

A
BASIC
CCOURSE
ON ISLAM

FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE FOR EVERY HUMAN BEING



ABU TARIQ ZUBAIR MOHAMED

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Foundational Knowledge For Every Human Being

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Al Huda Salafi Charitable Trust

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Typeset AR

Cover Razal Pareed

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ [١٢٢]
[آلِ عِمْرَانَ]

﴿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﴾ [١٦]
[النِّسَاء]

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

أَمَّا بَعْدُ؛ فَإِنَّ أَصْدَقَ الْحَدِيثِ كَلَامُ اللَّهِ، وَخَيْرَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ، وَشَرُّ الْأُمُورِ مُحَدَّثَاتُهَا، وَكُلُّ مُحَدَّثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ.

THANKS

The Messenger of Allah, Mohammed ﷺ, said:

لَا يَشْكُرُ اللَّهَ مَنْ لَا يَشْكُرُ النَّاسَ

"He who does not thank the people is not thankful to Allah"

Narrated by : Abu Hurairah

Collected by : Abu Dawud in his Sunan

Graded by : Albani as Sahih

Oh Allah! I praise You
as You have praised Yourself.

Oh Allah! As You ordered,
I thank all those who stood behind this effort.

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PREFACE

If you believe in an eternal life after death, then this book is for you. It aims to help the reader understand the foundational principles of the true religion given to us by the Creator of the universe.

It is also a token of my sincere apology for all the deficiencies, shortcomings, or negligence on my part. I hope that Allah, the Most Glorified and Exalted, will accept and will help this message reach and connect with people around the world who seek it.

This book was not written for personal expression, emotional recounting, or aesthetic enjoyment. It's written to guide people away from the path of eternal suffering. You might have ignored the warnings before, but remember, truth will knock on your door once, and if ignored, it might never come back. So, don't miss this chance!

For those who approach this book with an open mind, it will captivate and engage. And those who do not may find it uninteresting and filled with intricate terminology. But if

...PREFACE

one approaches it with patience, the book's importance will inevitably reveal itself. Much will depend on the reader's mindset. While some may find the book's straightforward and succinct style to be overwhelming, a careful and dedicated reader will quickly appreciate its usefulness and deep meaning.

Don't skim through this book. It's written for practical use, not for casual reading. It might seem academic, or like a textbook, but it's a guide for practicing. With Allah's guidance, this book will help beginners learn about practicing Islam gradually, no matter their background - whether they are new to the faith or have been brought up in it.

To enable continuous reinforcement and consolidation of knowledge, this book is structured in a spiral way, revisiting topics with more details as you progress. Learners will initially encounter a point with a few details, and in later chapters, they will revisit the same topic with more comprehensive information. By the end, they will have a fair understanding of the subject matter.

Islam, a universal faith, is founded on specific teachings. The *Hadith of Jibreel*, an authentic narration, illustrates the correct way to introduce Islam to a new person free from biases. It underscores all three levels of Allah's religion: *Islam*, *Iman* and *Ihsan*, which encompass the core knowledge that every Muslim should never be ignorant of. Once this is done, a sincere person becomes engaged, and it becomes their duty to acquire adequate knowledge from trusted sources to secure their life, both in this world and in the hereafter.

...PREFACE

Religious terms often lose their original meanings. In this book, we have used Islamic terminology with detailed explanations. Without a proper grasp of these terms, one cannot effectively navigate the challenges posed by the so-called "post-truth" era, which is complex and often demands media literacy, critical thinking, and fact-checking as essential tools to overcome them.

For instance, the word 'God' is often used interchangeably with the Sacred Name 'Allah'. However, this practice doesn't fit with Islamic principles, values, or norms. The term 'God' can represent any anthropomorphized or idolized divine figure, which doesn't match with His Exalted Name.

Another instance is the usage of the term 'religion'. This word is frequently used to describe a wide range of beliefs, from basic systems like paganism, to ideologies, political correctness, and even critical spirituality. Amidst this variety, Islam, the authentic Religion from Allah, holds a distinct position.

I pray that Allah forgives the mistakes and acknowledges the noble actions of everyone involved in this book's creation. Bear in mind, this book is a wake-up call: **SAVE YOUR SOUL FROM HELLFIRE, DO NOT IGNORE IT!**

— ABU TARIQ ZUBAIR MOHAMED

CHAPTER 1

THE TESTIMONY

As-Shahadah

By which one declares his submission to Allah

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

[*Ash-hadu Alla Ilaha Illallah,
Wa Ash'hadu Anna Mohammadar-Rasoolulla*]

I testify that there is none legitimately worthy of worship but Allah, and I testify that Mohammed is the (final) Messenger of Allah.

It is the Testimony, *As-Shahada*, by which one declares his total submission to Allah, and willingly embraces His true Religion, Islam. A quick analysis of its structure and basic ideas will reveal that it essentially embodies two fundamental parts: one part pertaining to Allah, and the other pertaining to His Messenger, Mohammed ﷺ. Let us briefly delve into these two parts more precisely:

1. I testify that there is none legitimately worthy of worship, but Allah.

With this Testimony, you are willingly and convincingly founding two pillars on which your creed is conscientiously built up on - one being a negation and the other being an affirmation.

- **Pillar One, Negation:** "None is legitimately worthy of worship"

By proclaiming this pillar, you are primarily clearing your heart, mind and soul from all forms of deities, be it figures, spirits, natural phenomena, symbols, animate or inanimate things or others. Wiping out all traces of false beliefs in such deities from your heart is essential to accept and establish the only One truly worthy of worship.

- **Pillar Two, Affirmation:** "but Allah"

By proclaiming this pillar, you are establishing in your heart, which has now been freed from all deities and false beliefs by the way of the previous one, the only One who is truly worthy of worship. He is Allah, the One and only *Ilah* to whom the whole creation owes their worship. Furthermore, it implies that you have to worship Him with steadfastness, and associate none as partner unto Him. He has no equals, partners or assistants, and even nobody can intercede with Him without His permission.

To sum up, by proclaiming this Testimony, *As-Shahadah*, as described above, you are cleansing your heart, mind, and soul from all forms of deities and false beliefs. On the clean slate of your heart, mind, and soul achieved thereby, you are imprinting the only One

legitimately worthy of worship, leaving absolutely no room for any false deity or false belief.

2. I testify that Mohammed ﷺ is the final Messenger of Allah

This is the second part of the Testimony, *As-Shahada*, and pertains to the fundamental beliefs and principles with regard to the Messenger of Allah, Mohammed ﷺ. Once you proclaim that Mohammed ﷺ is the final Messenger of Allah you are ascertaining your wholehearted willingness to:

1. **accept and obey all his commands and orders**, whether it is pertaining to your worldly or spiritual affairs.
2. **abstain from all that he has prohibited**, showing no concern for the loss or gain that it may bring about in this world.
3. **testify and hold as true all that he informed** without any element of denial, doubt or suspicion, as there is little chance for any mistake to creep into his saying. He never speaks on his own desire, rather it is the revelation sent down by Allah.⁽¹⁾
4. **worship Allah alone in the way he has prescribed**, without fabricating or inventing any modalities in them.
5. **to love him above all creations**, which results in unconditional obedience to him and absolute compliance with his instructions.

In short, the final Messenger of Allah, Mohammed ﷺ, is the only one whom the whole mankind should follow for their salvation. With the advent of the final Messenger, Mohammed ﷺ, every road to Allah is closed except the one that was taken by him. Though, he

is the most dignified, he is only a servant of Allah, never entitled to be worshipped. And being the Messenger of Allah he should not be denied or rejected under any circumstances for Allah has said, "We sent no Messenger, but to be obeyed by Allah's Leave." ⁽²⁾

References:

- (1) The Noble Quran, 53-Surah An-Najm, Verse No. 3-4
"Nor does he speak of (his own) desire. It is only an inspiration that is revealed."
- (2) The Noble Quran, 4-Surah An-Nisa, Verse No. 64
"We sent no Messenger, but to be obeyed by Allah's Leave.."

CHAPTER 2

PURIFICATION OF A MUSLIM

At-Twaharah

Appropriate way to attain the human dignity

Why are we on this earth?

Allah created the universe so that you may know Him and recognize His highest dominion over all things, and that He encompasses everything by His knowledge and power.⁽¹⁾ He created mankind only to establish *Tawheed*, i.e., to worship Him alone.⁽²⁾ He has determined life and death on this earth to test which of you is best in deed.⁽³⁾

What is the ultimate goal of human life?

The ultimate goal of a man who has testified his absolute submission to the Will of Allah is to save himself from the hellfire, *Al-Jahannam*, enter the paradise, *Al-Jannah*, and see the Face of Allah, who created him and bestowed him with all bounties.

What road do we take to attain our goal?

Allah created mankind for a great purpose and, therefore

did not abandon man to be on his own. The One who provides you with all the means of sustenance of your life would not avoid providing you with guidance on the purpose of your life and its ultimate goal.⁽⁴⁾ Allah sent down this guidance through His Messengers, and the Messenger of Allah, Mohammed ﷺ, has taught everything required to attain this goal in a step-by-step manner. The process of attaining this goal through the method shown by Allah's Messenger ﷺ can be termed as absolute purification.⁽⁵⁾

How to achieve the state of absolute purity?

For one to achieve the state of absolute purity, it is required to purge his mind from all forms of inward impurities like *Shirk*, *Kufr*, *Nifaq*, *Shub'hat*, and *Shahawat*, as well as his body from all types of physical impurities.

Shirk refers to the gravest sin of associating partners with Allah and ascribing His attributes to anyone or anything other than Him. It is often described as polytheism or idolatry which is strictly prohibited and goes against *Tawheed*, the core belief of Islam.

Kufr refers to any act of disbelief or rejection of the essential beliefs of Islam. It is considered as the opposite of *Iman* which signifies faith or belief in Allah and all the established tenets of Islam.

Nifaq refers to hypocrisy, the act of pretending to be a believer while concealing disbelief or having insincere intentions. *Nifaq* is considered one of the gravest moral and spiritual corruption since it involves dishonesty and betrayal of faith.

Shub'hat denotes the misconceptions, doubts or confusions that may arise concerning matters of Islamic creed and practice.

It could often lead to the ruining of a person's basic understanding of Islamic teachings. Further, it is the way of the people of whims and desires, hence is strictly prohibited and has been warned against.

Shahawat refers to worldly desires and temptations that may lead a person away from practicing his faith leaving him in a state of wickedness, immorality and utmost disorder.

Two types of physical impurities

Besides the aforementioned inward impurities, there are two types of physical impurities - major and minor. A Muslim must purge both impurities, internally and externally.

Minor impurity is only a state of ritual impurity that does not prevent a person from performing most day-to-day activities. However, it does affect his eligibility to perform certain acts of worship, such as *Salah* (formal prayers), *Tawaf* (circumambulation around the *Ka'ba*), and the like.

How to remove minor impurities?

Minor impurities can be removed by performing ablution, *wudu*.⁽⁶⁾ The method of performing *wudu* is described in the following narration:

"Othman bin Affan رضي الله عنه poured water over his hands and washed them thrice and then put his right hand in the water container and rinsed his mouth, washed his nose by breathing in water and sniffing it out. Then he washed his face and forearms up to the elbows thrice and passed his wet hands over his head. Then washed his feet up to the ankles thrice. Then he said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said, 'If anyone performs ablution like

that of mine and offers a *two-Rak'ah* prayer, during which his mind is not distracted by other thoughts, his past (minor) sins will be forgiven'." ⁽⁷⁾

How to remove major impurities?

Major impurities can be removed by taking a bath, *Ghusl*, and its steps are described in the following narration:

Narrated by A'isha رضي الله عنها: "Whenever the Prophet took a bath after *janaabah*, a source of major impurity, he started by washing his hands and then performed ablution, *wudu*, like that for the formal prayers. After that, he would put his fingers in water and run it in the roots of his hair, and then pour three handfuls of water over his head and then pour water all over his body." ⁽⁸⁾

A person who intends to offer total submission to Allah, i.e., embracing Islam, has to purge himself from all types of inward impurities. Upon the proclamation of the Testimony, *As-Shahada*, for the first time, he ought to purify his body also by taking a bath as prescribed above. The state of this purity must reflect in him, inwardly and outwardly illuminating every corner of his life.

