from Allah ﷻ. He communicated and explained it clearly. One is also testifying that the Prophet ﷺ conveyed all the aspects of the religion—its fundamental and secondary elements. There is no part of the faith that one need for his guidance that was not conveyed to humanity or that Allah ﷻ or the Prophet ﷺ may have possibly forgotten.

Therefore, when this complete and clear guidance from the Prophet ﷺ is present, there is no need for any Muslim to turn to other sources. There is no need for one to turn to the books of the Jews or Christians. Indeed, the Prophet ﷺ told Umar (رضي الله عنه) when he saw him reading the Torah,

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Al-Itissam-Al Shatibi

(3) Quran 5:3

that if Prophet Musa (Moses) عليه السلام were alive at his time, he would also have to follow Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. There is no need for any Muslim to turn to the Greek philosophers, for example, to learn about theology.

Muhammad ﷺ Rasul-Allah: Twelve Rules

1. Following the Prophet ﷺ in what he commands.
2. Obedience to the Prophet ﷺ is obedience to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.
3. Appoint the Prophet ﷺ as a judge to resolve our disputes.
4. Believe the Prophet ﷺ in what he informs.
5. Shunning what the Prophet ﷺ has prohibited.
6. Worshiping Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى alone the way the Prophet ﷺ instructed us.
7. Loving the Prophet ﷺ more than anything in the world.
8. Do not deliberately lie against the Prophet ﷺ by narrating or propagating fabricated Narration (*Hadith*).
9. Convey after the Prophet ﷺ even a single Verse (*Ayah*).
10. Enjoin good with good, and forbid evil without evil.
11. Have firm belief that the Prophet ﷺ has left us with all that leads to Paradise (*Jannah*), and he warned us about all that leads to the Hellfire (*Jahannam*).
12. The above prerequisites are not restricted to certain people or to a specific time.



Chapter Eight
**Worship: Pillars, Conditions
and Types**

Worship (*Ibadah*) is the right of Allah ﷻ upon us, and the purpose for which Allah ﷻ created us. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾ [سورة الذاريات:56]

“I did not create the *Jinn*, nor mankind, except to worship Me.” (1)

In this chapter, we will briefly provide the definition, conditions, pillars, and the types of Worship (*Ibadah*). Besides, we will shed some light on innovations.

Definition of Worship (*Ibadah*)

The Linguistic Definition

Submissiveness and lowliness (الذل والخصوع) is reflected in humbleness. When someone performs an act of worship, he is lowered, submissive, and humbled. The same is used with a horse if we can ride it comfortably you say “This horse was humbled, lowered, and made submissive,” or a road that is paved well and walking on it is easy, we call it a Lowered Path (طريق معبد).

It is how we understand the statement of the Prophet ﷺ regarding making Supplication (*Dua'*). An-Nu'man Ibn Basheer رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Supplication (*Dua'*) is worship." (2)

What the Prophet ﷺ meant here is that someone who makes Supplication (*Dua'*) shows desperation, lowliness, humbleness, and submissiveness more than what he may develop while performing other acts of worship such as Prayer (*Salah*), Obligatory Charity (*Zakah*), and Fasting.

Also, from the linguistic meaning of this word “*Ibadah*” (Worship) comes “*Taa'ah*” (Obedience), “*Inqiyaad*” (Compliance), and “*Ta'alluh*” (Devotion).

(1) Quran 51:56

(2) Al-Bukhari al-Adab al-Mufrad

The Technical Definition

As for the technical definition of “*Ibadah*” (Worship), below are a few selected definitions from some of our early scholars.

Ibn Kathir رحمه الله said concerning the explanation of the following Verse (*Ayah*):

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾ [سورة الذاريات:56]

“I did not create the *Jinn*, nor mankind, except to worship Me.” (1)

"And Worship (*Ibadah*) is obedience to Allah by acting upon what He commands and abandoning what He forbids; and this is the reality and essence of Islam. And the meaning of Islam is: submission and surrender (*Istislam*) to Allah - the Most High - along with the utmost compliance, humility, and submissiveness to Him." (2)

Ibn Kathir رحمه الله also said whilst explaining the above Verse (*Ayah*): "Indeed Allah - the Most High - created the creation so that they could worship Him alone, without associating any partner with Him. Whoever obeys Him will be completely rewarded, whereas whoever disobeys Him would be punished with a severe punishment. And He has informed that He is neither dependent, nor does He have any need for them. Rather, it is they who are in dire need of Him, in every condition and circumstance, since He is the One who created, sustains, and provides for them." (3)

Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله said, “Worship revolves around fifteen principles. Whosoever completes them has completed the stages of Servitude to Allah (*Ubudiyyah*). The explanation of this is that Worship (*Ibadah*) is divided between the heart, the tongue, and the limbs. And that for each one of these three come five types of rulings, covering all actions: Obligatory (*Wajib*), Recommended (*Mustahabb*), Prohibited (*Haram*), Disliked (*Makruh*), and Permissible (*Mubah*).” (4)

Imam Al-Qurtubi رحمه الله said, "The root of Worship (*Ibadah*) is humility and submissiveness. The various duties that have been prescribed upon the people are called Acts of Worship (*Ibaadaat*), since what is required is that these Acts of Worship (*Ibaadaat*) must be done with humility and submissiveness to Allah - the Highest." (5)

(1) Quran 51:56

(2) Tafsir Ibn Kathir Surat 51 Verse 56

(3) Tafsir Ibn Kathir 51:53

(4) Madarijus-Salikin (1/109)

(5) Jami' li-Ahkamil-Quran

Imam Al-Baghawi رحمه الله defined in a very beautiful way. He said, “Worship (*Ibadah*) is: obedience (*Taa'ah*) coupled with humbling of oneself (*Tadhallul*), and submissiveness (*Khudoo*), and the slave (*Abd*) is called as such due to his lowliness (*Dhillah*) and his compliance (*Inqiyaad*).” (1)

We left the best for last; the definition of Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله, who said: “Worship (*Ibadah*) is obedience to Allah by following that which He ordered upon the tongues of His Messengers.” Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله also said, “Worship (*Ibadah*) is a comprehensive term covering everything that Allah loves and is pleased with - whether saying, or actions, outward and inward.” (2)

Ibn Uthaymeen رحمه الله commented on the definition of Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله that it is the most precise, accurate and comprehensive definition. It brings together, everything that Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى loves and is pleased with, and this is summarized as the inward and outward sayings and actions. (3)

Types of Worship (*Ibadah*)

The worship (*Ibadah*), which Allah loves and is pleased with comprises speech (*Qawl*) and action (*Amal*), and this covers both what is inward and outward, and this then provides us with four categories:

1. The inward speech (affirmation), which is the heart's speech, is its belief; meaning the beliefs held in the heart are the sayings of the heart.
2. The outward speech, which is the speech of the tongue, and is expressed with the tongue, which includes testifying with ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*,’ remembering Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى, recitation of the Quran, asking forgiveness, and enjoining good and forbidding evil, teaching the religion, and the like.
3. The inward actions are the actions of the heart, emotions, and feelings, such as intention, sincerity, love, fear, hope, reliance, and so on.
4. The outward actions are the actions of the limbs, including the Prayer (*Salah*), Fasting, Obligatory Charity (*Zakah*), Pilgrimage (*Hajj*), and more.

Conditions of Worship (*Ibadah*)

For an act of Worship (*Ibadah*) to be valid, it must fulfill two conditions:

(1) Sharh us-Sunnah (1/53)

(2) Majmu' al-Fatawa (10/149)

(3) Majmou Fatawa Ibn Uthymeen

1. Sincere Intention

Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقِيَمَةِ ﴾ [سورة البينة:5]

"And they have been commanded no more than this: To worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion, being true (in faith); to establish regular Prayer (Salah), and to practice regular charity; and that is the Religion, right and straight." (1)

Allah ﷻ also said,

﴿ إِنَّمَا نَطْعِمُكُمْ لَوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكْرًا ﴾ [سورة الإنسان:9]

"We are feeding you for the sake of Allah. We do not expect from you any compensation or thanks." (2)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "The reward of actions depends upon the intentions, and every person will have the reward for that which he has intended. Thus, his migration was for Allah and his Messenger. His migration was for Allah and his Messenger, and he whose migration was for some worldly benefit or took the hand of a woman in marriage, his migration was for that which he migrated." (3)

Every action has an intention behind it, so you will only get the reward according to your intention. Hence, if you did it for other than the sake of Allah ﷻ, it will be rejected. So, it must agree with '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' (there is none worthy of worship except Allah).

2. Adherence

The Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever innovates into this affair of ours that is not from it shall have it rejected." (4)

In another Narration (*Hadith*) of Sahih Muslim: "Whoever does an action that is not from this affair of ours will have it rejected." (5)

It should not oppose, add, or remove anything from how the Prophet ﷺ performed it. If it is not following the Prophet's ﷺ Tradition (*Sunnah*), it will be rejected, even if the individual had a

(1) Quran 98:5

(2) Quran 76:9

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(4) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(5) Sahih Muslim

good intention. Due to the testification that ‘Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah,’ it entails that one worships Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى only with what the Prophet ﷺ prescribed.

Innovations (*Bid'ah*)

Based on the two conditions which validate the acts of worship in Islam (sincerity and adherence), innovated forms of worship, which have no evidence to sanction, are absolute innovations from all aspects.

Types of Innovations (*Bid'ah*)

Scholars categorized innovated forms of Worship (*Ibadah*) into two types:

1. Crystal-Clear or Absolute Innovation (*Al-Bid'ah Al-Haqeeqiyyah*)

Crystal-Clear Innovation (*Al-Bid'ah Al-Haqeeqiyyah*) is an act which is an Innovation (*Bid'ah*) in its essence, from all angles, which is very easy to refute and show its unlawfulness, because the practitioners of such innovative forms of Worship (*Ibadah*) have no evidence to validate their act. Regularly, when we rectify them committing an Innovation (*Bid'ah*) in the religion and call their act as such, they immediately ask those who are condemning the practice to produce a piece of evidence, but they are wrong regarding this request too.

We have a famous legal maxim which states that the basic rule is that, all acts of Worship (*Ibadah*) are Forbidden (*Haram*) except that which has evidence from the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*). The proof of this legal maxim is the same Narration (*Hadith*) of Aishah رضي الله عنها we quoted earlier when the Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever innovates into this affair of ours that is not from it shall have it rejected."⁽¹⁾ The ideal example for this type of Innovation (*Bid'ah*) is that of those who promote celebrating the birthday of the Prophet ﷺ despite the complete absence of the evidence.

2. Ambiguous Innovation (*Al-Bid'ah Al-Idafiyyah*)

Ambiguous Innovation (*Al-Bid'ah Al-Idafiyyah*) is the act that has a valid basis in the religion, but the violation typically is related to the timing, place, number of times, and how it is done.

An example of this type of Innovation (*Bid'ah*) is that of the man who sneezed next to Abdullah Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه and said, 'Alhamdulillah was Salamu ala Rasulillah.' Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه said: "I too say [at other times] 'Alhamdulillah was Salamu ala Rasulillah,' but this is not how

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

the Prophet ﷺ taught us. Rather he taught us to say, 'Alhamdulillah *ala kulli hal*' (praise be to Allah in all circumstances)." **(1)**

To conclude, it is well established that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى perfected His religion and left nothing, and His Messenger ﷺ fulfilled the trust and conveyed the complete truth. Hence, an act of worship that does not have the two conditions met (sincere intention and adherence) is fruitless.



(1) Sunan At-Tirmidhi and Al-Hakim

Chapter Nine
Polytheism (Shirk) in Allah's
سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى **Worship (Ibadah)**

In the first volume of the *Right Belief Series*, titled “*Know Your Lord*,” we presented Polytheism (*Shirk*) in Allah's Lordship, Names, and Attributes. In this current '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' *Worship Your Lord* edition of the series, we will present the subject of Polytheism (*Shirk*) in the area of Allah's *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* Worship (*Uluhiyyah*).

Polytheism (*Shirk*) in worship's definition is to associate others in worship with Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*. It is the one unforgivable sin in Islam if one dies on it without repenting.