A Muslim should also maintain other hygienic practices in his life as taught by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ like the ones that are mentioned below:

Five practices are the characteristics of the *fitra*, natural disposition: circumcision, shaving the pubic hair, trimming the moustaches, clipping the nails, and plucking the hair of the armpits. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ further ordered to do the last four once every forty days.⁽⁹⁾

References:

- (1) **The Noble Quran, 65-Surah At-Twalaq, Verse No. 12**
 "It is Allah Who has created seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof. His Command descends between them, that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah surrounds all things in His Knowledge."
- (2) **The Noble Quran, 51-Surah Ad-Dhariyat, Verse No. 56-57**
 "And I created not the *jinn*s and humans except they should worship Me Alone. I seek not any provision from them, nor do I ask that they should feed Me."
- (3) **The Noble Quran, 67-Surah Al-Mulk, Verse No. 2**
 "Who has created death and life, that He may test you which of you is best in deed. And He is the Almighty, the Oft-Forgiving."
- (4) **The Noble Quran, 23-Surah Al-Mu'minoon, Verse No. 71**
 "And if the truth had been in accordance with their desires, verily, the heavens and the earth, and whosoever is therein would have been corrupted! Nay, We have brought them their reminder, but they turn away from their reminder."
- (5) **The Noble Quran, 91-Surah As-Shams, Verse No. 9-10**
 "Indeed he succeeds who purifies his own self. And indeed he fails who corrupts his own-self."
- (6) **The Noble Quran, 5-Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse No. 6**
 "Oh you who believe! When you intend to offer Prayer, *Salah*, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, rub your heads, and wash your feet up to ankles. If you are in a state of *janaba*, purify yourself. But if you are ill or on a journey or any of you comes from answering the call of nature, or you have been in contact with women and you find no water, then perform *tayammum* with clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands. Allah does not want to place you in difficulty, but He wants to purify you, and to complete His Favour on you that you may be thankful."
- (7) **Bukhari and Muslim, *Sahih*, The Book of ablution**
- (8) **Bukhari, *Sahih*, The Book of bath**
- (9) **Muslim, *Sahih*, The Book of purification**

CHAPTER

3

FORMAL PRAYER

As-Salah

Compulsory, five times daily

S*alah* is a well-known Islamic term which refers to the formal prayers of Muslims. It is considered as the second pillar of Islam and stands out as the most fundamental act of worship for the believers. *Salah* has a prescribed form covering physical, mental and spiritual worship. Muslims are enjoined to establish it regularly five times a day at specific intervals. ⁽¹⁾

Furthermore, *Salah* plays a vital role in the lives of Muslims. It has a profound impact at individual and community levels, encompassing spiritual, psychological, and social dimensions. The formal prayer is the direct link between a worshipper and his Creator, Allah. It fosters a strong sense of connection with Allah, provides moral guidance, promotes self-discipline, and contributes to building a robust community bond among Muslims.

Following are the highlights of *Salah*:

- *Salah* is the second pillar of Islam.⁽²⁾
- In addition to *As-Shahadah*, both *Salah* and *Zakah* are essential for attaining Islamic fraternity.⁽³⁾
- *Salah* is compulsory and has to be offered five times daily. They are: *Fajr*, *Duhr*, *Asr*, *Maghrib* and *Isha*.
- These regular prayers are mandatory and should be performed at prescribed times. For men, it should be in congregation at the masjid.⁽⁴⁾
- Unlike any other acts of worship, merely abandoning *Salah*, without denying its obligation may amount to Disbelief, *kufr*.⁽⁵⁾
- One should remove major impurities through bath, *ghusl*, and minor impurities through ablution, *wudu*, before performing *Salah*.⁽⁶⁾
- *Salah* is offered facing the *Qiblah*, i.e., the *Ka'bah* situated in *Makkah*.⁽⁷⁾
- All actions and supplications in *Salah* should be performed exactly as established by the Messenger of Allah, Mohammed ﷺ, for he said: "Pray as you have seen me praying".⁽⁸⁾
- On Fridays, the *Jumu'a* Prayer of 2-*Rak'ah* is offered at noon after a brief sermon.⁽⁹⁾

Below is a detailed table showing the name of the *Salah*, the number of *Rak'ah* and their timings:

Prayer	No. of <i>Rak'ah</i>	Start Time	End Time
<i>Fajr</i>	2 <i>Rak'ah</i>	Starts when the dawn breaks	Ends with the start of sunrise
<i>Duhr</i>	4 <i>Rak'ah</i>	Starts when the sun moves from the zenith	Ends when one's shadow becomes the same length as his height (Till the time of <i>Asr</i>)
<i>Asr</i>	4 <i>Rak'ah</i>	Starts when ones shadow becomes the same length as his height	Ends when the sun becomes pale (Till the time of <i>Maghrib</i>)
<i>Maghrib</i>	3 <i>Rak'ah</i>	Starts when the sun sets	Ends when the twilight disappears (Till the time of <i>Isha</i>)
<i>Isha</i>	4 <i>Rak'ah</i>	Starts when the twilight disappears	Ends by the middle of an average night

Besides the regular prayers, there are some other compulsory prayers of collective obligation, like *Eid* or Funeral Prayers. If a Muslim dies, the corpse should be washed and *Janaza* Prayer should be offered.⁽¹⁰⁾

In addition to the above, many optional prayers are prescribed. Even though they are not obligatory, Muslims are highly recommended to observe them consistently to earn additional rewards and draw closer to Allah.

References:

- (1) **The Noble Quran, 4-Surah An-Nisa, Verse No. 103**
 "Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours."
- (2) **Bukhari and Muslim, Sahih, The Book of Iman**
 Narrated by Abdullah bin Omer رضي الله عنه that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "Islam is built on five (pillars): To testify that none is legitimately worthy of worship, but Allah, and Mohammad ﷺ is Allah's Messenger, to offer the compulsory regular prayers perfectly, to pay the obligatory charity, *Zakah*, to perform pilgrimage to Makkah, *Hajj*, and to observe fasting during the month of *Ramadan*."
- (3) **The Noble Quran, 9-Surah At-Taubah, Verse No. 11**
 "If they repent, establish *Salah* and give *Zakah*, then they are your brothers in religion. We detail the verses for a people who know."
- (4) **The Noble Quran, 2-Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse No. 43**
 "And establish prayer and give *Zakah* and perform *Ruku* with those who bow in *Ruku*"
- (5) **Tirmidhi, Sunan, The book of virtues, Graded by Albani as Sahih**
 Narrated by Abdullah bin Shaqeeq رضي الله عنه, he said: "The Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not consider the abandonment of any action as disbelief except neglecting *Salah*."
- (6) **The Noble Quran, 5-Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse No. 6**
 "Oh you who believe! When you intend to offer Prayer, *Salah*, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, rub your heads, and wash your feet up to ankles. If you are in a state of *janaba*, purify yourself.."
- (7) **The Noble Quran, 2-Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse No. 150**
 "And from wherever you go out, turn your face toward *Al-Masjid Al-Haram*. And wherever you may be, turn your faces toward it.."
- (8) **Bukhari, Sahih, The Book of Prayer**, Narrated by Malik bin Anas رضي الله عنه.

(9) **The Noble Quran, 62-Surah Al-Jumu'a, Verse No. 9**

"Oh you who believe! When the call is proclaimed for the *Salah* on the day of *Jumu'a* (Friday), come to the remembrance of Allah, and leave off all businesses, that is better for you if you did but know!"

(10) **Muslim, *Sahih*, The Book of visiting the sick**

Narrated by Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه that Allah's Messenger said: "If a Muslim dies and forty people, who do not associate anything with Allah in worship, participate in the funeral prayer over him, Allah will accept their intercession for him."

CHAPTER

4

REMEMBRANCE OF ALLAH

Al-Adhkar

Central part of any act of worship in Islam

A *l-Adhkar* (singular: *dhikr*) is an Islamic term that refers to the Remembrance of Allah. They are performed through the recitation of specific supplications, verses from the Quran, and phrases from Islamic traditions. The very purpose of *Adhkar* is to help Muslims maintain a constant connection with Allah throughout their daily lives and to seek Allah's protection, guidance and blessings.

They are the most essential part of a Muslim's religious practices. Each and every act of worship in Islam is enacted to establish and maintain the remembrance of Allah. The central part of any act of worship like *Salah*, *Zakah*, Fasting, *Hajj* and others is nothing but remembrance of Allah. The underlying purpose of such worship remains the same: to be always mindful of Allah, and desirous towards Him that He may remember him in return.

In terms of reward, there is nothing that can surpass the remembrance of Allah.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ once asked his companions: "Shall I not inform you of the best of your actions which are the purest to your *Rabb* (Lord Almighty), which exalt you to the highest of ranks, which are more efficacious than spending gold and silver in charity, and better for you than you encountering your enemies whom you smite the necks of and who smite your necks?" They replied, "Certainly". Then the Messenger ﷺ said, "Remembrance of Allah the Exalted." ⁽¹⁾

Here are a few *Adhkar* which can be recited at any time of the day, be it morning, evening or during prayer; and can be used by the beginners as a substitute for any other supplications or verses. One should utter or recite supplications and words of remembrance in Arabic, exactly as they are reported in order to avail results and rewards in full.

[*Sub'hanallah*] – سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ

I glorify and exalt Allah

(From all imperfections, associations and allegations)

The phrase *Sub'hanallah* is known as *Tasbeeh*, and it serves as a negation of any allegations, imperfections, or flaws attributed to Allah by infidels or wrongly ascribed to Him by the ignorant. This phrase negates any associations, equalities, or similarities between Allah and His creations. Through this remembrance, a believer holds Allah as exalted and high, far above any allegations, such as the notion that He has taken children, partners, or intercessors.

When a person says *Sub'hanallah* he is acknowledging,

upholding and ascertaining the oneness, uniqueness, greatness, perfection, holiness and sanctity of Allah. Furthermore, it serves as a way to express humility, reverence, and awe towards the sole Creator of the universe.

It is often recited in various situations and used to express denial of any allegation leveled against Allah. Besides that, it shows spiritual devotion and a means of seeking blessings and forgiveness from Allah.

[*Al-Hamdu Lillah*] – الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

All Praises are to Allah

(Praise with absolute love and fear; Praise for His Perfection and Mercy)

The remembrance (*dhikr*), *Al-Hamdu lillah*, well known as *Tahmeed*, is an affirmation of Allah's Perfection, and confirmation of the creation's obligation to worship Him alone. When a person says *Al-Hamdu lillah*, he is praising Allah for two things:

1. For His perfection, greatness, uniqueness and beauty in every aspect including His Essence, Names, Attributes and Actions.
2. For His benevolence, mercy and blessings. More precisely for all the good things that come from Him.

So, *Tahmeed* has two aspects, one is an expression of admiration and the other is an offering of gratitude, *shukr*, hence it signifies submission to the Will of Allah.

Tahmeed is a vocal expression of praise. It is not a simple commendation or eulogy. The difference between *Tahmeed* and

common commendations is that *Tahmeed* comes out of absolute love, fear and hope in Allah from the innermost heart, while the latter can be done without such a sincere feeling.

It is worth mentioning that *Tahmeed* is not merely an expression of gratitude, rather it is much greater with exceptional dimensions. Thanks and tributes are offered only for His benevolence, while *Tahmeed* is expressed both for His perfection and benevolence.

While *Tahmeed* relates to diverse aspects such as Allah's perfection, benevolence, actions, uniqueness, beauty, and more, its means of expression is singular – the tongue. Therefore, *Tahmeed* can only be performed through vocal expression.

Unlike *Tahmeed*, which relates to various aspects, gratitude pertains to a single aspect, namely His benevolence. However, the means of expressing gratitude are diverse and can involve one's heart, tongue, limbs, and various faculties. For instance, it can be expressed through verbal remembrance, physical prayer, or giving *Zakah* using one's wealth.

It's essential to remember that praises are descriptions and commendations about Allah. Nobody can formulate their own representation of Him. Instead, Allah Himself has revealed perfect wording for His praise. A believer should follow those expressions since he cannot invent them, not even enumerate His praises. Allah is as He has praised Himself.

Tahmeed is used in various contexts as a way to maintain a positive outlook and trust in Allah in any situation, be it success, challenges, difficulties, tribulations, and others. It is commonly recited in prayers, during moments of joy, and in everyday conversations to remind oneself and others of their reliance on Allah and the importance of gratitude in Islam.

In short, *Tahmeed* is a fundamental expression of faith, admiration and tribute emphasizing the fact that all praise and gratitude ultimately belong to Allah, the Creator, Sovereign and Sustainer of the universe.