Taking partners, rivals, or associates in worship with Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* means the rejection of Islam, and the act takes one outside the fold of Islam if it is done knowingly and willfully. Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* said,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا﴾
[سورة النساء: 116]

"Verily, Allah will not forgive the sin of setting up partners in worship with Him, but He forgives whom He wills sins other than that. And whoever sets up partners in worship with Allah, has indeed strayed far from the path." (1)

One of the benefits of good deeds is that they erase evil deeds committed before them. Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* said,

﴿إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرَى لِلذَّكِرِينَ﴾ [سورة هود: 114]

"Surely, good deeds erase bad deeds. That is a reminder for the mindful." (2)

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Follow the bad act with a good one to erase it.” (3)

The question which arises from both the above Verse (*Ayah*) and Narration (*Hadith*) is: Do bad deeds really erase good deeds?

The answer is “No,” but there is one bad deed that erases every good deed one has done, which is Polytheism (*Shirk*). Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* said to the Prophet ﷺ,

(1) Quran 4:116

(2) Quran 11:114

(3) At-Tirmidhi

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكَ لَئِن أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾ [سورة الزمر: 65]

"If you join others in worship with Allah, then surely all your deeds will be in vain, and you will certainly be among the losers." (1)

Polytheism (*Shirk*) is a sin that no Intercession (*Shafa'ah*) or ransom can rescue the perpetrator on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عليه السلام will attempt to intercede on behalf of his father but his petition will be rejected. In this segment of the Narration (*Hadith*), Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عليه السلام will say: "O Lord! You promised me not to disgrace me on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), and what will be more disgraceful to me than cursing and dishonoring my father?" Then Allah will say (to him), "I have forbidden Paradise (*Jannah*) for the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*)."⁽²⁾

Narrated by Anas Bin Malik رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ used to say, "A Disbeliever (*Kafir*) will be brought on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) and will be asked. Suppose you had as much gold as to fill the earth; would you offer it to ransom yourself? He will reply, Yes. Then it will be said to him, you were asked for something more comfortable than that (to join none in worship with Allah (i.e., to accept Islam, but you refused))."⁽³⁾

It is crucial to understand the types of Polytheism (*Shirk*), its manifestations, and categories. Many times Muslims fall into Polytheism (*Shirk*) unintentionally due to the lack of knowledge. There are two main types of Polytheism (*Shirk*) in Allah's Worship (*Uluhiyyah*), namely:

1. Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*)

Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) is the worship of others, along with Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. It is the chief form of Polytheism (*Shirk*); it is to direct acts of worship which are exclusive to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى towards others. It implies attributing some divinity to these associates. It mainly means the belief that these associates are the source of power, harm, or blessings besides Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) can be divided into four sub-categories:

A. Polytheism (*Shirk*) in Supplication (*Dua'*)

It implies invoking, supplicating, or praying to other deities besides Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. The most profound manifestation of it is to take an intermediary between Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and us, such as the grave worshipers, so they believe that the individual buried in the grave has some divine power. So, they offer their Supplications (*Dua'*), vows, and sacrifices to them, they appeal for

(1) Quran 39:65

(2) Sahih Muslim

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari

their help, and they share their needs with the dead person who is engraved, which is blasphemous.

The scholar's consensus is that whoever takes an Intermediary (*Wasilah*) between himself and Allah ﷻ, directs his Supplications (*Dua'*) to him, and asks him to intercede on his behalf is a Disbeliever (*Kafir*). Allah ﷻ describes this in a detailed manner. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿إِنْ تَدْعُوهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوا دَعَاءَكُمْ وَلَا يُسْمِعُوا مَا أَسْتَجَابُوا لَكُمْ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكْفُرُونَ بِشِرْكِكُمْ وَلَا يُنَبِّئُكَ مِثْلُ خَبِيرٍ﴾
[سورة فاطر: 14]

He said, "If you invoke them, they do not hear your Supplication (Dua'); and if they heard, they would not respond to you. And on the Day of Resurrection, they will deny your association. And none can inform you like [one] Acquainted [with all matters]."(1)

Allah ﷻ also said,

﴿فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا فِي الْفُلِ دَعَوْا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ فَلَمَّا بَجَّهْتُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ﴾ [سورة العنكبوت: 65]

"And when they embark on a ship, they invoke Allah, making their Faith pure for Him only, but when He brings them safely to land, behold, they give a share of their worship to others." (2)

B. Polytheism in Love (*Shirk Al-Mahabbah*)

It implies showing the love, which is supposed to be for Allah ﷻ alone, to others than Him. It was the first type of Polytheism (*Shirk*) which emerged in the face of this earth amongst the people of Prophet Nuh (Noah) ﷺ. They ended up loving five righteous community members so much that they ended up curving idols to revere them and supplicate to them; the love for these five pious individuals who had passed away filled their hearts, which is the king of the body.

Imagine, Allah ﷻ sent them Prophet Nuh (Noah) ﷺ who spent 950 years calling them back to the Pure Monotheism (*Tawheed*), and they said to him,

﴿وَقَالُوا لَا نَذَرُنَّ آلِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا نَذَرُنَّ وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا﴾ [سورة نوح: 23]

(1) Quran 35:14

(2) Quran 29:65

"And they have said: 'You shall not leave your gods, nor shall you leave Wadd, nor Suwa', nor Yaghuth, nor Ya'uq, nor Nasr (names of the idols)." (1)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِذْ يَرُونَ الْعَذَابَ أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعَذَابِ ﴾ [سورة البقرة: 165]

"And of humankind are some who take (for worship) others besides Allah as rivals (to Allah). They love them as they love Allah. But those who believe, love Allah more (than anything else). If only those who do wrong could see when they will see the torment, that all power belongs to Allah and that Allah is Severe in punishment." (2)

Guess who fell in the traps of this type of Polytheism (*Shirk*); the Christians, they love Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام to the extent of accepting the heresy that he is god. Hence our Messenger ﷺ warned us against this type of Polytheism (*Shirk*) and blocked ways that may lead to it. Narrated by Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that "I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, "Do not exaggerate in praising me as the Christians praised the son of Mariam (Mary), for I am only a Slave. So, call me the Slave of Allah and His Apostle."" (3)

C. Polytheism (*Shirk*) in the Intention

It implies intention, purpose, and determination in acts of worship and righteous deeds that may be good themselves but they are not done for the sake of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and instead are done for this worldly life. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said in this regard,

﴿ مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوفِّ إِلَيْهِم أَعْمَالَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْحَسُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ وَحَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُوا فِيهَا وَبِطُلُّ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾ [هود: 16]

"Those who desire this life and its glitter, to them We shall pay the price of their deeds in this same life in full measure. They are those for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter but the Fire. Vain are their designs and of no effect are their deeds."(4)

(1) Quran 71:23

(2) Quran 2:165

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(4) Quran 11:15-16

The word “*Niyyah*” (Intention) commonly refers to two elements. The first is to distinguish acts of worship from one another, like praying *Dhuhr* and *Asr*. They are almost identical; the only distinguishing factor is the intention, and also to identify what we do out of habit, and what we do as an act of worship, such as taking a bath to clean up and take a shower to uplift the major ritual impurity. The second element is to distinguish the intention behind the act, whether it is directed to Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* alone or Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* and others. This is what we mean by the Polytheism (*Shirk*) in the purpose and intention.

We also need to understand what we mean by Polytheism (*Shirk*) in the intention under Major Polytheism’s (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) category. However, if someone initially performs the acts of worship only to show off, like he prays, fasts, remembers Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*, and recites the Quran solely to impress others and win their praise, then he is committing Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*). So, the root motive and the purpose behind the act are others than Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*. We are not including the thought of showing off, which may occur while one is acting. Meanwhile, his initial intention was to do the act for the sake of Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*. This type falls under Polytheism’s (*Shirk*) third category, which we will explain later under the Hidden Polytheism (*Shirk Khafiyy*).

D. Polytheism (*Shirk*) in Obedience

It implies rendering obedience to any authority against the order of Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* when one submits to the rulings that are stipulated by those who are not authorized by Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* the Almighty, that state the lawful and the unlawful. Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* said,

﴿ أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ شَرَعُوا لَهُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا لَمْ يَأْذَنْ بِهِ اللَّهُ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةُ الْفَصْلِ لَفُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴾ [سورة الشورى: 21]

"Or have they partners with Allah (false gods), who have instituted a religion which Allah has not allowed. And had it not been for a decisive Word (gone forth already), the matter would have been judged between them. And indeed, for the Zalimun (polytheists and wrong doers), there is a painful torment." (1)

Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* said,

﴿ اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا لَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ سُبْحَانَهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴾ [سورة التوبة: 31]

(1) Quran 42:21

"They (Jews and Christians) took their Rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allah (by obeying them in things which they made lawful or unlawful according to their own desires without being ordered by Allah), and (they also took as their lord) Messiah, son of Maryam (Mary), while they (Jews and Christians) were commanded (in the Torah and the Gospel) to worship none but One Ilāh (God i.e., Allah), Lā ilāha illā Huwa (none has the right to be worshiped but He). Praise and Glory be to Him (far above is He) from having the partners they associate (with Him)." (1)

Once, while Allah's Messenger ﷺ was reciting the above Verse (*Ayah*), (2) Adi Bin Hatim رضي الله عنه said, "O Allah's Prophet! They do not worship them (rabbis and monks)." Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, "They certainly do. They (i.e., rabbis and monks) made legal things illegal and illegal things legal, and they (i.e., Jews and Christians) followed them; and by doing so, they worshiped them." (3)

Polytheism (*Shirk*) in the Lordship Paves the Way to Polytheism (*Shirk*) in Worship (*Ibadah*)

In conclusion, the one who commits Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) in Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى worship is generally due to his Polytheism (*Shirk*) in Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Lordship. Like we said, Oneness of Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Lordship necessities the Oneness in His worship. Similarly, Polytheism (*Shirk*) in Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Lordship is an introduction to Polytheism (*Shirk*) in His worship. Below are some of the causes of Polytheism (*Shirk*) in Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى worship:

1. One believes that others can create, give life and death, and control the universe's affairs along with Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. His belief will lead to loving them, fearing them, relying on them, hoping in them, invoking them, sacrificing to them, praying to them, besides Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, or associating with Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.
2. One believes that there is someone, whether human or *Jinn*, who has access to the unseen knowledge, such as palm readers, soothsayers, magicians, cup readers, and horoscope tellers. They will end up doing whatever it takes, whether lawful or unlawful, to inform you of the unseen they claim knowledge of having.
3. One believes that objects such as spells, love charms, turquoise beads, amulets (*Tamimah*, plural: *Tama'im*) which are things made from pearls or bones and worn on the necks of children or adults or hung up in houses or cars, can ward off evil (especially the

(1) Quran 9:31

(2) Tafsir At-Tabari, Vol.10, Page No. 114

(3) Narrated by Ahmad, At-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Jarir

evil eye). They believe these objects bring some benefits, without the permission of Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*.

4. One believes that there is someone who must be obeyed absolutely and unconditionally besides Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* because they have a special status with Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*, so he will submit to this individual regardless of whether it is permissible or forbidden whatever he wants, even if that goes against the religion.
5. One believes in the divinity, and the superhuman powers of a human being, whether a Prophet or Saint (*Wali*), so they pray to them or their name in association with Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*, prostrate, or offer sacrifices to them. It is the kind of Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) that puts one out of the fold of Islam.
6. One believes in the movement of the stars. For example when there is a rainfall he would say, "We have been given rain by such and such star," believing that the stars independently cause rain to fall without the permission of Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*.

Seven Penalties of Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*)

Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) is the most serious of all sins. If someone engages in it with full knowledge and deliberate intention, then below are some of the severe consequences of the act of Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*):

1. **Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) takes the Muslim out of the fold of Islam** if a Muslim commits it knowingly and willfully.
2. **Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) is the most extreme form of injustice.** Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* said on the tongue of Luqman,

﴿إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾ [سورة لقمان: 13]

“Indeed, Polytheism (*Shirk*) is a great injustice.” (1)

3. **Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) is a violation of Allah's *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* exclusive right, which is Monotheism (*Tawheed: Lā ilāha illa Allāh*).** Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ* said, I asked the Prophet ﷺ, "What is the greatest sin in the Sight of Allah?" He ﷺ said, "That you set up a rival unto Allah though He Alone created you." I said, "That is indeed a great sin." (2)

(1) Quran 31:13

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari

4. Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) is a form of defamation to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is The Glorified and Exalted, the Creator, the Sovereign, the Provider, the Giver of Life, and the One who causes death. The one who commits Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*), in a way, equates the creation being equal to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, the Creator of everything.

5. Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) is the one unforgivable sin if we meet Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى on Judgment's Day (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) while being guilty of it. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا﴾

[سورة النساء: 48]

“Indeed, Allah does not forgive setting up partners with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And whoever sets up partners with Allah has certainly fabricated a tremendous sin.” (1)

6. Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) is the only sin which goes away with all the good deeds. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكَتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾ بَلِ اللَّهُ فَعَّابٌ وَكُنْ مِنَ

الْمَشْكُرِينَ﴾ [سورة الزمر: 66]

“And it was already revealed to you and those before you: 'If you set up partners with Allah, your deeds would surely become worthless, and you would surely be among the losers.' Instead, worship Allah alone and be among the grateful.” (2)

7. Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) is the most wicked of Major Sins (*Al-Kaba'ir*).

Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه narrated: The Prophet ﷺ said thrice, "Shall I not inform you of the greatest of Major Sins (*Al-Kaba'ir*)?" They said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah!" He said, "Committing Polytheism (*Shirk*) and disobedience to parents." He sat up after he had been reclining and added, "And giving false witness." He continued to repeat it until we said, "We wish he would be quiet." (3)

(1) Quran 4:48

(2) Quran 39:65-66

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

2. Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*)

Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*) is the second category of Polytheism (*Shirk*) in Allah's **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** worship. Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*) does not result in apostasy (*Kufr*). However, it is graver than other Major Sins (*Al-Kaba'ir*) like adultery (*Zina*), but it still does not reach the same level of Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*).

One can distinguish Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) from Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*) if he calls in one criterion or guiding criteria, which is the belief and the intention behind the sayings or the actions. Sometimes, we may end up saying or doing certain things that we do not believe in them. These sayings are of Major Polytheism's (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) category, but because we did not believe what we said, or did, it is still considered Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*).

This category includes venerating individuals or objects excessively, but again does not go so far as ascribing Lordship to them besides Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**. Or, swearing by something other than Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**, while not attaching a divine status to them.

This applies to one who touches a thing seeking its Blessing (*Barakah*), when Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** has not created any Blessing (*Barakah*) in it, such as kissing the doors of the Mosques (*Masajid*), rubbing their thresholds, and seeking healing from their dust, and other such actions.

Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*) may sometimes take the form of outward actions, such as wearing talismans, strings, amulets and the like, and other words and deeds. And sometimes, it may be hidden, like a little bit of showing off.

The texts of the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) indicate that Polytheism (*Shirk*) and the ascribing of rivals to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** sometimes puts a person out of the fold of Islam, and sometimes does not. Hence, the scholars have stipulated guidelines to distinguish Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*) from Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*) when it is mentioned in the texts of Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*). These guidelines include the following:

1. Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*) refers to everything that Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** and His Messenger ﷺ have prohibited because they may lead to Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*). Hence, it is called Polytheism (*Shirk*) because it is liable to lead to Major Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Akbar*), like swearing by something or someone other than Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** The Almighty. The Prophet ﷺ prohibited it, and called it Polytheism (*Shirk*) and confirmed that the one who swears by anything other than Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** The Almighty had become a Polytheist (*Mushrik*). (1)

(1) At-Tirmidhi, Abu Daud, and Al-Haakim

2. Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*) is any act of worship or any religious deed done to gain praise, fame, or for worldly purposes, falls under this minor form, provided that the original intention behind the act was for Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** and the thought of showing off occurred within the action. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا﴾
[سورة الكهف: 110]

"Say (O Muhammad): 'I am only a man like you, it has been inspired to me that your Ilāh (God) is One Ilāh (God i.e., Allah). So, whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord.'" (1)

3. Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*) is the act which the Prophet ﷺ designated clearly as so.

Mahmoud Ibn Labeed **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ** narrated: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "The thing that I fear most for you is Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*)." They said: "O Messenger of Allah, what is Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*)?" He ﷺ said: "Showing off, for Allah will say on the Day when people are recompensed for their actions: 'Go to those for whom you were showing off with your deeds in the world and see what reward you find with them.'" (2)

4. Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*) are the words that the Prophet ﷺ interpreted as Polytheism (*Shirk*) or Disbelief (*Kufr*) in a manner that indicates that what is meant is a Minor form thereof and not the Major form.

It is narrated from Zayd Ibn Khaalid Al-Juhani **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ**: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ led the Morning Prayer (*Salat Al-Fajr*) for us at Al-Hudaybiyah following rainfall during the night. When the Prophet ﷺ finished, he turned to face the people and said to them: "Do you know what your Lord has said?" They said: "Allah and his Messenger know best." He said: "This morning one of My slaves became a believer in Me and one a disbeliever. As for him who said: 'We have been given rain by the grace of Allah and His mercy,' that one is a believer in Me, a disbeliever in the stars; and as for him who said: 'We have been given rain by such-and-such a star, that one is a disbeliever in Me, a believer in the stars.'" (3)

5. Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*) is the one when Polytheism (*Shirk*) is used in the texts of the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) in the indefinite form [without the definite article 'Al']. This usually refers to Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*), and there are many examples

(1) Quran 18:110

(2) Musnad Ahmed (Classified as Sahih by Al-Albani)

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

of this, such as when the Prophet ﷺ said: "Incantations, amulets, and love spells are Polytheism (*Shirk*)."⁽¹⁾

6. Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*) is what the Companions (*Sahabah*) understood from the texts of the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) that what was meant by Polytheism (*Shirk*) here was Minor, and not Major. Undoubtedly, understanding the Companions (*Sahabah*) carry weight because they are the most knowledgeable of the people, after the Prophet ﷺ concerning the religion of Allah ﷻ and the most knowledgeable as to the legislator's intent.

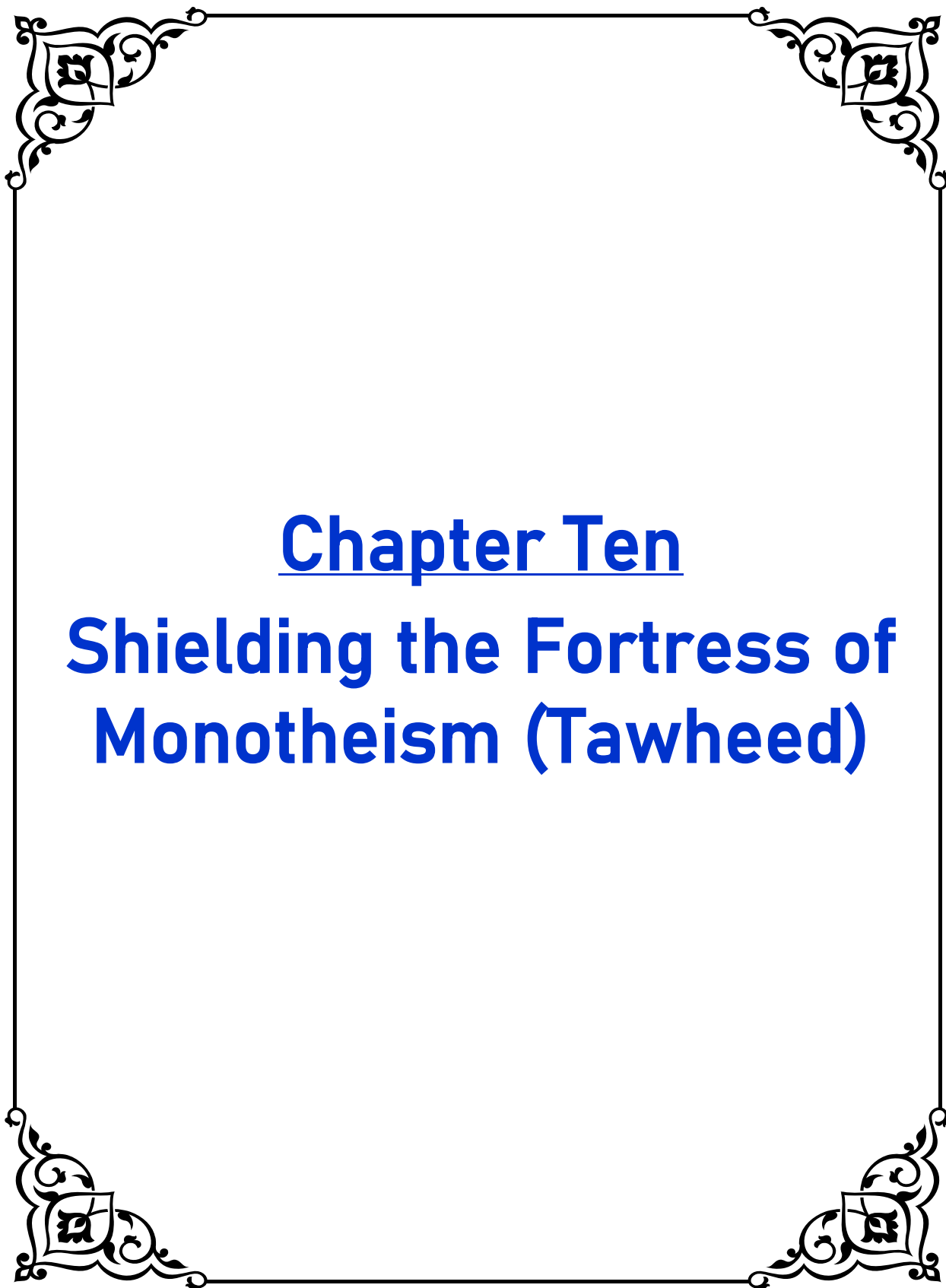
7. Minor Polytheism (*Shirk Al-Asghar*) includes a sub-category which is the Hidden Polytheism (*Shirk Khafiyy*), which implies being inwardly dissatisfied with the inevitable condition that Allah ﷻ ordained; it is conscientiously lamenting that if you had done or not done such and such or had you approached such and such, you would have had a better status.

The Prophet ﷺ said: "Hidden Polytheism (*Shirk Khafiyy*) in the Community (*Ummah*) is more inconspicuous than the creeping of a black ant on black rock in the night's pitch-darkness." And this inconspicuous Polytheism (*Shirk*) is expiated by saying thrice the following sentences within a day and a night: "O Allah! I take Your refuge from that I should ascribe anything as a partner in Your worship, being conscious of that, and I beg Your pardon for that sin I am not aware of."⁽²⁾



(1) Abu Daud (classified as Sahih by Al-Albani)

(2) Sunan Ibn Majah



Chapter Ten
**Shielding the Fortress of
Monotheism (Tawheed)**

All means that lead to the Prohibited (*Haram*) acts are Prohibited (*Haram*) as such, and blocking the ways of evil before it materializes is called “*Sad Al-Zarai*,” which is a legal principle on which scholars rely to derive religious rulings. These rulings aim to apply protective measures against imminent danger, risks, or actual attacks that could affect and compromise the primary five necessities in Islam: Monotheism (*Tawheed*), the life, family, the human mind, and the individual wealth. Perhaps we need to simplify this concept with the following examples as well as illustrate this legal principle in Islam.

The story of Prophet Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Hawa (Eve) in Paradise (*Jannah*) and how Allah ﷻ prohibited them from eating from the tree: Allah ﷻ did not say, “Do not eat from this tree,” instead, the command was quite clear, “Do not come near this tree.” There is a big difference between the two directives. “Do not come near this tree,” is at a higher level of prohibition than directly commanding, “Do not eat from this tree.”

Another example is the prohibition of intoxicants, and adultery, which affect two of the primary five necessities, the family, and the mind. Regarding intoxicants, Allah ﷻ said,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْحَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَمُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾ [سورة المائدة:90]

“O you who believe, intoxicants and gambling, idolatrous practices, and [divining with] arrows are abominable acts of Satan’s (Shaytan) handiwork. Avoid them so that you may prosper.” (1)

The command “Avoid it” linguistically means to keep away from, or declares that not only is it forbidden to drink but one must also stay away from the places where such practices are observed. The same applies to adultery (*Zina*). Allah ﷻ commanded,

{ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزَّيْنَةَ } [سورة الإسراء:32]

“Do not come near Zina (fornication/adultery).” (2)

This clearly means that one should stay away from lustful attractions to the opposite gender. The Prophet ﷺ considers gazing at the opposite sex with lustful eyes as adultery (*Zina*). Then what to speak of committing the act?