[*La Ilaha Illallah*] – لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

There is none legitimately worthy of worship, but Allah

The phrase *La ilaha illa Allah* is the testimony by which one declares his faith in Allah and the acceptance of His religion, Islam. It is often called *As-Shahadah* or *Tahleel*. It is considered as the most excellent remembrance and supplication. Based on a narration of Mohammed ﷺ, *Tahleel* is the best of what all Messengers of Allah have uttered and professed.⁽²⁾ It is the word of *Tawheed*, the oneness of Allah. It refers to the cornerstone of Islam, emphasizing the belief in the oneness and uniqueness of Allah.

The virtues of this remembrance, *dhikr*, are innumerable. The one who proclaims this testimony will have all his previous sins expiated, and his blood and wealth will be inviolable in this world. Whosoever dies uttering this word will enter paradise.

In short, there is no other remembrance or supplication in Islam greater than *Tahleel* in terms of virtues and rewards.⁽³⁾

اللهُ أَكْبَرُ – [Allahu Akbar]

Allah is the Greatest

The phrase *Allahu Akbar*, often called *Takbeer* is the most well-known and frequently recited remembrance in Islam. It is used in various contexts including prayers, calls for formal prayers, expressions of joy or success, and so on.

It primarily denotes the oneness of Allah. He is the Greatest in all levels and aspects. *Takbeer* reveals His greatness, and His highness over all his creations. In every sense, He is exalted and unparalleled.

Allah is the First and nothing was before Him, and He is the Last and nothing comes after Him. He didn't come into existence after He wasn't. He has no beginning, but He has always been. He has no end and He will always be. He is Ever-living and never dies. Thus, He is fully capable of temporal encompassment i.e., complete knowledge and control over all aspects of time and its unfolding.

He is the most High, nothing is above Him, and He is the most Near and nothing is nearer than Him. He is fully capable of spatial encompassment and possesses complete knowledge and control over all aspects of space and all its extent.

Allah is not limited by time or space, rather He exists beyond time and space, having a comprehensive understanding of past, present, and future events. His knowledge and power extend over the entirety of time and space.⁽⁴⁾

His greatness manifests His oneness. Similarly, His oneness reflects His greatness, making Him the One and the Greatest. *Takbeer* reveals these beautiful elements, making it powerful and spiritually significant. It represents the central belief in the greatness and supremacy of Allah while serving as a constant reminder of faith, humility, and the recognition that Allah is above all else. When one utters this remembrance, they establish in their mind that Allah is the Greatest for them, and all else is insignificant in matters pertaining to Allah.

[*Astaghfirullah*] – اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ

I ask Allah for forgiveness

The phrase '*Astaghfirullah*' is known as *Istighfar* which is commonly used to seek forgiveness from Allah. By uttering this remembrance, a Muslim acknowledges his shortcomings, mistakes, sins or any wrongdoings he might have committed, intentionally or unintentionally showing his repentance to Allah by begging for His forgiveness, mercy and blessings. Seeking forgiveness is a significant aspect of Islamic faith and practice. Moreover, it is a means of purifying one's soul and drawing him closer to Allah.

Istighfar is recited not only for forgiveness by a believer but also for seeking blessings and raising him to higher ranks. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to vocalize it more than seventy times a day.⁽⁵⁾ It is indeed an invocation of immense power and benefits used for obtaining sustenance and contentment in this life as well.⁽⁶⁾ A believer can use *Istighfar* in various situations including:

- **During personal reflection:** Muslims should often engage in self-reflection and self-correction as part of their daily spiritual practices. *Istighfar* is the best remembrance for it.
- **In Prayers and worships:** In the formal prayers, *Salah*, different forms of *Istighfar* are recited. Similarly, it is recited in various acts of worship emphasizing the importance of seeking Allah's forgiveness, blessings and nearness.
- **During times of distress or adversity:** Seeking forgiveness and pardon by *Istighfar* during times of difficulty or hardship is the best way to invoke Allah's help and mercy.
- **After committing a sin:** When a person becomes aware of the wrongdoing or sin he has committed, he should recite *Istighfar* many times as a way to express remorse and seek Allah's forgiveness.

In essence, the phrase '*Astaghfirullah*' is a humble and sincere expression of repentance, reminding human beings of their imperfections and the need to continually seek Allah's forgiveness and guidance in their journey towards the ultimate goal.

Highlights of the above remembrances:

1. ***Tasbeeh*** is the negation of all imperfections and allegations
2. ***Tahmeed*** is the affirmation of all His perfections and confirmation of all creations' obligation to worship Him
3. ***Takbeer*** is the most repeated pronouncement of Allah's Greatness in all aspects
4. ***Tahleel*** is the best of the remembrances of Allah taught by all His Prophets and Messengers

5. Allah will show a way out from every distress for one who performs *Istighfaar* consistently.⁽⁷⁾
6. *Tasbeeh* and *Tahmeed* shall fill one's scale, i.e., the balance that will be used to weigh the good and bad deeds on the Day of Judgment.⁽⁸⁾
7. *Tawheed* and *Istighfar* constitute a special combination of faith and submission to Allah, and for a Muslim, it is a means of attaining Allah's Mercy and surviving tribulations and solving problems in his life.

References:

- (1) Tirmidhi, *Sunan, Chapters on Supplications*, Graded by Albani as *Sahih*
- (2) Tirmidhi, *Sunan, Chapters on Supplications*, Graded by Albani as *Hasan*
 "The best of supplication is the supplication of the Day of *Arafah*. And the best of what I and the Prophets before me have said is: None has the right to be worshiped but Allah. He is the One, without partner, to Him belongs all that exists, and to Him belongs the Praise, and He is powerful over all things."
- (3) The Noble Quran, 14-Surah *Ibrahim*, Verse No. 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 to go astray those who are wrong-doers, and Allah does what He wills."
- (4) The Noble Quran, 57-Surah *Ibrahim*, Verse No. 3
 "He is the First and the Last, the Most High and the Most Near. And He is the All-Knower of every thing."
- (5) Bukhari, *Sahih, The Book of Supplications*
 Narrated by Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "By Allah! I ask for forgiveness from Allah and turn to Him in repentance more than seventy times a day."

(6) The Noble Quran, 71-Surah Nooh, Verse No. 10-12

"I (the Prophet Noah ؑ) said: Ask forgiveness from your *Rabb*; Verily, He is Oft-Forgiving; He will send rain to you in abundance; And give you increase in wealth and children, and bestow on you gardens and bestow on you rivers."

(7) The Noble Quran, 21-Surah Al-Anbiya, Verse No. 87

"But he (Dhan-Noon ؑ) cried through the darkness: *La ilaha illa Anta* (None has the legitimacy to be worshiped but You), Exalted are You, above all that they ascribed to You. Truly, I have been of the wrong-doers."

(8) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book of Purification*

Narrated by Abu Malik Al-Ash'ari ؓ that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "*Al-hamdu lillah* fills the scales; *Sub'hanallah* and Al-hamdulillah fill that which is between heaven and earth."

CHAPTER 5

**WHAT A MUSLIM SHOULD NEVER BE
IGNORANT ABOUT | PART -1**

KNOW YOUR LORD, ALMIGHTY

Ar-Rabb

Who is your *Rabb* - the Lord, Almighty?

Allah is my *Rabb* because He is the Only Creator, Owner, Organizer and Cherisher of all the worlds. Everything other than Allah is worlds created by Him, and I am one amongst them.⁽¹⁾ There is no *Rabb* for all the worlds other than Him. Nor any partner or helper or intercessor unto Him.

This is known as *Tawheedur-Ruboobiyya* which refers to the Oneness of the Lord-ship of Allah. *Ruboobiyya* primarily includes:

1. Creation (خَلْقٌ)
2. Ownership or Sovereignty (مُلْكٌ)
3. Planning and Organizing (تَدْبِيرٌ)

The above three, along with all the other aspects of *Ruboobiyya*, like the Giver of Security, the Provider, the Sustainer, the Cherisher, etc., belong to Allah Alone. And He has no partner in His Lordship whatsoever. ⁽²⁾

Who is your *Ilaah*, the One whom you should legitimately worship?

Allah is my *Ilaah*, the Only One whom all creation should legitimately worship. There is none truly worthy of worship but He. And I shall never associate anyone as partners with Him in my worship. For He alone has created all the worlds and He alone owns, plans and organizes them. None but Allah has any authority over them, not even the smallest share of it. He needs no assistance, and none has the right to intercede with Him without His permission. This defines *Tawheedul-Uloohiyya*, the Oneness of Allah in Worship.⁽³⁾

This is Allah's right over His creation, and the obligation of the creation unto their *Rabb*.⁽⁴⁾ Associating partners in His Lordship or in the worship to Him is *Shirk*, certainly the gravest sin that Allah never forgives.⁽⁵⁾

Behold that 'God' is anything that is worshipped, while 'Allah' (*Ismul-Jalaalah*) is the proper name of the *Rabb* of all the worlds. So, the word 'God' cannot be used as an equivalent or substitute to His Name 'Allah'.

How to know your *Rabb*?

The best way to know Allah is to learn His Names and Attributes. Allah has many Names, some of them He has revealed in His Books, some He taught to certain of His creations and some He concealed in His unrevealed knowledge. All His Names are perfect and the most beautiful.⁽⁶⁾

Allah has many Attributes. Every one of His Names includes one or more attributes. However, He has many Attributes that

have not been included in His Names, and He has many Names and Attributes that are not revealed to us. All His names are most beautiful and all His attributes are perfect and the most sublime.⁽⁷⁾

None has the right to name Allah or ascribe any attribute to Him except He Himself. The only sources available to learn His Names and Attributes are His revelations, i.e., His words in the Noble Quran and the authentic traditions (Sunnah) of His Messenger Mohammed ﷺ.⁽⁸⁾

A Muslim should believe in them, affirm what is affirmed in the Quran and Sunnah, and reject what is negated in them without any type of denial, distortion, similitude, figurative illustration or false interpretation. This is known as *Tawheedul-Asma' was-Swifat*, the Oneness and Uniqueness of Allah in His Names and Attributes.⁽⁹⁾

And one should not say about Allah what he knows not, nor fabricate or deny any of His Names or Attributes. Doing so is *Ilhad*, a deviation that may amount to *Kufr* or *Shirk*.⁽¹⁰⁾

Amongst His Names, there are ninety-nine! Whosoever memorizes them, learns their meanings and acts upon them will enter paradise.⁽¹¹⁾

Ruboobiyya, *Uloohiyya* and *Al-Asma' was-Swifat* are the three aspects of *Tawheed*, the Oneness of Allah. To establish and prove this ultimate truth is the purpose for which mankind was created and it is our duty to fulfill it in the way Allah is pleased.⁽¹²⁾

Besides the above, the ways to know Allah are:

- Study the verses of His revelation in the Quran and Sunnah

- Keenly observe and ponder over His vast and diverse creations

References:

(1) The Noble Quran, 1-Surah Al-Fatihah, Verse No. 2

"All Praises are to Allah, Lord of all worlds."

(2) The Noble Quran, 34-Surah Saba, Verse No. 22

"Oh Mohammed! Say: Call upon those whom you assert besides Allah, they possess not even the weight of a small ant, either in the heavens or on the earth, nor have they any share in either, nor there is for Him any supporter from among them."

(3) The Noble Quran, 34-Surah Saba, Verse No. 22, (Ibid)

(4) Bukhari, *Sahih, The Book of Jihad by means of riding*

Narrated by Mu'ad رضي الله عنه, he said: 'I was the one riding behind the Prophet ﷺ on a donkey called Ofair.' Then the Prophet ﷺ asked, "Oh Muad! Do you know what Allah's right on His slaves is, and what the right of His slaves on Him is?" I replied, "Allah and His Messenger know better." He said, "Allah's right on His slaves is that they should worship Him alone, and should not worship any besides Him. And slave's right on Allah is that He should not punish him who worships none besides Him." I said, "Oh the Messenger of Allah! Should I not inform the people of this good news?" He said, "Do not inform them of it, lest they would rely on it."

(5) The Noble Quran, 4-Surah An-Nisa, Verse No. 48

"Verily, Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with him in worship, but He forgives except that to whom He pleases, and whoever sets up partners with Allah in worship, he has indeed invented a tremendous sin."

(6) Albani, *Silsilatul Ahadees As-Swaheehah, Hadith No. 199*

Narrated by Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه: that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "When a servant is afflicted by distress or sorrow he should say, 'Oh Allah! I am Your servant, the son of Your servant, the son of Your handmaid, and at Your disposal; my forelock is in Your hand; Your judgment is effective regarding me; just concerning me is Your decree; I ask You by every Name You have by which You have called Yourself, or sent down in Your Book, or taught any of Your creatures, or kept to

Yourself in the hidden knowledge, to make the Quran the Spring of my heart and the means of clearing away my care and grief." He declared that, "no one had ever said it without Allah removing his grief and giving him joy instead of it."

(7) Ibn Othaymeen, *Al-Qawa'idul Muthla*, (*The Best Rules Regarding The Attributes Of Allah And His Most Beautiful Names*)

(8) Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Aqeedatul Wasitiyya*

(9) Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Aqeedatul Wasitiyya (Ibid)*

(10) The Noble Quran, 7-Surah Al-A'raf, Verse No. 180

"And 'the Best Names' belong to Allah, so invoke Him by them. And leave those who practice deviation (*Ilhad*) concerning His names. They will be recompensed for what they have been doing."

(11) Bukhari, *Sahih, The Book of Conditions*

Narrated by Abu Huraira رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Allah has ninety-nine names, i.e. one-hundred minus one, and whoever enumerates and act upon them will enter paradise."

(12) The Noble Quran, 19-Surah Maryam, Verse No. 165

"Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them - so worship Him and have patience for His worship. Do you know of any similarity to Him?"

CHAPTER 6

**WHAT A MUSLIM SHOULD NEVER BE
IGNORANT ABOUT | PART - 2**

KNOW YOUR RELIGION

Ad-Deen

Definition of the Religion, *Deen*

The Arabic term '*Deen*' refers to a holistic way of life involving faith, values and practices aimed at guiding mankind in the spiritual, moral and social realms of their lives. It sets a comprehensive framework of how a human being should live and interact positively with all the elements of the universe with special emphasis on monotheism, moral integrity, compassion and social responsibility.

There are two angles to the definition of *Deen*, one from the perspective of the creations and the other from the perspective of the Creator.

1. It is all that with which one submits to the Will of Allah. From this angle, *Deen* encompasses all the beliefs, words and actions of a person with the intention to achieve Allah's pleasure.
2. Everything in one's life that will be accounted for. From this

angle, *Deen* comprises every activity, be it mental, verbal or physical that would be reckoned by Allah on the Day of Judgment.⁽¹⁾

Background

Allah created man and provided him sustenance. He did not abandon him worthless. When He sent him down to the Earth, He promised him guidance and said:

"Whenever there comes to you Guidance from Me, and whoever follows My Guidance, there shall be no fear on them, nor shall they grieve."⁽²⁾

It is a great favour upon us that He sent Messengers to mankind from time to time with His Guidance. This Guidance is His Religion – Islam – which means total submission to the Will of Allah.

The Religion preached by all the Messengers of Allah was Islam in general and the central message preached by them all was to worship Allah alone and to keep away from every false deity, *Taghoot*.⁽³⁾ Islam was completed in its perfect and final form by the last Messenger of Allah, Mohammed ﷺ,⁽⁴⁾ and the whole of mankind and *jinn* must embrace it. For he said:

"By Him in whose hand Mohammed's soul is, anyone from this nation, whether Jew or Christian, who hears about me but does not affirm their belief in what I have been sent with and dies in this state of disbelief, shall be among the dwellers of the hellfire."⁽⁵⁾

Structure of *Deen*

The *Hadith Jibreel*, a well-known Islamic tradition, provides us with a profound insight into the comprehensive framework

for understanding the structure of the core beliefs and practices in Islam. It is a pivotal narration that encapsulates the essence of the religion of Islam in a clear and concise manner. It serves as a source of guidance and reflection for Muslims seeking a deeper understanding of their religion.

Jibreel ﷺ came to the Messenger of Allah, Mohammed ﷺ asking him certain questions to educate the people about their religion. Then the Messenger of Allah Mohammed ﷺ responded describing the religion as having three levels: *Islam*, *Iman* and *Ihsan*:⁽⁶⁾

- Level One - *Islam*: It denotes total submission to Allah and it consists of five pillars.
- Level Two - *Iman*: It refers to the creed and beliefs which consists of six pillars.
- Level Three - *Ihsan*: It implies the state of excellence and the highest degree in worshipping Allah and it has only one pillar.

References:

(1) Ibn Jarir At-Tabari, *Jami'ul Bayan*

(2) The Noble Quran, 2-Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse No. 38

(3) The Noble Quran, 16-Surah An-Nahl, Verse No. 36

"We certainly sent into every nation a Messenger, that you worship Allah alone and avoid *Taghoot*. And among them were those whom Allah guided, and among them were those upon whom error was decreed. So proceed through the earth and observe how was the end of the deniers."

(4) The Noble Quran, 5-Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse No. 3

"This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion. But whoever is forced by severe hunger with no inclination to sin - then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful."

(5) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book of Iman*, Narrated by Abu Huraira ؓ

(6) Bukhari, *Sahih, The Book of Beliefs*

Narrated by Abu Huraira ؓ, he said: "One day while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sitting in the company of some people, *Jibreel* came and asked, "What is *Iman*?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied, "Faith is to believe in Allah, His angels, the meeting with Him, His Messengers, and to believe in Resurrection." Then he further asked, "What is *Islam*?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied, "To worship Allah Alone and none else, to offer prayers perfectly to pay the compulsory charity, *Zakah*, and to observe fasts during the month of *Ramadan*. "Then he further asked, "What is *Ihsan*?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied, "To worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you cannot see Him, worship Him as if He sees you." Then he further asked, "When will the Hour be established?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied, "The answerer has no better knowledge than the questioner. But I will inform you about its portents.

- When a slave (lady) gives birth to her master.
- When the shepherds start boasting and competing with others in the construction of lofty buildings.

And the Hour is one of five things which nobody knows except Allah. The Prophet ﷺ then recited: "Knowledge of the Hour belongs to Allah; it is He who sends down the relieving rain and He who knows what is hidden in the womb. No soul knows what it will reap tomorrow, and no soul knows in what land it will die; it is Allah who is all knowing and all aware." (31-Surah *Luqman*, Verse 34) Then he left and the Prophet ﷺ asked his companions to call him back, but they could not see him. Then the Prophet ﷺ said, "That was *Jibreel* who came to teach the people their religion."

CHAPTER 7

**WHAT A MUSLIM SHOULD NEVER BE
IGNORANT ABOUT | PART - 2**

KNOW YOUR RELIGION

Level One - Islam

Islam is the true and only religion acceptable to Allah. It is the religion preached by all of His Messengers, with its core aspects remaining the same, while amendments were made only in its laws and codes as required at the time and for the people of the respective Messengers. ⁽¹⁾

The last Messenger of Allah, Mohammed ﷺ, preached the final form of this religion. It consists of three levels: *Islam*, *Iman* and *Ihsan*.

The first level of the religion of Allah is also called *Islam*. It is defined as the total submission to Allah through *Tawheed*, surrendering to Him with obedience and keeping away from *shirk* and its people. ⁽²⁾ There are five pillars on which *Islam* is built and they are mostly outward actions. ⁽³⁾ Following is a brief description of these five pillars:

1. **The Testimony, *As-Shahadah*:** It is the proclamation of one's

faith by which he embraces the religion of Allah, and it is the following declaration:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

[*Ash'hadu Alla Ilaha Illallah,
Wa Ash'hadu Anna Mohammadar-Rasoolulla*]

- I bear witness that there is none legitimately worthy of worship but Allah
- And I bear witness that Mohammed is the (final) Messenger of Allah

It is the first Pillar of Islam, the level one of Allah's religion, and it has two parts, one about the Oneness of Allah, and the other about the Prophet-hood of Mohammed ﷺ.

2. **Formal Prayer, As-Salah:** Establish regular prayers five times daily. They are *Duhr, Asr, Maghrib, Isha* and *Fajr* performed in congregation. It is the visible line of demarcation between Islam and *kufr*. Abandoning them even without denying its obligation may amount to disbelief, *kufr*.
3. **The Obligatory Charity, Az-Zakah:** The Arabic term *Zakah* means purification and prosperity. It serves as a means of self-purification and one's wealth too. It demonstrates one's submission to Allah and concern for fellow human beings. It is considered as the right of the poor and destitute. It should be given from one's wealth upon maturity, following the proportions prescribed in the Noble Quran, to the eight specified categories among the Muslims.
4. **The Fasting during Ramadan, As-Sawm:** The term *Sawm* refers to the abstinence from worldly pleasures such as food, drink, sexual activities and the like from dawn to dusk. It is

observed during Ramadan, the month that the Noble Quran was first revealed.

5. **The Pilgrimage, *Al-Hajj*:** *Hajj* represents the act of pilgrimage to the Sacred House of Allah in Makkah at least once in a lifetime if one has the means to perform it, financially and physically.

References:

- (1) The Noble Quran, 42-Surah As-Shura, Verse No. 13

"He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you, and what We enjoined upon Ibrahim and Mousa and Eisa - to establish the religion and not be divided therein. Difficult for those who associate others with Allah is that to which you invite them. Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns to Him in repentance."

- (2) Ibn Othaymeen, *Explanation of the three fundamental principles and their proofs*

- (3) Bukhari, *Sahih, The Book of Iman*, Narrated by Ibn Omer ﷺ

CHAPTER 8

**WHAT A MUSLIM SHOULD NEVER BE
IGNORANT ABOUT | PART - 2**

KNOW YOUR RELIGION

Level Two - Iman

I*man* is the level two of the Religion of Allah. The Arabic term *Iman* denotes the firm faith that plays a central role in the practice of the religion of Allah, and it consists of three basic aspects:

1. Conviction with the heart
2. Proclamation with the tongue
3. Actions with the parts of the body ⁽¹⁾

Iman increases and decreases. Submissiveness to Allah through remembrances, praises, obedience to His orders and the like will increase it. On the other hand, refusal by disobedience, negligence and the like will decrease it. ⁽²⁾

Iman is built upon six pillars, and it has seventy-odd branches. These pillars and branches collectively constitute the core beliefs and tenets of Islam. Muslims should have a firm and clear faith, beyond any doubt or suspicion, in each of them. They should

practice their faith through their heart, tongues and the parts of their body which would reflect in their acts of worship, ethical behaviour and adherence to the guidance of Allah. ⁽³⁾

Here is a brief description of the six pillars of *Iman*:

1. **To believe in Allah:** Belief or faith in Allah includes basically four aspects. They are:
 - To believe in His existence
 - To believe in the Oneness of His Lordship, *Ruboobiyyah*
 - To believe in the Oneness of His Worship, *Uloohiyyah*
 - To believe in the Oneness and Uniqueness of His Names and Attributes, *Al-Asma was-Sifat* ⁽⁴⁾
2. **To believe in His Angels:** Here are the highlights about the angels which are drawn from the texts of the Noble Quran and the authentic narrations from Sunnah.
 - They are one of the unseen worlds, and are created out of light ⁽⁵⁾
 - They never disobey Allah, rather they precisely carry out Allah's orders and discharge their duties. ⁽⁶⁾
 - Only Allah knows their numbers. ⁽⁷⁾
 - They have wings in different numbers - two, three, four or more. ⁽⁸⁾
 - They keep worshipping and glorifying Allah without any weariness. ⁽⁹⁾
 - Muslims should believe in them all as a whole in a general sense.

- One should also believe in them in detail like their names, qualities and duties as mentioned in the revelations, such as:
 - ***Jibreel:*** entrusted with revelations to the Messengers of Allah
 - ***Meeka'eel:*** entrusted with water and vegetation
 - ***Israfeel:*** entrusted with the trumpet that will be blown to mark the Last Day or Day of Judgment
 - ***Maalik:*** guardian of the hellfire
 - ***Munkar and Nakeer:*** entrusted with the interrogation of a person in the grave
 - ***Malakul Maut (Angel of death):*** entrusted with the removal of souls from bodies upon their death
 - Angels delegated to guard and account the deeds of people.
- 3. **To believe in His Books:** As the fulfilment of Allah's promise to send guidance for mankind, He revealed several Books to His Messengers. Firm faith in them is integral to the Islamic creed, and it plays a central role in shaping Islamic belief, practice, jurisprudence and the like.⁽¹⁰⁾

Here are some other key points regarding these Books:

- One should believe in all Books revealed by Allah as a whole
- One should also believe in the four Books mentioned in the Noble Quran

- To believe in *Tawrat*, the Book revealed to the Messenger of Allah, Mousa ﷺ.
- To believe in *Zabur*, the Book revealed to the Messenger of Allah, Dawood ﷺ.
- To believe in *Injeel*, the Book revealed to the Messenger of Allah, Eisa son of Maryam ﷺ.
- To believe in the Quran, the final Book that abrogates all the former books and scriptures, revealed to the final Messenger of Allah, Mohammed ﷺ.⁽¹¹⁾

4. **To believe in His Messengers:** Here are the highlights about the belief in the Messengers of Allah:

- They are human beings, specially chosen from mankind to call them to Allah and teach them His religion, Islam.⁽¹²⁾
- Messengers have been sent to each and every nation of mankind.⁽¹³⁾
- Allah has sent to mankind throughout their history 124,000 prophets, among them 315 were Messengers.⁽¹⁴⁾
- One should believe in every one of them without any discrimination.⁽¹⁵⁾
- One should also believe in all details and narrations about them mentioned in the Quran and Sunnah.
- Around 25 Messengers have been mentioned in the Noble Quran by their names.
- There is an elite group of five Messengers, referred to as *Ulul-Azm* in the Quran and Sunnah considering their highest level

of determination, steadfastness, and resilience in delivering Allah's message to their respective people. They are Nooh, Ibrahim, Mousa, Eisa and Mohammed ﷺ.⁽¹⁶⁾

- Mohammed ﷺ is the final and the most dignified Messenger sent to the whole of mankind and *Jinn* till the end of this world.⁽¹⁷⁾

5. To believe in the Last Day: This Day is also known as the Day of Resurrection or the Day of Judgment. Faith in the Last Day is a fundamental aspect of the Islamic creed which is rooted in the Quran and Sunnah. It underscores the necessity of leading a righteous life in accordance with Islamic teachings. It stands always as a powerful reminder of the moral and ethical responsibilities of a person in his worldly life.