(1) Quran 5:90

(2) Quran 17:32

Shielding *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*

As for the first and the most important of the five primary necessities, which is Monotheism (*Tawheed: Lā ilāha illa Allāh*), you will find Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ Blocking All Means (*Sad Al-Zarai*) that may lead to Polytheism (*Shirk*). As if Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is a fortress which is shielded by these preventive and protective rulings.

Ibn Taymiyyah ﷺ mentioned: “Indeed, the Prophet ﷺ would actualize this Monotheism (*Tawheed*) for his Community (*Ummah*) and cut off from them the constituents of Polytheism (*Shirk*) since this is the actualization of our saying: ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh.*’” (1)

Ibn Al-Qayyim ﷺ said: “Indeed the Prophet ﷺ guarded the aspect of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) with the greatest protection, such that he ﷺ forbade against the observance of the voluntary Prayer (*Salah*) for Allah ﷻ, at the rising of the sun and its setting; so that it should not be a means to the resemblance of the worshipers of the sun, those that prostrate to it in these two circumstances. Likewise, he ﷺ obstructed the means by prohibiting Prayer (*Salah*) after *Asr* and the morning due to the connection of these two timings with the two timings in which the Polytheists (*Mushrikun*) prostrate for the sun.” (2)

Ibn Al-Qayyim ﷺ also mentioned: “So, the Prophet ﷺ cut off any attachment of Polytheism (*Shirk*) from their hearts so that there should not remain any attachment from it within them so that they should not become confused with action from the actions of its people—at all.”(3)

Abdur-Rahmān Ibn Sa’di ﷺ said: “Whoever looks into the texts of the Book and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) in this subject matter, he will find many passages that encourage with everything that strengthens Monotheism (*Tawheed*), and that which cultivates it, and nourishes it so that one is solely dependent upon Allah ﷻ, and these texts confine and restrict the connection of the heart to Allah ﷻ, with desire and fear of Him—and urgently and avidly desiring His bounty and favor—and striving hard to attain that—and to be liberated from the servitude and enslavement of the created beings. Furthermore, to relinquish [undeserved] connection to them from every aspect—or to exaggerate and go overboard concerning any creation—and to establish the perfection by one’s deeds, both apparent and hidden.

The texts specifically encourage the spirit of worship. That is pure, sincere devotion for Allah ﷻ alone—then in opposition to this, He forbade all speech and actions that have within them exaggeration and excess veneration of the created beings.

Allah ﷻ, the Highest, forbade from imitating the idolaters because that will invite the believer to incline towards them, so He forbade all speech and action that is feared will become

(1) Majmu’ Fataawa 1/136

(2) Ad-Daa wad-Dawaa p.308-309

(3) Miftaah Daarus Sa’aadah 3/1485

a pathway to Polytheism (*Shirk*). So, this is a mercy for the believers that they may go forth and fulfill that for which they were created, which is the worship of Allah **سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى**, both apparent and hidden, and perfect it. Then that happiness and success are completed for them. The proofs bearing witness to this are plentiful and well-known.” (1)

Allah **سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى** sent us the Messenger ﷺ, who loves us. Therefore, he taught us how to protect ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ and safeguard it. Hence, he left us with instructions to ensure the purity of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) by closing every avenue, and door leading to Polytheism (*Shirk*). The Prophet ﷺ gave great emphasis and importance to Monotheism (*Tawheed*) and its teaching to his Community (*Ummah*). Allah **سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى** said,

{ لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ [سورة التوبة: 128]

“Verily, there has come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves. It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He is anxious over you, and towards the believers full of pity, kindness, and merciful.” (2)

The Prophet ﷺ said: “My similitude with you is like a man who built a fire,” meaning is the darkness of the night, “so the moths and flies started flying into it, so he waves them away from it. And I am trying to hold you back from the fire by your garments. But you are slipping through my hands.” (3)

A Muslim must be keen on living for ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ and dying on it, and the only way is to protect it.

Preventing the Way to Excessive Love

The first type of Polytheism (*Shirk*), which emerged on the earth, was the type caused by an excessive love for righteous people. Allah **سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى** said,

﴿ وَقَالُوا لَا نَدْرَأُ الْهَتِكُمْ وَلَا نَدْرَأُ وَدَا وَلَا سَوَاعَا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا ﴾ [سورة نوح: 23]

"They (idolaters) have said: "You shall not leave your gods, nor shall you leave Wadd, nor Suwa, nor Yaghuth, nor Ya'uq nor Nasr (names of the idols)." (4)

(1) Al-Qawlus-Sadeed fee Maqāsīdit-Tawheed pp. 86-87.

(2) Quran 9:128

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(4) Quran 71:23

Originally, the names given in the above Verse (*Ayah*) were of good and righteous people who had lived among them. After their deaths, statues of them were erected to keep their memories alive. After some time, however, people began to worship these statues. Later generations did not even know why they had been erected; they only knew their parents had prayed to them. That is how idol worshiping developed. Since they had no understanding of Allah **سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى** The Almighty, who would punish them for their evil deeds, they became cruel and immoral.

The Prophet ﷺ wanted to block anything that may lead to Polytheism (*Shirk*), like the type that emerged right before Prophet Nuh (Noah) **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام**. He also warned us against following the path which the Christians have taken regarding Prophet Isa (Jesus) **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام**. Hence, narrated by Umar **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ**: I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, "Do not exaggerate in praising me as the Christians praised the son of Maryam (Mary), for I am only a Slave. So, call me the Slave of Allah and His Apostle."⁽¹⁾

Preventing People from Prostrating to Prophet ﷺ

When Mu'adh Bin Jabal **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ** came from Syria, he prostrated to the Prophet ﷺ who said: 'What is this, O Mu'adh?' He said: 'I went to Syria and saw them prostrating to their bishops and patricians, and I wanted to do that for you.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Do not do that. If I were to command anyone to prostrate to anyone other than Allah, I would have commanded women (wives) to prostrate to their husbands. By the One in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad! No woman can fulfill her duty towards Allah until she fulfills her duty towards her husband. If he asks her (for intimacy) even if she is on her camel saddle, she should not refuse.'⁽²⁾

Preventing People from Praising the Prophet ﷺ Excessively

The Prophet ﷺ forbade his Companions (*Sahabah*) from excessive praise of him or anyone else because this is a path that leads to Polytheism (*Shirk*). Though the Companions (*Sahabah*) spoke the truth about him, the Prophet ﷺ wanted to cleanse their hearts and souls and protect their beliefs from Polytheism (*Shirk*). So, he forbade them from praising him excessively, especially in his presence, to protect them from all paths by which the devil might lead them to Polytheism's (*Shirk*) darkness after they had escaped from it. Then he permitted them to praise him in a manner allowed by their religion, befitting his position as Allah's **سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى** Slave and Messenger.

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sunan Ibn Majah -The Book of Nikaah

Anas Ibn Malik رضي الله عنه said: "No person was dearer to them than the Prophet ﷺ, but when they saw him, they did not stand up for him because they knew that he disliked that." (1)

Abdullah Ibn Ash-Shikhir رضي الله عنه said: "I went with a delegation of Banu Amir to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and we said (to him): "You are our Sayyid." He replied: "As-Sayyid is Allah, Most Glorified, Most High." We said: "And you are the most excellent and superior of us." He answered: "Say what you have to say, or part of what you have to say, and do not let Satan (Shaytan) make you get carried away." (2)

Preventing the People from Venerating the Prophet ﷺ After his Death

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "Do not turn your houses into graveyards, and do not make my grave into a place of ritual celebration. And send your prayers (salutations of peace and blessings of Allah and His praise) upon me, for indeed your prayers will reach me wherever you may be." (3)

Preventing the Way to Suggest the Prophet's ﷺ Divinity

In the following Narration (*Hadith*), the Prophet ﷺ did not want to leave his Companions (*Sahabah*) with any impression that the Prophet ﷺ had any authority over the rain without Allah's سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى power.

From his warnings also is when a man came to him and said: "O Allah's Messenger! The people are exhausted and facing hardships, their families are suffering, their wealth is destroyed, their cattle have died—so seek from Allah rain for us for verily we seek your intercession with Allah. And we seek Allah's intercession with you." He replied: "Woe to you! Do you know what you're saying?" The Messenger glorified Allah, and he did not cease doing so until the effect of that was seen of the faces of his Companions (*Sahabah*), then he said: "Woe to you! Allah is not to be sought as an intercessor with any of his creation! Allah is greater than that. Woe to you! Do you know who Allah is? His Throne is over the heavens like this—and he gestured with his fingers like a dome above him—and it creaks on account of Him as a saddle creaks on account of its rider." (4)

Narrated Al-Mughira Bin Shu'ba رضي الله عنه that: "The sun eclipsed in the lifetime of Allah's Messenger ﷺ on the day when (his son) Ibrahim died. So, the people said that the sun had eclipsed because of the death of Ibrahim. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, "The sun and the moon do

(1) Sunan At-Tirmidhi

(2) Narrated by Abu Daud with a sound chain

(3) Abu Daud (2042), Authenticated by Al-Albani

(4) Abu Daud (4726), Declared weak by Al-Albani

not eclipse because of the death or life (i.e., birth) of someone. When you see the eclipse, pray and invoke Allah."

Preventing the Way to Suggest Divinity to the Creations

Narrated Zayd Ibn Khalid Al-Juhani رضي الله عنه who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ led the Morning Prayer (*Salat Al-Fajr*) for us at Al-Hudaybiyah following rainfall during the night. When the Prophet ﷺ finished, he faced the people and said to them: "Do you know what your Lord has said?" They said: "Allah and his Messenger know best." He said: "This morning one of my slaves became a believer in Me and one a disbeliever. As for him who said: 'We have been given rain by virtue of Allah and His mercy,' that one is a believer in Me, a disbeliever in the stars; and as for him who said: 'We have been given rain by such-and-such a star,' that one is a disbeliever in Me, a believer in the stars." The pre-Islamic Arabs believed that rain was brought about by the movement of stars. This Hadith draws attention to the fact that whatever be the direct cause of such natural phenomena as rain, it is Allah the Almighty who is the Disposer of all things. (1)

Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله said: "Indeed the Prophet ﷺ guarded the aspect of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) with the most exceptional protection, such that he forbade us against observing the voluntary Prayer (*Salah*) for Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى at the rising of the sun and at its setting; so that it should not be a means to the resemblance of the worshipers of the sun, those that prostrate to it in these two circumstances.

Conclusion

Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله also mentioned: "So, he ﷺ cut off any attachment of Polytheism (*Shirk*) from their hearts so that there should not remain any attachment from it so that they should not become confused with action from the actions of its people – at all." (2)

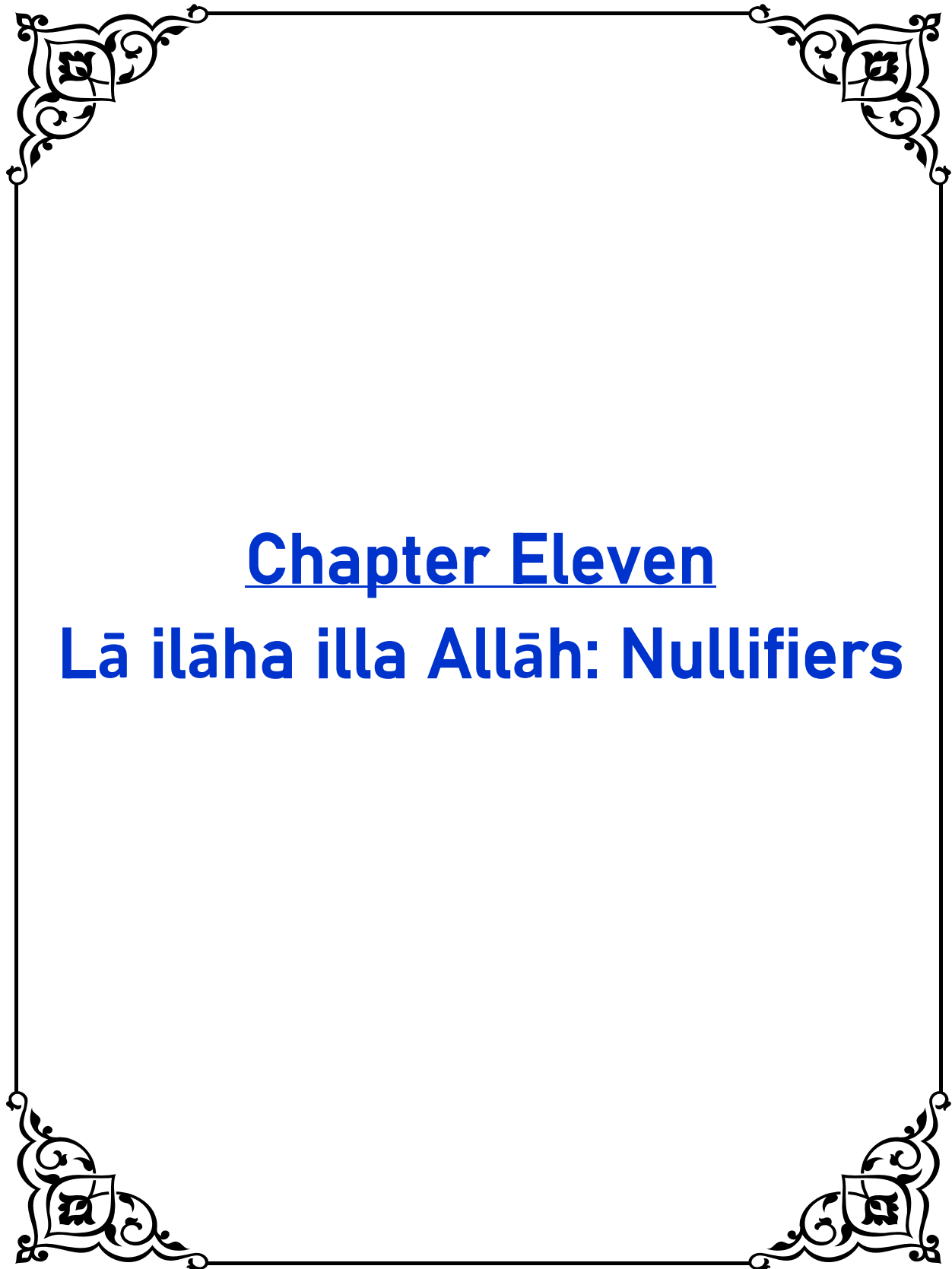
Narrated Thabit Ibn Ad-Dahhak رضي الله عنه that in the time of the Prophet ﷺ, a man took a vow to slaughter a camel at Buwanah. So, he came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: "I have taken a vow to sacrifice a camel at Buwanah." The Prophet ﷺ asked: "Did the place contain any idol worshiped in pre-Islamic times?" They (the people) said: "No." He asked: "Was any pre-Islamic festival observed there?" They replied: "No." The Prophet ﷺ said: "Fulfill your vow, for a vow to do an act of disobedience to Allah must not be fulfilled, neither must one do something over which a human being has no control." (3)



(1) Related by Al-Bukhari, by Malik, and an-Nasa'i

(2) Miftaah Darus Sa'adah 3/1485

(3) Sahih Abu Daud, Al-Albani



Chapter Eleven
Lā ilāha illa Allāh: Nullifiers

'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' is the decisive criterion by which we identify someone as a Muslim or a Disbeliever (*Kafir*). The entire religion of Islam is based upon the Testimony of Faith (*Kalimah*); the way we perceive life, death, humanity, and the universe through it. Allah ﷻ based the message of all Messengers beginning with Prophet Nuh (Noah) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and ending with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ upon 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh.' Allah ﷻ said,

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ﴾ [سورة الأنبياء: 25]

"We did not send a Messenger before you without revealing to him: "There is no god worthy of being worshiped except I, therefore worship Me." (1)

Allah ﷻ has created humanity, *Jinn*-kind, and the rest of creation on account of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' (There is no one worthy of being worshiped except Allah). Consequently, everything in this universe submits in worship to Allah ﷻ.

Once it comes to mankind and *Jinn*-kind, Allah ﷻ granted them the freedom to choose. Islam should be manifested by saying 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' and by doing the obligatory actions. These two things show us that one is a Muslim. The basic principle is that he is treated as a Muslim, and his Islam cannot be nullified unless through specific steps which we will explain in this chapter. Since his Islam is affirmed by Certainty (*Yaqeen*), it is not to be denied by doubt.

Two Extremes

We live at a time where there is a lack of knowledge about Islam, and there are famous sayings and actions, which people do, and say unknowingly and unwillingly. Consequently, we cannot nullify their Islam. Meanwhile, if we establish by evidence that these sayings and actions were said and done with the knowledge and the willful intention, for us to attain our state of Islam, we must declare them disbelievers and treat them accordingly. Once it comes to this crucial subject, we do have two extremes, and the truth is always in the middle in between them.

1. The Extremists

Al-Khawarij have a niche and joy in labeling Muslims to be apostates (*Kafir*). They are not entitled to do that. They do it without fulfilling the conditions and removing the obstacles which we will explain later.

(1) Quran 21:25

They do not realize the danger and the gravity of ruling someone to be apostate (*Kafir*). Abdullah Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “If you call your brother a Disbeliever (*Kafir*), one of the two is a Disbeliever (*Kafir*). If he is not, then you are.” (1)

Also, when they label a Muslim as a Disbeliever (*Kafir*), they do not realize that there are religious rulings attached to this label, such as you cannot eat his meat, follow his Funeral (*Janazah*), and cannot marry a Muslim woman.

2. The Negligent

Al-Murjia'h refrain completely from labeling anyone as a Disbeliever (*Kafir*), even if they reject the commands of Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى or declare something Permissible (*Haram*), Prohibited (*Halal*), or commit one of the nullifiers of Islam while possessing both the knowledge and willful intention. It is undoubtedly another extreme.

The Middle Path

The scholars who follow the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) based on the understanding of the three praised generations (*Al-Salaf Al-Salih*) put together some guidelines to prevent us from falling into the traps of both sects, *Al-Murijah* and *Al-Khawarij*.

Major Differences

There are major differences between the Original Disbeliever (*Al-Kafir Al-Asli*) who never accepted Islam, and an Apostate (*Al-Kafir Al-Murtad*), and people have often been confused between the two groups. Answering the following questions will fix the matter.

How is someone recognized as a Muslim?

He is born into a Muslim household, he is someone who performs the acts of Islam, such as praying with the Muslims in the Mosque (*Masjid*), or someone who was born as a Muslim, and he never showed apostasy or someone who was a Disbeliever (*Kafir*). He reverted to Islam, by uttering the Declaration or Testimony of Faith '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh.*'

Who is a Disbeliever (*Kafir*)?

A Disbeliever (*Kafir*) is a one who does not believe in Islam and the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. They are of two types:

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

1. Originally Disbeliever (*Al-Kafir Al-Asli*)

An Original Disbeliever (*Al-Kafir Al-Asli*) is the one who was born into a disbelieving household, and they changed the natural state upon which he was born, which is Islam, and he never reverted to Islam. A Disbeliever (*Kafir*) in Islam also includes those who may believe in Allah **سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى** but not in the Messenger Muhammad ﷺ. There are different categories of the Polytheists (*Mushrikun*) from among the *People of the Book*, i.e., Jews & Christians, and the other Polytheists (*Mushrikun*) and Disbelievers (*Kafirun*), e.g., Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Atheists who believe in science, self-worshippers, women-worshippers, money-worshippers, etc.

As for the nature of our treatment and relationship with an Original Disbeliever (*Al-Kafir Al-Asli*), not all non-Muslims are alike. There are three different types of non-Muslims in this context:

A. Non-Muslims from the People of the Book (*Ahlu Al-Dhimmah*)

They usually live within the boundaries of the Muslim community. According to Islamic Law (*Shari'ah*), it is compulsory upon the Muslim community to guarantee them the freedom to worship, protect their lives, and their properties against any danger.

The Prophet ﷺ said, "You would soon conquer Egypt, which is a land known (as the land of *Al-Qirat*). So, when you conquer it, treat its inhabitants well. There lies upon you the responsibility because of blood-tie or relationship of marriage (with them)." (1)

The blood-tie refers to Hajar, the Egyptian wife of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ**, who gave birth to Prophet Ismail (Ishmael) **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ**. The wife, as argued by many scholars, refers to Mariah the Copt, who was gifted to Prophet Mohammed **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ** by Muqawqis, the Christian ruler of Egypt at the time.

B. Non-Muslims with Whom Muslims (Individuals or Authorities) have a Covenant

A state-to-state agreement must be honored by the authorities of both Muslim and non-Muslim states. In addition to this, we have a couple of more scenarios. A non-Muslim enters legally into to a Muslim land for any reason. A Muslim travels to a non-Muslim country, and the non-Muslim embassy admits him with an entry visa. The entry visa is the covenant between the Muslim and non-Muslim states, and all the punishments apply to him if he violates the code of conduct living there.

(1) Sahih Muslim

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever killed a *Mu'ahid* (a person who is granted the pledge of protection by the Muslims) shall not smell the fragrance of Paradise (*Jannah*) though its fragrance can be smelt at a distance of forty years (of traveling)." (1)

Narrated Sawfan Ibn Sulaim رضي الله عنه through a number of the Companions (*Sahabah*) that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever wrongs one with whom a covenant has been made, burdens him with more than he can bear or forcibly takes something from him, I will be his adversary on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*)." (2)

The Prophet ﷺ said, "The protection granted by Muslims is one and must be respected by the humblest of them. And he who broke the covenant made by a Muslim, there is a curse of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, of His Angels, and the whole people upon him. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will accept neither an obligatory act nor a supererogatory act from him as punishment on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*)." (3)

C. Combatant Non-Muslims in a Declared War

Obviously, with this type, we can only deal with them based on the rules of engagement in a battlefield. Also, if a non-Muslim is fighting against you and you promise to give him security, you cannot come after him and harm him because of a Hadith where the Prophet ﷺ said that he would disclaim you if you do that on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). (4)

The first two types of non-Muslims deserve a just and fair treatment. Furthermore, Muslims should show mercy, kindness, and goodness towards them in the character of calling them to Islam.

2. Apostate (*Kafir Murtad*)

A *Kafir Murtad* is the one who was a Muslim once but committed one or more of the following violations knowingly and willfully:

- **Denying an Obligation (*Al-Juhoud*):** To deny any obligation known from the religion of Islam by necessity. If a person rejects any action that Muslims know from Islam by necessity, such as to deny fasting, Hajj, Prayer (*Salah*), Islamic Law (*Shari'ah*), *Jihad*; he will become *Jahid*. 'The Denier' or 'Rejector' is the one who indulges in the act of *Juhoud*. If a person rejects Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى commands with complete knowledge and a willful intention, he will become an Apostate (*Murtad*).

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sunnan Abu Daud

(3) Sahih Muslim

(4) Sahih Al-Bukhari, Al-Adab Al-Mufrad

- **Permitting what Allah ﷻ Forbade (*Al-Istihlal*):** To permit what Allah ﷻ forbids or forbids what Allah ﷻ permits, *Istihlaal* is to allow what Allah ﷻ forbids or vice versa. An example of this is the one who permits fornication. The one who commits *Istihlaal* is called *Al-Mustahil* (Legislator). If a person declares anything Permissible (*Halal*) which Allah named to be Prohibited (*Haram*) with full knowledge and a willful intention, he will become Apostate (*Murtad*).
- **Committing Nullifiers of Islam (*Al-Naqid*):** Committing one or more of the nullifiers of Islam, knowingly, and willfully. The negations of the two testimonies of faith are one of the ten nullifiers of Islam (*Nawaqid-ul-Islam*). If a person violates any one of them with knowledge and willful intention, he will become an Apostate (*Murtad*). In the next section, we will list the ten main nullifiers of Islam.

Nullifiers of the Two Testimonies

Nullifying ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ and ‘*Muhammadur-Rasūlu-llāh*’ is a nullifier of Islam because they are the two testimonies that one pronounces to enter Islam. Uttering both statements is affirming their intent and steadfast in establishing their prerequisites like fulfilling the rituals of Islam. If one forsakes this steadfastness, he has invalidated the pledge he took when he uttered the two testimonies.