Below are the key points about this pillar:

- To believe in the appointed time of the physical and spiritual resurrection of all creations.⁽¹⁸⁾
- To believe in judgment and accountability, and that each person will be called to reckon for his actions, both good and bad, no matter how small.⁽¹⁹⁾
- To believe in paradise and hell, and that each one will be rewarded or punished, based on their deeds and the mercy of Allah. Paradise, *Jannah*, is the place of eternal bliss and reward, while hell, *Jahannam*, is the place of punishment for those who rejected faith and lived in an irresponsible manner.⁽²⁰⁾
- To believe in the role of intercession with Allah by the righteous such as the Messengers, Angels, Believers and

others. Without His special permission, nobody can intercede with Him. The Messenger of Allah, Mohammed ﷺ shall be honoured with the greater share of the intercession on that Day.⁽²¹⁾

- To believe in the rewards or punishments in *Barzakh*, the period between death and resurrection on the Day of Judgment. This is integral to the belief in the Last Day.⁽²²⁾
- To believe in the various signs that will precede the Day of Resurrection, including the emergence of false prophets, moral decay, and supernatural occurrences.⁽²³⁾

6. **To believe in Destiny (*Qadr*), good and ill of it:** This is the faith of preordainment that everything is predetermined by Allah with His will and knowledge. To be precise, this pillar is central to the Islamic faith and has great importance in shaping the world view and approaches of the believers, hence it should be treated meticulously.

Here are some of the key points: ⁽²⁴⁾

- Allah's knowledge: Allah's knowledge has always been with Him and is everlasting. And His knowledge encompasses everything, including all that is to happen till the Last Day.
- Recorded in the Preserved Tablet: He recorded all that has to happen till the Day of Judgment in the Mother of the Book, fifty thousand years before the creation of the heavens and earth. All of that has preceded in His knowledge.
- Allah's Will: Everything that was recorded happens only by the Will of Allah. Nothing happens without the Will of Allah.

- Allah created Everything: All creations - their essences, qualities, properties, actions and doings - all are created by Allah.

Therefore, you should have an unshakable and clear faith, that which has hit you was never going to pass you by, and that which has passed you by was never going to hit you. The pen has been lifted and the scrolls have dried. ⁽²⁵⁾

References:

(1) Ibn Taymiyya, *The Book of Iman*

(2) Ahmed bin Hanbal, *The Creed as narrated by Al-Khallal*

(3) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book of Iman*

Narrated by Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "*Iman* has seventy-odd branches - or sixty-odd branches - the uppermost of which is the declaration that 'None has the legitimacy to be worshipped but Allah'; and the least of which is the removal of harmful object from the road, and modesty is a branch of *Iman*."

(4) Ibn Othaymeen, *Explanation of the three fundamental principles and their proofs*

(5) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book of Zuhd and softening hearts*

Narrated by A'isha رضي الله عنها that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "The Angels were created out of light and the Jinns were created out of the spark of fire and Adam was created as he has been defined for you"

(6) The Noble Quran, 66-Surah At-Tahreem, Verse 6

"Oh you who have believed! Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are angels, harsh and severe; they do not disobey Allah in what He commands them, but do what they are commanded."

(7) The Noble Quran, 74-Surah Al-Muddathir, Verse 31

"And none knows the soldiers of your Lord except Him. And mention of the Fire is not but a reminder to humanity."

(8) The Noble Quran, 35-Surah Al-Fatir, Verse 1

"Praise is to Allah, Creator of the heavens and the earth, who made the angels messengers having wings, two or three or four. He increases in creation what He wills. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent."

(9) The Noble Quran, 21-Surah Al-Anbiya, Verse 20

"They glorify His Praises night and day, and they never slacken."

(10) The Noble Quran, 57-Surah Al-Hadeed, Verse 25

"We have already sent Our Messengers with clear evidences and sent down with them the Scripture and the balance that the people may maintain justice.."

(11) The Noble Quran, 5-Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse 48

"And We have revealed to you, the Book in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and as a criterion over it.."

(12) The Noble Quran, 18-Surah Al-Kahf, Verse 110

"Say, I am only a man like you, to whom it has been revealed that your *Ilah* is the one truly worthy of worship. So whoever would hope for the meeting with his Lord - let him do righteous work and not associate anyone in the worship of his Lord."

(13) The Noble Quran, 18-Surah Al-Kahf, Verse 110

"And We certainly sent a Messenger to every nation, saying: 'Worship Allah alone and avoid every *Taghoot*'.."

(14) Albani, *Silsilah Al-Ahadeesu-Saheehah*, Hadith No. 2668

Narrated by Abu Dharr, he said: "I asked, 'Oh the Messenger of Allah, how many were the total number of prophets?' He replied, 'One hundred twenty-four thousand. Among them, three hundred fifteen were the Messengers, a plentiful crowd."

(15) The Noble Quran, 2-Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 285

"The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and so have the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His angels and His Books and His Messengers, saying, 'We do little discrimination between any of His Messengers'. And they say, 'We hear and we obey. We seek Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the final destination!'"

(16) The Noble Quran, 46-Surah Al-Ahqaf, Verse 35

"Oh Muhammad! So be patient, as were those of determination among the Messengers and do not be impatient for them.."

(17) The Noble Quran, 33-Surah Al-Ahzab, Verse 40

Muhammad is not the father of [any] one of your men, but [he is] the Messenger of Allah and last of the prophets. And ever is Allah, of all things, Knowing

(18) The Noble Quran, 21-Surah Al-Anbiya, Verse 104

"The Day when We will fold the heaven like the folding of a sheet of the records. As We began the first creation, We will repeat it. A promise binding upon Us. Indeed, We will do it."

(19) The Noble Quran, 21-Surah Al-Anbiya, Verse 47

"And We place the scales of justice for the Day of Resurrection, so no soul will be treated unjustly at all. And if there is even the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it forth. And sufficient are We as accountant."

(20) The Noble Quran, 20-Surah Taha, Verse 15

"Indeed, the Hour is coming - I almost conceal it - so that every soul may be recompensed according to that for which it strives."

(21) The Noble Quran, 21-Surah Al-Anbiya, Verse 28

"He knows what is before them and what is after them, and they cannot intercede except on behalf of one whom He approves. And they, from fear of Him, are apprehensive."

(22) Bukhari, *The Book of Supplications*

A'isha رضي الله عنها reported: Two elderly Jewish women entered upon me, and they said, 'The people of the graves are being punished in their graves.' I disbelieved them and I wasn't happy to believe them. Then they went out, and the Prophet ﷺ came to me, and I mentioned to him what they had said. He said, "They spoke the truth. The people of the graves are being punished with a punishment that all the creatures can hear."

(23) The Noble Quran, 47-Surah Mohammed, Verse 18

"Then do they await except that the Hour should come upon them unexpectedly? But already there have come some of its signs. Then what good to them, when it has come, will be their remembrance?"

(24) Ibn Othaymeen, *Explanation of the three fundamental principles and their proofs*

(25) Tirmidhi, *Sunan, The Book of the Description of the Day of Judgement*

Narrated by Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه, who said: I was once riding on the back seat of the Prophet ﷺ when he said, "Oh boy! I shall teach you a few words: Be mindful of Allah, He will preserve you. Be mindful of Allah, you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, ask of Him Alone; and if you seek help, seek help from Allah alone. Know that if the entire nation were to gather together to benefit you, they will not be able to benefit you except that which Allah had preordained; and if all of them gather to harm you with something, they will not be able to afflict you with anything except with something that Allah has pre-destined against you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried up."

CHAPTER 9

**WHAT A MUSLIM SHOULD NEVER BE
IGNORANT ABOUT | PART - 2**

KNOW YOUR RELIGION

Level Three - Ihsan

The term *Ihsan*, generally translated as excellence or perfection, refers to the third and highest level of the Religion of Allah, Islam. It underscores the concept of achieving spiritual excellence and perfection, and the necessity to strive for ethical and moral perfection in one's faith and actions. Practically, it enables a believer to worship Allah earnestly in a profound state of mind.

Here are some key points about *Ihsan*:

1. It is the level that makes one closest to Allah, and is the most rewarding state of one's faith.
2. The term *Ihsan* has been well defined by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as saying:

"It is to worship Allah as if you are seeing Him, and if you do not see Him, then surely He is seeing you." ⁽¹⁾

3. The above tradition has two aspects:

- To worship Allah as though you are seeing Him. This is the most recommended and the highest form of devotion.
- If you cannot attain this state of devotion then you must consider the state below it, which is to worship Allah with the conviction that surely He is seeing you.

To sum up, *Ihsan* represents the culmination of the pursuit of spiritual excellence and perfection. It is expected that those who embody *Ihsan* will demonstrate kindness, compassion, and honesty in their interactions with others. It raises their spiritual status by elevating their acts of worship from mere routine movements to the state of worshipping Allah with a deeper sense of awareness and a genuine desire to please Him.

References:

- (1) Muslim, *Sahih, The book of Iman*,
The *Hadith of Jibreel* on teaching the Religion, Narrated by Ibn Omer 🕌

CHAPTER 10

**WHAT A MUSLIM SHOULD NEVER BE
IGNORANT ABOUT | PART - 3**

KNOW THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH

Mohammed ﷺ

Mohammed (ﷺ - Peace be upon him) who was sent as Allah's special mercy to the worlds, is the final and the most dignified of His Messengers to mankind. He has been delegated to both mankind and *jinn* till the end of the world. There are no other Messengers to come after him. Knowing about him is central to the beliefs of Islam, and a deceased person will be asked about him in his grave, along with two other questions, i.e., about his *Rabb*, Allah, and about his *Deen*, Islam. ⁽¹⁾

Below are the basic and the most striking facts about him:

Name and Lineage

His full name is Mohammed son of Abdullah, and he belongs to the tribe of *Quraysh*, the most prominent tribe among the Arabs. They are the descendants of Ismail son of Ibrahim ﷺ. ⁽²⁾

Age and Prophet-hood

Ignorance and paganism prevailed in the pre-Islamic era, characterized by a lack of knowledge and the worship of multiple deities, where superstitions and tribal divisions held sway. The advent of the Messenger of Allah, Mohammed ﷺ, with the message of monotheism and Islamic fraternity, illuminated the path of history. This transformation reshaped the Arabian Peninsula and eventually the world, influencing the course of human history through the spread of the teachings of Islam and the unification of diverse societies under a common faith. The most striking point is that all of these events occurred in the limelight of recorded history, and no one can deny or cast doubts and suspicions on the subject matter.

Mohammed ﷺ was born in Makkah and lived for 63 years. Allah chose him as His final Messenger when he was 40 years old. With the revelation of *Surah Iqra'*, he became the Prophet (*Nabi*) and with the revelation of *Surah Al-Muddathir*, he became the Messenger of Allah (*Rasool*). He remained amongst his people as the Messenger of Allah for a period of twenty-three years and died when he was sixty-three.⁽³⁾

When a believer proclaims the second part of the Testimony, i.e., *Ash'hadu Anna Mohammadar-Rasoolullah*, in fact, he testifies that he will accept and obey all the commands and orders of Mohammed ﷺ, he will abstain from all that he has prohibited, he will attest and hold as true all that he informed, he will worship solely Allah, only in the way he has prescribed and he will love him above all creations.

Behold! Even though he is the most dignified, he is only a servant of Allah, never entitled to be worshiped. And being the

Messenger of Allah he should not be denied or rejected under any circumstances.

Al-Isra' – Al-Mi'raj and Hijra

He persistently warned his people against *shirk* and called them to *Tawheed* for ten consecutive years. Thereupon on a chosen night, he was taken on a night journey from *Masjidul-Haram* in Makkah to *Masjidul-Aqsa* in Jerusalem. This night journey is known as *Al-Isra'*. On the same night, from *Masjidul-Aqsa* he was taken on a miraculous journey called *Al-Mi'raj*, a cosmic ascension through the heavens up to the *Sidratul-Muntaha*, the farthest point in the seventh heaven to which any created being ever reached. On the same night, he was also returned to *Masjidul-Haram* in Makkah. ⁽⁴⁾

Upon *Mi'raj*, he was ordered to establish the five-time regular prayers. For three years, he offered them diligently and patiently in his birthplace, Makkah, despite the hostility directed towards him and his followers. Eventually, hostility towards him and his followers increased, persecution from the disbelievers intensified, and the social situation in Makkah deteriorated to unbearable levels for the Muslims. This paved the way for a crucial turning point in his mission when Allah gave him permission to do *Hijra*, the historic exodus from Makkah to Madinah by him and his companions.

Completion of Islam in Madinah

After the *Hijra*, Allah indeed completed His religion perfectly in Medina. All good things were enjoined and all evils were prohibited and warned against. Obedience to the Messenger was enjoined by Allah for both mankind and *jinn*. Every believer must

love him the most after Allah, and this love should be manifested by following his footsteps strictly.

He died in Madinah and was buried in his spouse A'isha's house adjacent to his Masjid. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him always.

References:

- (1) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book of Paradise, its Description, its Bounties and its Inhabitants*

Narrated by Bara' bin Azib رضي الله عنه that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "Allah will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm (*La Ilaha Illallah*).." [14:27]. He said: "This was revealed concerning the punishment of the grave. The deceased will be asked: 'Who is your *Rabb*?' He will reply: 'My *Rabb* is Allah, and my Prophet is Mohammad, ﷺ.' That is the meaning of His word: "Allah will establish those who believe, with the firm word, in this world and in the hereafter".

- (2) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book of Virtues*

Narrated by Wathila bin Al-Asqa' رضي الله عنه, he said: I heard Allah's Messenger ﷺ saying, "Indeed, Allah chose Kinanah from the descendants of Ismail, and He chose *Quraysh* from *Kinanah*, and He chose the *Banu Hashim* from *Quraysh*, and He chose me from the *Banu Hashim*."

- (3) Ibn Othaymeen, *Explanation of the three fundamental principles and their proofs*

- (4) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book of Iman*, Narrated by Anas bin Malik رضي الله عنه

CHAPTER 11

VIRTUES OF TAWHEED

Oneness of Allah

Fulfilment of which Jinn and Mankind were created for

T*awheed* is the fundamental aspect of monotheistic faith, professed by all Prophets and Messengers, that emphasizes Allah's absolute oneness and uniqueness. It is the cornerstone of the Islamic faith and is often described as the most important element in Allah's religion, Islam. The phrase *La Ilaaha Illallah* is the authentic word revealed by Allah to articulate this belief and to declare the testimony or *As-Shahadah*. It is often referred to as the Word of *Tawheed*, formulating the oneness and uniqueness of Allah, and is considered the best of what all the Messengers of Allah have uttered.⁽¹⁾

The fulfilment of *Tawheed* is what the *jinn* and mankind were created for, and it is their first and foremost obligation. Allah revealed all His Books and sent all His Prophets and Messengers for the fulfilment of this faith.⁽²⁾

Whoever testifies to *Tawheed*, will receive Allah's abundant guidance, leading to a harmonious and balanced life in all

aspects. Moreover, Allah will grant him absolute security in the hereafter and will protect him from the evils of this world. Most importantly, he will be saved from the hellfire, which is the ultimate goal of every human being. In fact, Allah has forbidden hellfire upon those who testify *La Ilaha Illallah* seeking His pleasure, and seeking to see His Face in the hereafter. ⁽³⁾

The word of *Tawheed*, *La Ilaha Illallah*, outweighs the whole of creation, and this testimony, *As-Shahada* will cause to expiate one's sins even if they pile up to the sky, or they are as numerous as the foam on the sea, or as earth full. If someone approaches Allah with a multitude of sins but remains steadfast in his belief in *Tawheed*, Allah will match their sins with equal forgiveness. ⁽⁴⁾

Whoever testifies that there is none legitimately worthy of worship but Allah and that Mohammed ﷺ is His Servant and Messenger, and that Eisa ﷺ is no more than Allah's Servant and Messenger, and he is Allah's Word ('Be!' - And he came into existence) directed to Maryam and a Soul created by Him, and that the paradise is true and the hellfire is true, Allah will enter him into the paradise whatever the deeds may be. ⁽⁵⁾

Those who fulfil all the requirements of *Tawheed* will enter paradise without reckoning and punishment, and one can attain the fulfilment of *Tawheed* by the following:

1. Abstaining from major *shirk* that will demolish the very foundation of *Tawheed*.
2. Abstaining from minor *shirk* that will diminish the obligatory perfection of *Tawheed*.
3. Abstaining from *bid'a* (innovations) and major sins, and

from minor sins in a persistent manner that will breach the recommended perfection of *Tawheed*.

References:

- (1) Tirmidhi, *Sunan, Chapters on Supplications, Graded by Albani as Hasan*
 "...The best of what I and the Prophets before me have said is: None has the right to be worshipped but Allah. He is the One, without partner, to Him belongs all that exists, and to Him belongs the Praise, and He is powerful over all things."
- (2) The Noble Quran, 51-Surah Ad-Dhariat, Verse No. 56-57
 "And I created not the *jinn*s and humans except they should worship Me Alone. I seek not any provision from them, nor do I ask that they should feed Me."
- (3) The Noble Quran, 6-Surah Al-An'am, Verse No. 82
 "They who believe and do not mix their belief with injustice (*Shirk*) - those will have security, and they are [rightly] guided."
- (4) Albani, *Silsilah Al-Ahadeesu-Saheehah, Hadith No. 127*
 Narrated by Ans bin Malik رضي الله عنه from Allah's Messenger ﷺ, who related from Allah the Exalted, saying: "Oh son of Adam! If you call upon Me and place your hope in Me, I will forgive you for whatever is within you, and I do not mind. Oh son of Adam! Even if your sins were to reach the clouds of the sky, and then you seek forgiveness from Me, I will forgive you, and I do not mind. Oh son of Adam! If you were to come to Me with sins nearly as great as the earth and then meet Me without associating anything with Me, I would certainly bring you forgiveness nearly as great as it."
- (5) Tabreezi, *Mishkat Al-Masabeeh, The Book of Faith*
 Narrated by Ubadah bin As-Samit رضي الله عنه, that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whoever testifies that there is none legitimately worthy of worship, but Allah alone, without any partner, and that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger, and that Eisa is the servant of Allah and His Messenger, and the son of His maid Maryam, and His word which He directed to Mary, and a soul created by Him, and that paradise and hellfire are true, Allah will admit him into paradise, whatever his actions may have been."

CHAPTER 12

BEWARE OF SHIRK

And other Nullifiers of Islam

The term Nullifiers of Islam refers to any belief or action contrary to the core tenets of Islam that can make a person exit from the fold of the religion of Allah.⁽¹⁾ There are several nullifiers of faith out of which the gravest and the most commonly found nullifiers are listed below:

1. ***Shirk***: The term *shirk* refers to the act of associating partners with Allah in His Lordship, Worship or in His Names and Attributes. Therefore, it represents a fundamental violation of the very concept of *Tawheed*. Basically, Allah created his slaves with a strong sense of repulsion against *shirk* and a clear inclination towards *Tawheed*. It is the devils who dragged them away into *shirk* thereafter.⁽²⁾ One could get entrapped into committing *shirk* as covertly as the crawling of a black ant on a black rock on a dark night.⁽³⁾

The most important factor that determines one's final destiny is *Ikhlas* which can be defined as the dedication of all worships

solely to Allah to seek His pleasure and see His Face in the hereafter without tainting it with any sort of stain like worldly desires and interests. *Shirk* is the greatest sin, as Allah says:

"Allah will not forgive setting up partners with Him, And He will forgive anything else below that to whom He wills." ⁽⁴⁾

There are two types of *shirk*, major and minor, and it has many manifestations:

1. **Major Shirk:** This includes explicitly associating partners with Allah in belief and in acts of worship or disbelieving in Allah. Examples include believing in false deities and praying to jinns or saints, deceased or otherwise.
2. **Minor Shirk:** This is less overt and occurs in the form of actions or intentions that diminish one's *Ikhlas* and sincerity in worship. Showing off in the acts of worship, making oaths or vows by other than Allah and excessive reliance on creations for fulfilling one's needs are a few examples of minor *shirk*.

Hidden Shirk: This is the most subtle form of minor *shirk*, where one's intentions and beliefs are tainted with impure intentions and interests, even if they do not express them openly. It affects their *Ikhlas* and sincerity and certainly attracts the wrath of Allah and keeps one away from Him.

Whoever commits *shirk*, be it major or minor, and does not repent from it before his death, incurs the following:

- He is doing the gravest of all sins and offenses
- Allah will not forgive his act of *shirk*

- Allah will enter him into the hellfire

In the event of committing major *shirk*, additionally, it incurs the following:

- All his prior good deeds will be invalidated ⁽⁵⁾
 - He will exit from the fold of Islam and will become a disbeliever
 - The paradise will be forbidden for him
 - He will abide in the hellfire forever ⁽⁶⁾
2. Establishing intermediaries between oneself and Allah.
 3. Not holding the infidels or polytheists as disbelievers.
 4. Believing that any guidance is more perfect and suitable other than the guidance of the Messenger of Allah, Mohammed ﷺ.
 5. Hating or disliking anything that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came with, even if one is practicing it.
 6. Mocking any part of the Religion.
 7. Involving oneself with sorcery or magic.
 8. Supporting or aiding the enemies of Islam, like polytheists and others, against the Muslims.
 9. Believing that it is permissible for anyone to be free from *Sharee'a*.
 10. Turning away from Allah's religion, not learning or implementing it. ⁽⁷⁾

References:

(1) The Noble Quran, 98-Surah Al-Bayyinah, Verse 6

"Indeed, they who disbelieved among the People of the Scripture and the polytheists will be in the fire of Hell, abiding eternally therein. Those are the worst of creatures."

(2) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book of Paradise, description of its bounties and its inhabitants*

Narrated by Iyad رحمته الله that Allah's Messenger ﷺ quoted Allah as saying: "..I have created My servants as monotheists, but the devils have come to them and led them astray from their religion, prohibited for them what I made permissible, and commanded them to associate with Me that for which I revealed no authority.."

(3) Suyooti, *Al-Jami'us-Sagheer, Hadith No. 4918*

Narrated by A'isha رضي الله عنها that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "The hidden shirk in my nation is more concealed than the crawling of an ant on a pitch-black night.."

(4) The Noble Quran, 4-Surah An-Nisa, Verse No. 48, 116

(5) The Noble Quran, 39-Surah Az-Zumar, Verse 65

"And it was already revealed to you and to those before you that if you should associate anything with Allah, your work would surely become worthless, and you would surely be among the losers."

(6) The Noble Quran, 5-Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse 72

"..Indeed, he who associates others with Allah - Allah has forbidden him paradise, and his refuge is the fire. And there are not for the wrongdoers any helpers."

(7) Mohammed bin Abdil Wahab, *Nullifiers of Islam*

CHAPTER 13

THE OPENING CHAPTER

Of the Noble Quran

Surah Al-Fatihah - سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

S*urah Al-Fatihah*, the first chapter of the Noble Quran, is also known as *As-Sab'ul Mathanee* and *Ummul Quran* or *Ummul Kitab*, which consists of seven verses. It is the most fundamental part of the Quran which should be recited in every *Salah*.⁽¹⁾ It is also recited on various other occasions prescribed in Sunnah.