The nullifiers of Islam are many, and the scholars have collected them in books of Islamic Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*). However, the most important of them are ten, which have been mentioned by Shaikh Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab رحمته الله. They are the following:

- 1) Polytheism (*Shirk*); Associating partners with Allah ﷻ in His worship.
- 2) Placing Intermediaries (*Al-Wasilah*) for him to go to Allah ﷻ. People go to shrines and saints (*Awliya*) and call upon them to intercede, which is an act of Polytheism (*Shirk*).
- 3) Whoever does not hold those who are Polytheists (*Mushrikun*) to be Apostates and Disbelievers (*Kafirun*).
- 4) Whoever believes that there is a complete guidance other than the guidance of the Messenger ﷺ. Also, if they think that someone's judgment is better than the judgment of Allah ﷻ.
- 5) Whoever hates something that the Messenger ﷺ brought is a Disbeliever (*Kafir*); even if he follows the Messenger ﷺ but still dislikes the acts in his heart.
- 6) Whoever mocks or ridicules the religion is a Disbeliever (*Kafir*). Nowadays, people making fun of *Hijabs*, beards, or pants above the ankles.

- 7) Sorcery or magic spells.
- 8) Supporting/assisting a non-Muslim against a Muslim.
- 9) Whoever believes that they are exempt from an obligation because they are at a certain level. For example, if someone says that he does not have to make Prayer (*Salah*) because he is exempt from it and Prayer (*Salah*) is for ordinary people. It is Disbelief (*Kufr*).
- 10) Turning away from the religion of Allah **سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى** and not learning or implementing it is Disbelief (*Kufr*).

Seven Rules on Excommunication from Islam (*Takfir*)

The following are the guidelines which are implemented by the scholars on declaring someone as an Apostate (*Kafir*):

The First Rule

It is not permissible to take lightly the matter of judging someone to be a Disbeliever (*Kafir*), because that involves two very serious matters:

- It implies fabricating lies against Allah **سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى** regarding this ruling, and fabricating lies against the one who is being judged.
- Accusing a Muslim of committing Disbelief (*Kufr*) and thus calling him a Disbeliever (*Kafir*). Narrated from AbdAllah Ibn Umar **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ** that the Prophet ﷺ said: “If a man declares his brother to be a Disbeliever (*Kafir*), it will apply to one of them.” According to another report: “Either it is as he said, otherwise it will come back to him.” (1)

The Second Rule

Scholars, Muslim judges, or rulers are entitled to label a Muslim as a Disbeliever (*Kafir*). It is not up to individuals to make *Takfir* as this is the job of those who possess the knowledge about Islamic Law (*Shari'ah*).

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

The Third Rule

The Basic Principle (*Al-Hukm Bi-Al-Zahir*): As long as someone appears to be a Muslim, he is a Muslim. For example, if someone is attending Prayer (*Salah*), Fasting, paying Obligatory Charity (*Zakah*), then he is a Muslim regardless of what he conceals in his heart. Remember, Allah ﷻ, revealed to His Messenger ﷺ the identity of the Hypocrites (*Munafiqun*) in his community. Despite that, he always treated them based on what he saw and heard from them.

The Fourth Rule

Staying away from individual *Takfir*. There are two types of *Takfir*:

- Unrestricted *Takfir* (*Al-Takfir Al-Mutlaq*): Where we classify the action to be a blasphemous, not the doer. For example, we say: "Whoever denies fulfilling Allah's ﷻ commands or authorizes an unlawful act like usury while he has full knowledge and the willful intention, then he goes out of the fold of Islam (an Apostate). It is a general *Takfir* without specifying anyone.
- Individual *Takfir* (*Takfir Al-Moua'n*): To identify a person and hold him as a Disbeliever (*Kafir*). You must establish the evidence and lift the obstacles.

The Fifth Rule

Completion of Proof (*Iqamat ul-Hujjah*): One must establish proof from the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) to conclude that an action or a person's statement is an act of Disbelief (*Kufr*). One must show the doer of the act the evidence and prove it to him first.

The Sixth Rule

Istifa Al-Shorout means to establish the proof (*Hujjah*) and one must affirm two conditions:

- Affirm that the doer has full knowledge about this act being an act of Disbelief (*Kufr*). What this entails is that he had full knowledge of the act being Disbelief (*Kufr*).
- To establish that he did it with a willful intention. He was not forgetting nor forced into doing it.

The Seventh Rule

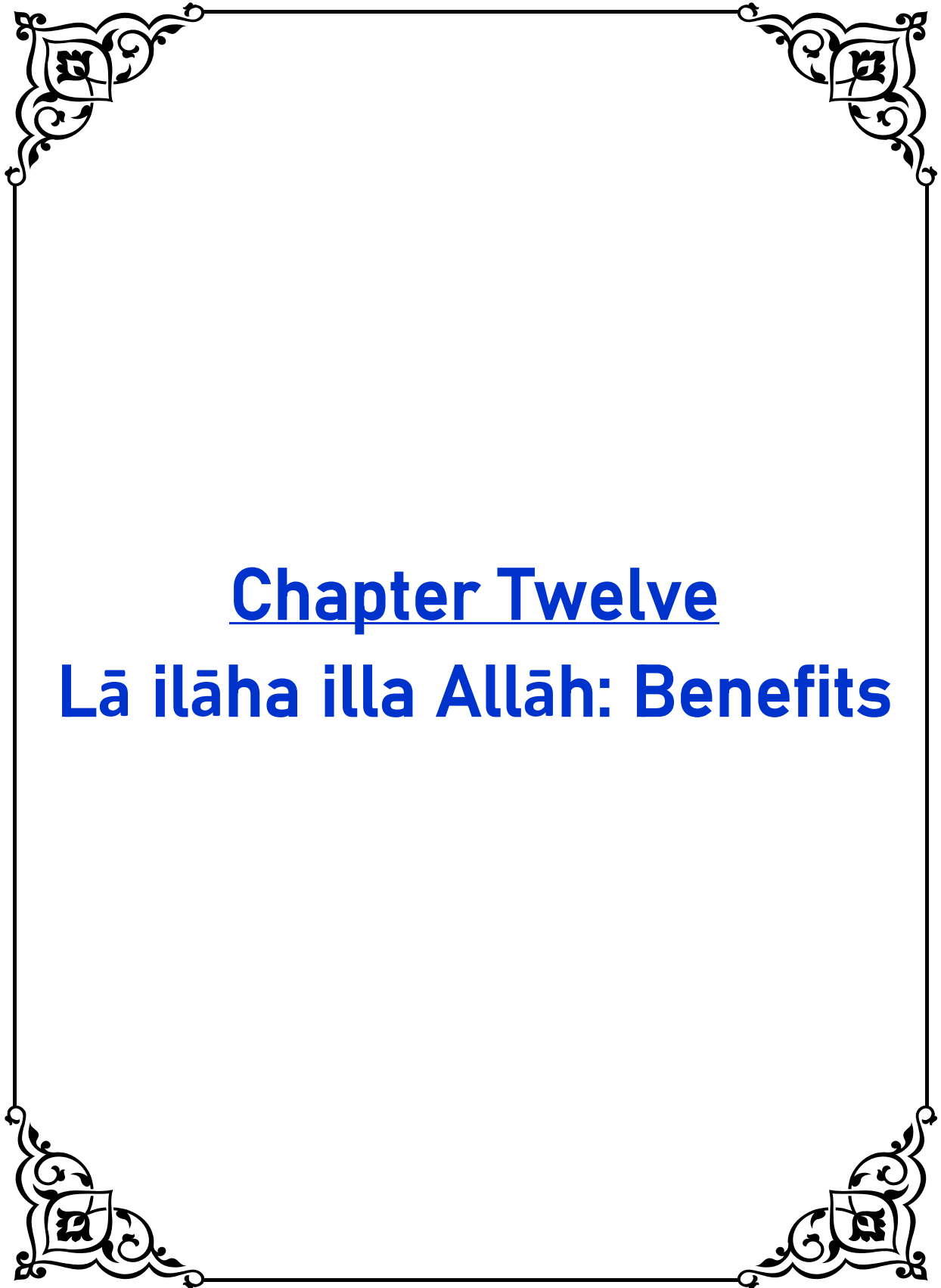
Intifa Al-Mawani, which means we must make sure that we remove the four obstacles. These four obstacles are:

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

1. **Ignorance:** If someone does not have the proper knowledge and is unaware of a ruling, and does an act out of ignorance, he must not be labeled as a Disbeliever (*Kafir*).
2. **Faulty Interpretation:** If someone does not comprehend a specific verdict, should not be identified as a Disbeliever (*Kafir*).
3. **Error or Forgetfulness:** Doing the act out of error or forgetfulness.
4. **Being Forced:** He is not forced to say or do something.

In the next volume of the *Right Belief Series*, we will shed more light on Faith (*Iman*), Disbelief (*Kufr*), and the guidelines of Excommunication (*Takfir*).





Chapter Twelve
Lā ilāha illa Allāh: Benefits

Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** created us for a test, and difficulties and hardships are part of this test. Indeed, the most difficult moments on a human being are the three transitional stages from one world to another: birth, death, and resurrection. Hence both Prophets Yahya **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ** and Isa (Jesus) **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ** made this beautiful Supplication (*Dua'*), asking Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** to pour peace and tranquility upon them during these three stages. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said on the tongue of Prophet Yahya **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ**,

﴿وَسَلِّمْ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَيَوْمَ يَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ يُبْعَثُ حَيًّا﴾ [سورة مريم:15]

"And Salamun (peace) be on him the day he was born, the day he dies, and the day he will be raised to life (again)!" (1)

Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** said on the tongue of Prophet Isa (Jesus) **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ**,

﴿وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا﴾ [سورة مريم:33]

"And Salam (peace) be upon me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I shall be raised alive!" (2)

Guess who witnesses the birth of babies? To scare and terrify them, the following Narration (*Hadith*) is the proof:

Abu Hurairah **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ** reported: The Messenger of Allah **ﷺ** said, "No person is born but that Satan (Shaytan) pricks him, and he cries from the touch of Satan (Shaytan), except for Mariam (Mary) and her son." (3)

Abu Hurairah **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ** said, "Recite the Verse (*Ayah*) if you wish: Verily, I seek refuge for her and her offspring from the cursed Satan (Shaytan)." (4)

Another moment is the time of death. One can imagine death's agonies from the end of the Prophet **ﷺ**. Besides, Satan (Shaytan) tries to exploit a weak point in the human journey back to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**. No doubt, the time when death is approaching is a time of distress and hardship as the agonies of death are extremely difficult to bear.

(1) Quran 19:15

(2) Quran 19:33

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(4) Quran 3:36

The Prophet ﷺ found them very hard to bear, to the extent that he ﷺ would say: "Verily death comes with agonies." (1)

When his daughter Fatimah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا realized the Prophet's ﷺ hardship, she said: "How hard it is for my father!" (2)

Satan (Shaytan) will never leave the children of Prophet Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام alone at the time of death, for it is an opportunity for him, and he would consider it his last chance to misguide him, mainly if he lived all his life steadfast on the straight path.

Jabir رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said: I heard the Prophet ﷺ say: "The Satan (Shaytan) is present with any one of you in all his affairs." (3)

The Prophet ﷺ used to ask Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى not to allow Satan (Shaytan) to gain power over him at the time of death, to teach the Muslims to strive to be safe from the Affliction (*Fitnah*) of Satan (Shaytan).

Narrated Jabir Ibn Abdullah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, I heard Umar Ibn Al-Khattab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ say to Talha Ibn Ubaidullah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ upon seeing him looking unhappy: "What is wrong with you, Abu Muhammad? Why are you looking disheveled and dusted since the death of the Prophet ﷺ? Let me guess, are you displeased with the leadership of your cousin (Abu Bakr)?"

Talha رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said I seek refuge with Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى to feel this way about the leadership of Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, but the reason I am unhappy is, one day I heard the Prophet ﷺ making a statement, I did not understand what he ﷺ meant by it. Meanwhile, I refrained in adherence to ask him.

Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said to Talha رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, "which statement?" Talha رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said the Prophet ﷺ said, "I know of a Word (*Kalimah*) If someone says it when dying. As a result of this, he will receive the following virtues: His face will illuminate, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will relieve his distress, and his soul will find peace, and tranquility will it is taken out of his body and it will stand out of his good deeds on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*)."

Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ swore by Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, saying, "I know which word did the Prophet ﷺ meant by this word." Talha رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said to Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, "Tell me which word did the Prophet ﷺ meant?"

Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said which word is superior to the Word (*Kalimah*), which the Prophet ﷺ wanted his uncle to utter at the bed of death. Talha رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said "You got it." (4)

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(3) Sahih Muslim

(4) Musnad Ahmed

Based on the following Narration (*Hadith*), we can establish that the Word (*Kalimah*) is *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*. When death approached Abu Talib, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ kept on inviting him to say '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.' Meanwhile, Abu Jahl and Abdullah Ibn Abi Umaiyah by his side asked him not to abandon the way of Abdul Muttalib. (1)

Hence, we conclude from the above narrations that prompting the dying person to say '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' eases death's agonies. But we need to realize that *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* does not only help us when dying, but during our life in this World (*Dunya*) and the Hereafter (*Akhirah*) as well.

In This World (*Dunya*)

The following are some benefits one harvest through his conviction to *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*:

Forgiveness of Sins

Abu Dharr رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever says ten times immediately after finishing Morning Prayer (*Salat-ul-Fajr*), before moving from his place or talking to anyone, 'None has the right to be worshiped except Allah alone having no partner, sovereignty is His and all praise is for Him and He brings life and He causes death and He has full power over everything,' ten good deeds will be recorded for him, ten sins will be eliminated from him, he will be upgraded ten degrees (in reward), he will be safeguarded from all kinds of harm all that day, he will be guarded against Satan (Shaytan) and no sin can overtake him on that day (and nullify his good deeds) except associating others in worship with Allah." (2)

The Best Way to Remember Allah سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ

Consider this Hadith on the value that Allah سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ places in '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.' Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri رضي الله عنه said that The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that Prophet Musa (Moses) عليه السلام said: "O Lord! Teach me something that I can remember You with, and I can supplicate You with." Allah سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ said: Say '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*', O Musa (Moses)!" He (Musa) said: "All of your slaves say this." Allah سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ said: "If the seven Heavens and those who dwell in them other than Me and the seven Earths are put into one pan (of the scale) and '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is put into the other, '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' would be more substantial." (3)

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sunan At-Tirmidhi

(3) Ibn Hibbaan and Al-Hakim

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

Jabir Bin Abdullah رضي الله عنه narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "The best Remembrance of Allah (*Dhikr*) is 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' and the best Supplication (*Dua*) is Praise be to Allah (*Al-Hamdu Lillah*)."⁽¹⁾

The Best Supplication (*Dua*)

The best Supplication (*Dua*) is the one on the Day of Arafah, and the best thing that was said by the Prophet ﷺ and the Prophets before him was, "There is no God except Allah alone, He has no partners."⁽²⁾

Relief from Distress, Grief, and Anxiety

Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه reported, "The Prophet ﷺ at times of sorrow and grief used to Supplicate (make *Dua*), "There is no god but Allah, the Mighty, the Forbearing, there is no god but Allah, the Lord of the mighty throne, there is no god but Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the earth, and the Lord of the throne of honor)."⁽³⁾

Sa'd رضي الله عنه reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The Supplication (*Dua*) of Younus (Jonah) when he called upon Allah inside the belly of the whale was this,

﴿أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ [سورة الأنبياء: 87]

“There is no God, but you, glory be to you, for I have been among the wrongdoers.”⁽⁴⁾

Verily, a Muslim never Supplicates (makes *Dua*) for anything with it, but that Allah will answer him.”⁽⁵⁾

In the Hereafter (*Akhirah*)

Lā ilāha illa Allāh will do one of three following services:

1. Let you enter Paradise (*Jannah*) without accountability or punishment.
2. Help you enter Paradise (*Jannah*) after questioning, but without punishment.
3. Let you exit Hellfire (*Jahannam*) and enter Paradise (*Jannah*).

(1) At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasaee, and Ibne Maajah

(2) At-Tirmidhi

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(4) Quran 21:87

(5) Sunan At-Tirmidhi

1. Entering Paradise (*Jannah*) Without Accountability or Punishment

The Muslim who will enter Paradise (*Jannah*) without accountability or punishment is indeed amongst the fortunate from amongst this Community (*Ummah*). They are those who fulfilled the conditions, and the obligations of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.'

Specifically, they were right to one aspect of the word, which is Reliance upon Allah *سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى* (*Tawakkul*). The Prophet ﷺ pointed out four distinguishing qualities that differentiate them from the rest of the Muslims. All these qualities are related directly to the correct concept of Reliance (*Tawakkul*):

- They do not believe in evil omens (*Tatayyur*) and other superstitious beliefs.
- They do not get themselves branded (cauterized).
- They avoid seeking Incantation (*Ruqyah*).
- They rely entirely on their Lord.

Regarding the reference to these fortunate Muslims from among the Community (*Ummah*), we ask Allah *سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى* that we are of them. Narrated from Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah displayed the nations on their way to Paradise (*Jannah*) behind their Prophets the night of Ascension (*Isra* and *Mi'raj*); one or two Prophets would pass by along with a few followers. A Prophet would pass by accompanied by nobody. Then a big crowd of people passed in front of me, and I asked, "Who are they? Are they, my followers?" It was said, "No. It is Musa (Moses) and his followers."

Then it was said to me, "Look there and there about the stretching sky! Behold! There was a multitude filling the horizon." It was said to me, "This is your nation out of whom 70,000 shall enter Paradise (*Jannah*) without reckoning." Then the Prophet ﷺ entered his house without telling his Companions (*Sahabah*) who they were. Upon this, the Companions (*Sahabah*) of the Prophet ﷺ engaged in figuring out who those are. Glory to Allah *سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى*! They excluded themselves, and they said; it must be those who were born into Islam and have never been born into the Ignorance Period (*Jahiliyyah*) before the advent of Islam.

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ heard of that, he came out and said, "Those people are those who do not treat themselves with Incantation (*Ruqyah*), nor do they believe in bad or good omen (from birds, etc.) nor do they get themselves branded (cauterized) but they put their trust (only) in their Lord." (1)

It is indeed a great honor that Allah *سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى* will bestow on a few of His slaves on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). Some scholars mentioned that the number of 70,000 refers to

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

abundance and not necessarily the actual figure. However, they are still few when compared to the Community (*Ummah*) as a whole.

Abu Umamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated the Prophet ﷺ said: "My Lord promised me that 70,000 of my Community (*Ummah*), thousand Paradise (*Jannah*) without accountability, nor punishment; with each thousands of them would be another 70,000, plus three handfuls of the handfuls of my Lord, may He be Glorified." (1)

After looking into the above, to be among those fortunate Muslims, we must help maintain the correct form of Reliance (*Tawakkul*).

Some Muslims have a wrong perception of Reliance (*Tawakkul*). They think it the total abandonment of the practical means, which is entirely incorrect. The Narration (*Hadith*) of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is profound proof of their wrong position on the subject matter. Umar Ibn Al-Khattab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "If you were to rely upon Allah with reliance due to him, he would provide for you as he provides for the birds. They go out in the morning with empty stomachs and return full." (2)

As we can see, the Prophet ﷺ is encouraging us to have the reliance of the birds; they do utilize the means. They go out in search of their sustenance and do not remain in their nests during the day. It proves that one should try, and then leave the outcome upon Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

There are two levels of Reliance (*Tawakkul*). A Muslim must be keen on maintaining a boosted level of Faith (*Iman*), which is the provision to have one of the two levels while hoping in Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى to include him with those who will enter Paradise (*Jannah*) without accountability or punishment.

Level One: A believer adopts the means but places his Reliance (*Tawakkul*) alone, without counting on the utilized means, even if it is religious, such as the Incantation (*Ruqyah*), or how righteous and pious is the person who is performing it according to him. At times, such a person's attention might shift towards the means he has adopted, but he quickly reverts to relying solely on Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

Level Two: It is a higher level than the previous, where one relies solely on Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and hardly even uses the permissible means of the world. If they do utilize the means, their attention never diverts from Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى for even a moment. In comparison, the first group may experience temporary diversion at times. (3)

(1) Musnad Ahmed

(2) Sunan At-Tirmidhi

(3) References for all of the above: Al-Minhaj of Nawawi, Al-Mufhim,, and Fathul Bari

Both levels may help a believer to earn the rank of the most fortunate of the Community (*Ummah*). Of course, the second level should be the aim. However, the first level is still accepted, provided that the believer immediately makes a quick U-turn to rely upon Allah ﷻ and disregard the reliance on adopted means. But in general, he must be very careful with his level of Faith (*Iman*); because he will not be able to actualize one of the high two levels of Reliance (*Tawakkul*) if he doesn't maintain the required level of it. Neglecting one's Faith (*Iman*) may endanger the believer's reliance to the extent of possibly shunning the permissible means at his disposal.

2. Entering Paradise (*Jannah*) after Questioning but Without Punishment

If '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' does not save us from the questioning on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), it can still save us entirely from the Hellfire (*Jahannam*), even though we must go through 'The Questioning.' According to our belief system founded on the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) based on the understanding of the first three praised generations (*Al-Salaf Al-Salih*), some Muslims may end up in Hell (*Jahannam*) due to failing to repent from Major Sins (*Al-Kaba'ir*). However, they will exit Hellfire (*Jahannam*), because of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*,' even though they did not make a full commitment to it.

Many Verses (*Ayat*) and Narrations (*Ahadith*) confirm and describe one of the scariest scenes of Judgment Day (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), which is the scene of Reckoning (*Al-Hisab*). Allah ﷻ and His Messengers told us about this scene so that the believers will prepare themselves for the most important final test.

Allah ﷻ will hold us accountable for our sayings and actions, and this will begin with questioning us. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿أَقْرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ﴾ [سورة الأنبياء: 1]

"Draws near for mankind their reckoning, while they turn away in heedlessness." (1)

Allah ﷻ also said,

﴿إِنَّ إِلَيْنَا إِيَابَهُمْ ﴿٢٥﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُمْ﴾ [سورة الغاشية: 26]

"Verily, to Us will be their return: Then verily, for Us will be their reckoning." (2)

(1) Quran 21:1

(2) Quran 88:25-26

Adi Ibn Hatim رضي الله عنه reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "There are none among you but that his Lord will speak to him in the Hereafter (*Akhirah*) without a translator between them, nor a veil to separate them." (1)

These Verses (*Ayat*) and other Narrations (*Ahadith*) that will be mentioned, state one of the events that will happen on the Judgment Day (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). What will happen on this day is called The Reckoning (*Al-Hisaab*), when Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى asks every person what they have done in their lives.

The Process of Examinations

The questioning and accountability method are concluded from a Narration (*Hadith*) in which the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah will bring the believer very close and privately and ask him "Do you know this sin? Do you know that sin? The believers' reply will be, "Yes, Oh Lord," until he is reminded about all his sins, and he thinks he will perish. Allah will say, "I covered up your sins during your life, and I will forgive your sins today." Then he will be given his book of good deeds. But the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) and Hypocrites (*Munafiqun*) will be asked about their acts loudly in front of the creatures." These are the ones who lied against their Lord!" No doubt! The curse of Allah is on the (polytheists, wrongdoers, oppressors, etc.)!" (2)(3)

Hence, there will be two methods of questioning on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). The first one is that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will quickly and easily skim through the people's deeds and allow them to enter Paradise (*Jannah*) safely. Those who believe strongly with sincerity will enter Paradise (*Jannah*) in this manner despite confessing to their sins of Judgment's Day (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*).

The proof of evidence which describes this scene is in the Narration (*Hadith*) of Abū Mūsā Al-Ash'ari رضي الله عنه, explaining this further: "The believer will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), and his Lord will show him his deeds, just between him and His Lord. He will admit it and say, 'Yes, O Lord, I did do that.' Then Allah will forgive him for his sins and conceal them, and no creature on Earth will see any of those sins, but his good deeds will be seen, and he will want all the people to see them." (4)

As for the second method, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will discuss the people's deeds in-depth and in detail and hold them accountable for each evil act they committed. Then Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will send them away to the Hellfire (*Jahannam*). These are disobedient of the Muslims, the disbelievers, hypocrites, those who are weak in their faith, or those who are not sincere. Still, we believe that

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(3) Quran 11:18

(4) Musnad Ahmed

possessors of *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* will not stay in Hell (*Jahannam*) for eternity. Instead, they will exit Hell (*Jahannam*) one day.