Here are the Arabic text, transliteration and the translation of its meaning in English:

1. بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[*Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Raheem*]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

2. الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

[*Al-Hamdu Lillahi Rabbil Aalameen*]

All Praises are to Allah, Lord of all worlds

3. الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

[Ar-Rahmanir-Raheem]

The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

4. مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

[Maliki Yaumid-Deen]

The Only Owner and Ruler of the Day of Judgment

5. إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

[Iyyaaka Na'budu wa Iyyaka Nasta'een]

You alone do we Worship and You alone do we ask for help

6. اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

[Ihdinas-Swiratal-Mustaqeem]

Guide us on the straight Way

7. صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

[Swiratalladheena An'amtalalayhim]

The way of those upon whom You bestowed Your Grace,

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ

[Ghairil maghdoobi alalayhim]

Not of those who earned Your anger,

وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

[Waladwaalleen]

Nor of those who went astray

Key points about *Surah Al-Fatihah*:

- Recitation of this chapter in every *Salah* is obligatory. Reciting it in *Salah* is, in fact, an intimate conversation between a slave and his *Rabb*. This silent supplication runs through the oft-repeated verses of *Al-Fatihah* as follows:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Allah Almighty has said, say: I divided the prayer into two halves between Me and My servant, and My servant will receive what he asks.

When the servant says: All Praises are to Allah, Lord Almighty of all Worlds

Allah the Most High says: My servant has praised Me.

And when he says: The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,

Allah the Most High says: My servant has exalted Me.

And when he says: The Only Owner and Ruler of the Day of Judgment,

He says: My servant has glorified Me, and sometimes He would say: My servant entrusted (his affairs) to Me.

And when he says: You alone do we worship and You alone do we ask for help,

He says: This is between Me and My servant, and My servant will receive what he asks for.

Then, when he says: Guide us on the straight way - The way of those upon whom You bestowed Your Grace; Not of those who earned you anger, nor of those who went astray.

He says: This is for My servant, and My servant will receive what he asks for." ⁽²⁾

- The best and the most authentic way to know Allah is to learn about Him through His Names and Attributes. In *Surah Al-Fatihah*, some of them are explicitly stated. They are as follows:

Names	Attributes	Meanings/Implications
Allah		<i>Ismul-Jalalah</i> , the proper Name of the Creator and the only One legitimately worthy of worship
<i>Ar-Rahman</i>	<i>Rahmah</i> , Mercy	The One with vast and abundant mercy
<i>Ar-Raheem</i>	<i>Rahmah</i> , Mercy	The One who bestows mercy on His creation
<i>Rabb</i>	<i>Ruboobiyyah</i> , Lordship of Almighty	Creator, Supreme Owner, Planner and Organizer of all the worlds
<i>Maliku Yaumid-Deen</i>	<i>Al-Mulk</i> , Ownership and Authority	Only Owner and Ruler of the Day of Judgment
	<i>In'am</i> , Bestowal of Grace	One who bestows His Grace upon His Creation

- The earnest supplication of a Muslim, i.e., "You alone do we Worship and You alone do we ask for help" is included in the middle of this chapter. This verse implies that we need to seek the Help of Allah in order to worship Him alone. ⁽³⁾

- This is followed by the second most important supplication, and that is "Guide us on the straight way." It means we need to seek the help of Allah for continuous guidance to show us the way that He is pleased with in worshipping Him alone. So, while the first supplication is seeking His help to worship Him alone, the second supplication is seeking His guidance for Him to be pleased with His worship.
- This straight-way is that which was pursued by His Messengers, the first and foremost believers, the martyrs and the righteous. ⁽⁴⁾
- The chapter ends with a prayer to Allah, the Almighty, to keep us away from the path of those who earned His Anger by deviating away from the truth even though they knew it, like the Jews; and from that of those who went astray due to worshipping upon their ignorance, like the Christians. ⁽⁵⁾
- The recitation of this Chapter is often followed by *Aameen*, which means 'Oh Allah! Answer this supplication'. It is not a part of this Chapter. Rather a phrase which is invoked with other supplications too.

References:

(1) Bukhar, *Sahih, The Book of the Call for Prayer*

Narrated by *Ubadah bin As-Samit*  that Allah's Messenger  said: "The prayer will not be counted for those who didn't recite *Surah Al-Fatihah*."

(2) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book of Prayers*

(3) Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmoo'ul-Fatawa*

"Allah, the Exalted and Glorified, sent the Messengers proclaiming that there is none to be legitimately worshipped, but Him. Therefore, hearts turned away from loving anything besides Him to loving Him, and from seeking anything

besides Him to seeking Him, and from working for anyone else to working for Him, and from seeking assistance from anyone else to seeking assistance from Him. That is why the essence of the *Fatihah* (the opening chapter of the Quran) is "You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help."

(4) The Noble Quran, 4-Surah An-Nisa, Verse 69

"And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favour of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions."

(5) Ibn Kathir, *Tafseerul-Quran, Al-Ma'idah, Explanation of Verse 34*

Sufyan bin Uyaynah said: "Whoever among our scholars becomes corrupt, there is some resemblance to the Jews in him, and whoever among our worshippers becomes corrupt, there is some resemblance to the Christians in him."

CHAPTER 14

THE CHAPTER OF TAWHEED

Absolute Oneness and Uniqueness of Allah

Surah Al-Ikhlās – سُورَةُ الْإِخْلَاصِ

S*urah Al-Ikhlās* is a short but very significant chapter of the Quran, consisting of only four verses, which is equivalent to one-third of the Quran. It emphasizes the very essence of *Tawheed*, the belief in the Oneness and Uniqueness of Allah.⁽¹⁾

In the Islamic framework, the term *Ikhlās* refers to purifying Allah and the worship offered to Him. To make it more vivid, It can be described as the firm and clear belief in Allah without associating any equals, partners, helpers, intermediaries or intercessors with Him, and the dedication of all worship solely to Allah in order to seek His pleasure and see His Face in the hereafter without tainting it with any sort of stain like worldly desires and interests.

This chapter is central to the beliefs and practices of a Muslim, and it is recited on various occasions.

Here are the Arabic text, transliteration and the translation of its meaning in English:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Raheem]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

1. قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ

[Qul huwallahu Ahad]

Say: He is Allah, the One

2. اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ

[Allahus-Swamad]

Allah, the Absolute, the One whom all depend upon and Who depends on none

3. لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ

[Lam yalid, wa lam yoolad]

He begets not, nor was He begotten

4. وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

[Wa lam yakun lahu kufuwan Ahad]

And there is none equal unto Him

Here are the basic elements covered in this Chapter:

- This is the most comprehensive, clear and concise description of Allah given by Himself. It emphasizes the Oneness, Uniqueness and Purity of Allah as well as the purity in His Worship.

- This chapter is equivalent to one-third of the Noble Quran in terms of reward, and it is one of the chapters used as a remembrance (*dhikr*) to fortify oneself from the devils and evils.
- Allah is *As-Swamad* which means He is absolute and perfect in every sense. He is free from emptiness and deficiencies. He is self-sufficient and does not depend on anything for existence or sustenance. He is the One whom all creations turn to for everything at all times. He is the only *As-Swamad*, none else.⁽²⁾
- It negates the concept that Allah begets children (like the beliefs of Jews, Christians and Pagans)
- It also negates the concept that there are equals unto Allah (like that of the beliefs of polytheists) or there are people who can intercede with Him without His permission
- All these allegations are absolutely absurd! For He is the One who does not depend on anything, the One who is Self-sufficient, while everything depends upon Him

References:

- (1) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book the Travellers' Prayer and its Shortening*
 Narrated by Abud-Darda' ؓ that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "..Surah Al-Ikhlâs equals one-third of the Quran.."
- (2) Ibn Jarir At-Tabari, *Jami'ul Bayan, Explanation of Surah Al-Ikhlâs*

CHAPTER 15

CHAPTER OF THE DAYBREAK

The act of breaking, the dawn or otherwise

Surah Al-Falaq – سُورَةُ الْفَلَقِ

S*urah Al-Falaq* along with *Surah Al-Ikhlās* and *Surah An-Nas* are known as *Al-Mu'awwidhat* or the chapters of seeking refuge in Allah. They are also supplications to be incorporated into the daily routines of a Muslim and act as a spiritual shield against various adversities and negativities.

Here are the Arabic text, transliteration and the translation of its meaning in English:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[*Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Raheem*]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

1. قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ

[*Qul a'oodhu bi Rabbil falaq*]

Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of the daybreak

2. مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ

[Min sharri ma khalaq]

From the evil of all that He created

3. وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ

[Wamin sharri ghasiqin idha waqab]

And from the evil of that comes at night as its darkening
overspreads

4. وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ

[Wa min sharrinnaaffathati fil oqad]

And from the evil of those who blow in the knots

5. وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ

[Wamin sharri hasidin idha hasad]

And from the evil of the envier as he envies

Some benefits from this Chapter are given below:

- This is one of the chapters known as *Al-Mu'awwidhat* that are prescribed to fortify oneself from witchcraft, evil eyes, possessions, other harms and evils of demons and devils, etc. ⁽¹⁾
- It is part of the daily routines of a Muslim and is recited in the morning and evening remembrances, after the regular prayers and before going to bed.
- It helps strengthen the connection with Allah and maintain mindfulness of Him in daily life.

To sum up, there are certain indispensable remembrances and supplications for a Muslim to seek protection, guidance and blessings from Allah. This chapter is one of them, and others include *Surah Al-Fatihah*, *Surah Al-Ikhlās*, *Surah Al-Falaq*, *Ayat Al-Kursi*, and many more.

References:

(1) Ibn Majah, *Sunan*, *The Book of Medicine*, Graded by Albani as Sahih

Narrated by Abu Sa'eed, he said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to seek protection against the evil eyes of the jinn and the evil eyes of the human beings until the *Mu'awwidhatain* (*Surah Al-Falaq* and *Surah An-Nas*) were revealed. After they were revealed, he began to recite them and not anything else for protection."

CHAPTER 16

THE CHAPTER OF MANKIND

The refuge of Mankind in Allah

Surah An-Nas – سُورَةُ النَّاسِ

Surah Al-Falaq along with Surah Al-Ikhlās and Surah An-Nas are known as *Al-Mu'awwidhat* or the chapters of seeking refuge in Allah. They are also supplications to be incorporated into the daily routines of a Muslim and act as a spiritual shield against various adversities and negativities. ⁽¹⁾

Here are the Arabic text, transliteration and the translation of its meaning in English:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[*Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Raheem*]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

1. قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ

[*Qul A'oodhu bi Rabbin-Nas*]

Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind

2. مَلِكِ النَّاسِ

[*Malikin-Nas*]

The King of mankind

3. إِلَهِ النَّاسِ

[*Ilahin-Nas*]

The *Ilah* (only One worthy of worship) of mankind

4. مِنَ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ

[*Min sharri waswasil kannas*]

From the evil of the whisperer who withdraws ⁽²⁾

5. الَّذِي يُوسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ

[*Alladhee yuwaswisu fee swudoorinnas*]

Who whispers in the hearts of mankind

6. مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ

[*Minal jinnati wannas*]

(Whispers) of jinn and mankind

Here are some beneficial points from this chapter:

- Allah alone has the absolute Lordship, Ownership and Authority over all creations including mankind
- Allah is the only One legitimately worthy of worship for mankind and all other creations.

- Allah is the only One with whom mankind should seek refuge from whisperers of *jinn* and humans who whisper evil in the breasts and hearts of people.
- Whisperers from *jinn* and humans can do nothing if one conscientiously remember Allah. Rather, they certainly will withdraw if Allah's beautiful Names or His Words of perfection are recited.
- This chapters is treated as part of the daily routines of a Muslim and is recited in the morning and evening remembrances, after the regular prayers and before going to bed. ⁽³⁾

References:

(1) Nasa'i, *Sunan, The Book of Forgetfulness*, Graded by Albani as Sahih

Narrated by Oqbah bin Amir ؓ, he said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded me to recite the chapters for seeking refuge with Allah (*Surah Al-Ikhlās*, *Surah Al-Falaq* and *Surah An-Nas*) after every prayer."

(2) Alabni, *Silsilatul Ahadeesis-Saheehah*, Hadith No. 840

Narrated by Abdur-Rahman bin Khanbash ؓ that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "Jibril came to me and said, 'O Muhammad, say'. He asked: 'What should I say?' He said: Say: 'I seek refuge in the perfect words of Allah, which no righteous or unrighteous person can exceed, from the evil of what He has created, originated, and brought into existence. I seek refuge from the evil of what descends from the sky, the evil of what ascends to it, the evil of what is spread on the earth, the evil of what comes out of it, and from the trials of the night and the day, and from the evil of every night comer, except for the one who brings good, Oh the most Merciful.'"