The same above Narration (*Hadith*) mentions the questioning of disobedient Muslims, Disbelievers (*Kafirun*), and Hypocrites (*Munafiqun*). "So, they will be brought to account, and their Lord will show them their deeds and deny them. Saying, "Oh Lord, by your glory, this Angel has written down things that I did not do." The Angel will say to him, 'Did you not do such and such a day, and in such a place?' He will say, 'No, by Your glory, I did not do that.' When he says this, Allah will seal his mouth." Abū Mūsā Al-Ash'ari رضي الله عنه said that he believes that the first thing to speak up will be the thigh of the right leg of that person. (1)

3. Exit Hellfire (*Jahannam*) into Paradise (*Jannah*)

The last benefit *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* can do for a Muslim who ended up in Hellfire (*Jahannam*) is to help them exit and be admitted into Paradise (*Jannah*).

The Quran proved that those who sinned but who believed in the Oneness of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى (*Tawheed*) would not be in Hellfire (*Jahannam*) eternally. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ﴾ [سورة آل عمران: 131]

“And fear the Fire, which has been prepared for the disbelievers.” (2)

Shaykh As-Sa'di رحمه الله said, "The Verse (*Ayah*) also proves that even if the Monotheists (the people of *Tawheed*) have committed some Major Sins (*Al-Kaba'ir*), they will not be in Hellfire (*Jahannam*) eternally. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said about which has been prepared for the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*). So, if the 'sinning monotheists' were to be in Hellfire (*Jahannam*) eternally, then the Fire would not have been prepared for the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) only, contrary to the belief of the *Mu'tazilah* and *Khawaarij*."

Also, there is a consensus among the scholars that the disobedient Muslims from this Community (*Ummah*) will not be in Hellfire (*Jahannam*) eternally; Al-Qaadhi' Iyaadh رحمه الله was among the scholars who reported the consensus in this regard.

Jabir رضي الله عنه reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “People among those who worshiped Allah alone (*Ahl Al-Tawheed*) will be punished in the Hellfire (*Jahannam*) until they are coals. Then the mercy of Allah will reach them, and they will be taken out and presented at the gates

(1) Musnad Ahmed

(2) Quran 3:131

of Paradise (*Jannah*). The people of Paradise (*Jannah*) will pour water over them, and they will grow just as the stubble carried by the stream grows, then they will enter Paradise (*Jannah*).” (1)

An-Nawawi رحمته الله commented on these traditions, saying: It is a proof for the people of the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*), that those who commit Major Sins (*Al-Kaba'ir*) will not remain in the Hellfire (*Jahannam*) forever. If they enter it, they will be taken out and eventually admitted into Paradise (*Jannah*). (2)

It is an indication of Allah's سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى mercy and his great wisdom, yet it is a concession that we should not take for granted. Some Jews and Christians used this as an excuse to continue committing their sins, saying that they would only have to endure Hellfire (*Jahannam*) for a short while. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿ وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَةً قُلْ أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ ۗ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾
[سورة البقرة: 80]

“They say: Never will the Hellfire (*Jahannam*) touch us, except for some days. Say: Have you taken a covenant with Allah? Allah will never break His covenant. Or do you say about Allah that which you do not know?” (3)

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

{ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ وَعَرَّهَمُ فِي دِينِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْرُقُونَ } [سورة آل عمران: 24]

“That is because they say: Never will the Hellfire touch us, except for some days. They became deluded in their religion because of what they fabricated.” (4)

Indeed, some of the Muslims say the same to themselves to rationalize their sins. But we should know that a single moment in the Hellfire (*Jahannam*) is worse than any amount of pleasure we can get out of the world. A person will be dipped in Hellfire (*Jahannam*) only once, and due to that pain; he will forget everything he or she ever experienced.

Abu Sa'eed رضي الله عنه reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said “Allah the Exalted will say: The Angels have interceded, the Prophets have interceded, the believers have interceded, and none remains to intercede but the Most Merciful of the merciful. He will take a handful from the Hellfire (*Jahannam*) and bring people out of it who never did any good and who had been

(1) Sunan At-Tirmidhi

(2) Sahih Muslim

(3) Quran 2:80

(4) Quran 3:24

Lā ilāha illa Allāh

turned into charcoal. He will cast them into a river named the River of Life on the outskirts of Paradise (*Jannah*). They will come out as a seed comes cut from the silt carried by the flood. You see it near a stone or tree. Whatever is exposed to the sun is yellow or green, and whatever is under the shade is white.” (1)



(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

Conclusion

The word conclusion reminds me of the end of our journey in this world and how desperate we will need to say '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' in the deathbed to ease the agonies of death on us.

Uttering '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' at the time of death will serve as a sign of our Good End (*Husn Al-Khatimah*), which will also comfort our loved ones whom we leave behind us in this world.

For us to be granted Allah's *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* steadfastness, to conclude our lives, saying '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' is a sign that somehow it was not lipped service; instead it was part of our lives.

In this edition of the *Right Belief Series*, we emphasized how much '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' will be of great benefit to us, in this world, the time of death, and the Hereafter (*Akhirah*). The least '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' will do for a sinful Muslim who deserved to be in Hell (*Jahannam*) for a duration of time, is to take him out of Hell (*Jahannam*) and admit him into Paradise (*Jannah*).

We wanted to conclude the *Right Belief Series (Volume II)* with two examples; the first is like the father of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) *عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام* who will come on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) without '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.' Meanwhile, Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) *عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام* has shown the highest level of servitude to Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*. He is the Friend (*Khalil*) of Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*. Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* said,

﴿وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا﴾ [سورة النساء: 125]

“And Allah did take Ibrahim (Abraham) as a Khalil (an intimate friend).” (1)

On the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) *عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام* will take the hand of his father, interceding on behalf of his father, and his petition will still not be admitted, because his father rejected '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.' Hence, his father would end up landing in the Hellfire (*Jahannam*) in the form of a blood-stained hyena for eternity. The following Narration (*Hadith*) is the proof.

Narrated Abu Hurairah *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ* that the Prophet ﷺ said, "On the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), Ibrahim (Abraham) will meet his father Azar whose face will be dark and covered with dust. (Ibrahim will say to him): 'Didn't I tell you not to disobey me?' His father will reply: 'Today I will not disobey you.' Ibrahim (Abraham) will say: 'O Lord! You promised me not to

(1) 4:125

disgrace me on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), and what will be more disgraceful to me than cursing and dishonoring my father?' Then Allah will say (to him): 'I have forbidden Paradise (*Jannah*) for the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*).' Then he will be addressed, 'O Ibrahim (Abraham)! Look! What is underneath your feet?' He will look, and there he will see a *Dhabh* (an animal) blood-stained, which will be caught by the legs and thrown in the Fire (*Jahannam*)."
(1)

Considering the above Narration (*Hadith*), we can now understand the Prophet's ﷺ reason, and disappointment regarding his uncle's death. Why did the Prophet ﷺ insist on requiring his uncle to utter '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' at the deathbed?

In the Narration (*Hadith*) of Musyab Ibn Hasn رضي الله عنه: Allah's Messenger ﷺ kept on inviting Abu Talib to say '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.' In contrast, they (Abu Jahl and Abdullah) kept on repeating their statement till Abu Talib said as his last statement that he was on the religion of Abdul Muttalib and refused to say, '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.' (2)

We also understand the disappointment of the Prophet ﷺ that he could not help his own uncle, because he knew that without saying it, like Prophet Ibrahim's (Abraham) عليه السلام father, there will be no way that he can help his uncle on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) to enter Paradise (*Jannah*). Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى revealed the following Verse (*Ayah*) to comfort, and to remind him with the fact that for someone to accept guidance, it is in the hand of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ﴾
[سورة القصص:56]

"Verily! You (O Muhammad) guide not whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He knows best those who are the guided." (3)

Even though, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will reduce his punishment due to the Prophet's ﷺ Intercession (*Shafa'ah*): Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was once reminded of his uncle, Abu Talib, and he said, "Perhaps my Intercession (*Shafa'ah*) will benefit him on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), and he will be placed in a shallow part of Hellfire (*Jahannam*), reaching his ankles, which will cause his brain to boil."(4)

All those who die as Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) will dwell in the Hellfire (*Jahannam*) forever, whether they were related to the Prophet ﷺ or not. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari
(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari
(3) Quran 28:56
(4) Sahih Muslim

﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾ [سورة البقرة: 39]

“But those who disbelieved (in the Oneness of Allāh - Islāmīc Monotheism) and denied Our Ayāt (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), they will be the dwellers of the Fire, to dwell therein forever. And worst indeed is that destination.” (1)

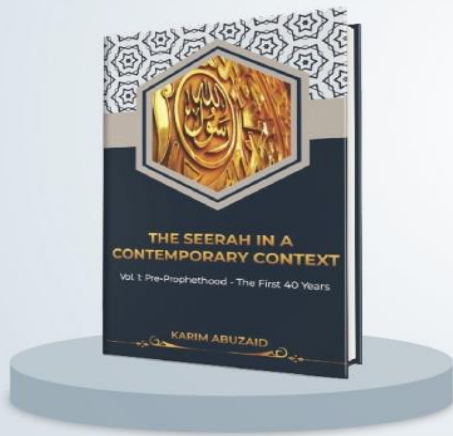
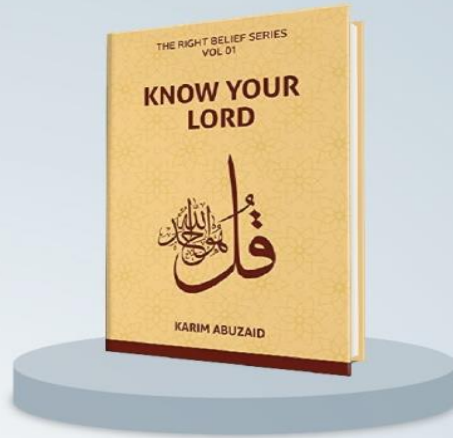
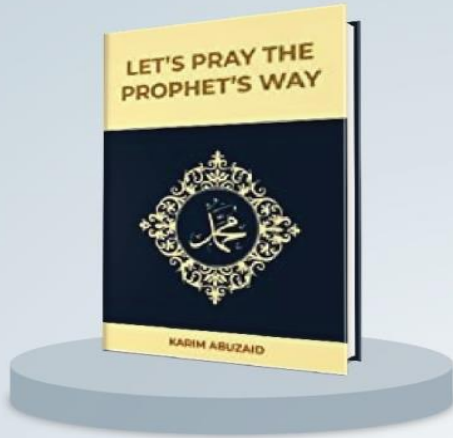
As for the second example, compare him to Prophet Ibrahim's (Abraham) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام father, considering his story mentioned earlier. He is one individual from the Community (*Ummah*), and he committed so many sins that they occupied the Ninety-Nine Scrolls. Afterward, he wholeheartedly embraced ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*,’ its two pillars of Negation (*Al-Bara*) and Affirmation (*Al-Wala*), and fulfilled its conditions. See for yourself what ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ will do for him in the Narration (*Hadith*) below.

Abdullah Bin Amr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "A man from my nation will be called before all of creation on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), and Ninety-Nine Scrolls will be spread out for him, each one extending as far as the eye can see. Then Allah will say: "Do you deny anything of this?" He will say: "No, O Lord." He will say: "Have My recording scribes been unfair to you?" Then He will say: "Apart from that, do you have any good deeds?" The man will be terrified and will say: "No." (Allah) will say: "Indeed, you have good deeds with Us, and you will not be treated unjustly this Day." Then a card will be brought out on which is written *Ash-hadu an la ilaha illallah wa anna Muhammadan' abduhu wa rasuluhu* (I bear witness that none has the right to be worshiped but Allah, and that Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger). He will say: "O Lord, what is this card compared with these scrolls?" He will say: "You will not be treated unjustly." Then the scrolls will be placed in one side of the Balance and the card in the other. The scrolls will go up (i.e., be light), and the card will go down (i.e., will weigh heavily)." (2)

﴿الحمد لله الذي بنعمته تتم الصالحات﴾

(1) Quran 2:39

(2) Ibn Majah (Authenticated by Al-Albani)



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