CHAPTER 17

THE VERSE OF AL-KURSI

Al-Kursi, the Foot-Place of Allah

آيَةُ الْكُرْسِيِّ – *Ayat Al-Kursi*

The 'Verse of *Al-Kursi*' from *Surah Al-Baqarah*, Verse No. 255, is the greatest and most powerful verse in the Noble Quran. The term *Kursi* literally means chair or stool. It is the place of Allah's two feet as per some authentic narrations. Indeed, this verse is a treasure of knowledge about Allah, and the most magnificent remembrance to seek His protection, guidance and blessings.

Here are the Arabic text, transliteration and the translation of its meaning in English:

255. اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ

[*Allahu la ilaha illa hu..*]

Allah! There is none legitimately worthy of worship, but He

الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ

[*Al-Hayyul Qayyoom*]

The Ever-living, the Sustainer

لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ

[*La ta'khudhu sinatun wala naum*]

Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ

[*Lahu ma fissamawati wama fil-Ard*]

To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on the earth

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ

[*Man dhalladhee yashfa'u indhahu illa bi idhnihi*]

Who is there to intercede with Him without His permission?

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ

[*Ya'lamu ma bayna aydeehim wa ma khalfahum*]

He knows what was before them and what is to come for them

وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ

[*Wa la yuheetoona bishay'in min ilmihi illa bima shaa'*]

And they will never compass anything of His knowledge except that which He wills

وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ

[*Wasi'a Kursiyyuhus-Samawati wal-Ard*]

His *Kursi* extends over the heavens and the earth

وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا

[*Wa la ya'ooduhu hifduhuma*]

And preserving them both burdens Him not

وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

[*Wa huwal Aliyyul Azeem*]

And He is the Most High, the Supreme

Here are some benefits covered in this verse:

- This is the greatest verse of the Noble Quran, without exception. ⁽¹⁾
- This verse includes the most Supreme Name of Allah – *Al-Hayyul Qayyoom* – by which, if someone invokes Allah, his call will be answered, and he will be granted what he asked for. ⁽²⁾
- In this verse, special reference is made to *Kursi*, which is the Foot-Place of Allah, The proportion of the *Kursi* to the *Arsh* above, and its proportion to the heavens and earth beneath, is amazing. All the heavens and the earth in proportion to the *Kursi* are like a ring in a vast desert, while the *Kursi* in proportion to the Great *Arsh* is also like a ring in a vast desert. ⁽³⁾
- This verse includes five beautiful Names of Allah. They are: Allah, *Al-Hayy*, *Al-Qayyoom*, *Al-Aliyy* and *Al-Azeem*.
- Besides the above Names, around twenty-five Attributes of Allah have been mentioned in this verse such as *Uloohiyya*.

- This is one of the verses that is prescribed for the fortification of a Muslim and is recited after the five-time regular prayers, in the remembrance of morning and evening and before going to bed.⁽⁴⁾
- If someone recites it in the evening it will be a safeguard for him till the next morning, and if it is recited in the morning it will be a safeguard for him till the evening. It's specially mentioned that one who recites it before going to bed Allah will appoint a personal guard for him and no devil will come near him till the morning.⁽⁵⁾

References:

(1) Ahmed bin Hanbal, *Musnad, Hadith No. 21278*

Narrated by Ubayy ؓ: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked him, "Which verse in the Book of Allah is the greatest?" He replied, "Allah and His Messenger know best." Allah's Messenger repeated the question several times, and then Ubayy said, "*Ayat al-Kursi*." Then the Messenger of Allah said: "May this knowledge bring you joy, Oh Abul-Mundhir!"

(2) Nasa'i, *Sunan, The Book of Forgetfulness, Graded by Albani as Sahih*

Narrated by Anas bin Malik ؓ that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: (referring to a person who invoked Allah by His Greatest Name) "..By Him in whose hand my soul is, he invoked Allah by His Greatest Name, which, when He is invoked by it, He answers, and when He is asked by it, He gives."

(3) Dhahabi, *Highness belongs to the Most High, the Most Forgiving*

(4) Nasa'i, *Sunan Al-Kubra, Graded by Albani as Sahih*

Narrated by Abu Omama ؓ that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "The one who recites *Ayat Al-Kursi* after every prayer will not be prevented from entering paradise except by death."

(5) Bukhari, *Sahih, The Book of the Virtues of the Noble Quran*

Narrated by Abu Hurairah ؓ, who quoted a night visitor saying: "When you go to bed, recite *Ayat Al-Kursi*. If you do so, Allah will protect you, and no devil will come near you until morning." Then Allah's Messenger also said: "He has spoken the truth, although he is a liar; that was a devil."

CHAPTER 18

ISLAMIC ETIQUETTES

Code of manners and behaviours

The term *Al-Aadab* which refers here to Islamic Etiquette is a set of values, principles and behaviours derived from the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. It provides a framework for fostering strong connection with Allah, and maintaining a respectful and balanced relationship with fellow human beings, and the rest of the creations in general. Moreover, it promotes values of servitude to Allah and kindness to fellow beings. It also significantly contributes to the compliance of the Islamic faith and a positive attitude, which leads to a harmonious life.

Two facets of the religion of Allah are one's relationship with his Creator, Allah, and his relationship with the creations. The nature of these two relationships can be defined as servitude to Allah, the Lord Almighty, and respect for all others than oneself. More precisely, one should dutifully worship Allah alone and treat others with fairness and kindness according to Islamic standards and on par with humane values.⁽¹⁾

In Islam, detailed and comprehensive etiquettes are meticulously prescribed for all aspects of life. Muslims are enjoined to incorporate them diligently into their daily lives.

Below are some examples of key Islamic etiquettes related to different realms of life:

1. To be submissive and dutiful to Allah by worshipping Him alone ⁽²⁾
2. To be dutiful to one's parents with due respect, love and care ⁽³⁾
3. To be respectful to elders and those in authoritative positions
4. To be loving, kind and generous to one's kith and kin, orphans and the deprived ⁽⁴⁾
5. To love one another and cooperate in all good things
6. To uphold truthfulness and trustworthiness, refrain from telling lies in any situation, and keep promises, commitments and covenants ⁽⁵⁾
7. To honour time by managing it fruitfully and to keep one's words without fail ⁽⁶⁾
8. To keep away from all shameful deeds, injustice and rebellions
9. To maintain high standards of personal hygiene ⁽⁷⁾
10. To maintain chastity, modesty and respectful dress code ⁽⁸⁾
11. To maintain high standards of hospitality,⁽⁹⁾ and to exchange Islamic greetings

Greeting has a special impact on shaping human relations and

maintaining community bonds. *Assalamu Alaikum wa Ramatullah* is the prescribed phrase for greeting in Islam. The practice of this greeting proves Muslims' adherence to Islamic values, and it reflects the strength of their social fabric. The following narration depicts this perspective well:

"None will enter paradise till they believe, and none will believe till they love one another, and to love one another they must spread *Salam* - the greeting of Islam - amongst them." ⁽¹⁰⁾

Muslims are also enjoined to practice the following among themselves. Some of them are treated as an entitlement of a fellow Muslim:

- To return greeting ⁽¹¹⁾
- To visit the sick ⁽¹¹⁾
- To follow funeral processions ⁽¹¹⁾
- To say, *يَرْحَمُكَ اللَّهُ* [*Yarhamuka Allah* - May Allah be merciful to you] to the one who sneezes when he says, *الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ* [*Al-Hamdu Lillah* - All Praises are to Allah] ⁽¹¹⁾
- To accept invitations ⁽¹¹⁾
- To help the oppressed and to support others to fulfil their oaths and pledges
- To pronounce *بِسْمِ اللَّهِ* [*Bismillah* - In the Name of Allah] before eating, drinking, entering homes, performing *wudu* or *ghusl*, slaughtering animals and so on.
- To prioritize the right over the left always unless stated otherwise, for instance, entering the toilet with the left foot first or exiting the Masjid with the left foot first.

Allah Almighty says:

"Say: Surely, what my Lord has forbidden is limited to all shameful deeds, whether open or secret; sins and unrighteous transgressions; associating partners with Allah, for which He has given no authority; and saying anything about Allah of which you have no knowledge".⁽¹²⁾

In summary, within the context of Islam, these practices extend beyond mere social etiquette; they represent a code of manners and behaviours. Moreover, they hold profound spiritual significance, emphasizing the importance of one's relationship with the Creator and fellow creations, ultimately fostering peace and harmony in one's life.

References:

- (1) **The Noble Quran, 2-Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse No. 83**

"And (recall) when We took the covenant from the Children of Israel, (enjoining upon them), "Do not worship except Allah; and to parents do good and to relatives, orphans, and the needy. And speak to people good (words) and establish prayer and give *Zakah*. Then you turned away, except a few of you, and you were refusing."

- (2) **The Noble Quran, 17-Surah Al-Isra, Verse No. 23**

"And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age (while) with you, say not to them (so much as) '*uff*', and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word."

- (3) **The Noble Quran, 17-Surah Al-Isra, Verse No. 23 (Ibid)**

- (4) **The Noble Quran, 16-Surah An-Nahl, Verse No. 90**

"Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded your Lord."

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- (5) The Noble Quran, 25-Surah Al-Furqan, Verse No. 64-77
 - (6) Abu Ishaq Ibrahim As-Shatibi , *Al-I'tisam*, 2/152
 - (7) The Noble Quran, 2-Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse No. 222
 "Truly, Allah loves those who turns to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean."
 - (8) The Noble Quran, 24-Surah An-Noor, Verse No. 30-31
 - (9) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book of Iman*, Narrated by Abu Hurairah
 Narrated by Abu Huraira  that Allah's Messenger  said: "He who believes in Allah and the Last Day let him not harm his neighbour; and he who believes in Allah and the Last Day let him show hospitality to his guest; and he who believes in Allah and the Last Day let him speak good or remain silent."
 - (10) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book of Iman*, Narrated by Abu Hurairah 
 - (11) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book of Salam*, Narrated by Abu Hurairah 
 - (12) The Noble Quran, 7-Surah Al-A'raf, Verse No. 33

CHAPTER 19

THE METHODOLOGY OF ISLAM, PART-1

The authentic way to acquire Knowledge and Religion

In the post-truth era, where social media platforms are active, the word "religion" appears to be archaic and has lost its basic characteristics. When we mention Islam or the religion of Allah, it doesn't align with any contemporary narratives of religion, such as critical spirituality, personifications and idolatry, politicized versions of religions, etc.

Islam, the true religion of Allah, stands apart from others as it is neither an ideology invented and fabricated by humans, nor a form of blind spirituality, or paganism, or modern creation. Instead, it is a religion that remains unadulterated to its core. Islam is from Allah, the Creator of the universe, and was revealed to His Messengers, sent down to earth by Him.⁽¹⁾ Throughout the history of humanity, the most pious individuals of each generation have practiced and professed this religion. Its content and formulation are beyond the influence of mankind. Rather, humans are merely recipients who faithfully apply it in their daily lives without the slightest deviation or alteration.

To safeguard the purity of Allah's religion, He has prescribed a set of fundamental methods to be strictly followed for acquiring knowledge, drawing conclusions, practicing it in real life and transmitting it to the next generation.

Here are a few key points about this methodology:

The sources of Knowledge

The religion of Allah, Islam, is built upon revelations, and it has two forms:

- The Quran, the Book of Allah sent down to mankind
- Sunnah, the traditions of Allah's Messenger, Mohammed ﷺ. It consists of three components. They are:
 - the words or sayings of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ
 - his deeds or action
 - his sanctions or approvals
- The wordings of the revelation and their meanings are from Allah, for He says:

"And its (the Quran) collection and recital are for Us (Allah). And when We recite it just follow its recital. And then, it is for Us (Allah) to provide its explanation." ⁽²⁾
- Sunnah is a part of the revelation, for Allah said:

"Nor he (Mohammed ﷺ) says of his own desire. It is no less than the revelation inspired to him." ⁽³⁾
- A Muslim should refer to the Book of Allah and Sunnah of His Messenger in all major and minor issues of his life. ⁽⁴⁾
- The Quran and Sunnah are two integral parts of the revelation.

In order to derive religious beliefs and rulings, one should treat both of them as a single source of Islam without any discrimination or denial of any part of Sunnah. ⁽⁵⁾

- One should neither reject any part of the revelation nor twist its meaning. Instead, it is incumbent upon them to act in accordance with it precisely.
- The texts of the Quran and Sunnah must be understood, explained, and applied strictly in accordance with the intentions of Allah and His Messenger. ⁽⁶⁾

Upon the understanding of the Pious Predecessors

- The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was commanded to convey the words and meanings of the revelation to the whole of *jinn* and mankind. ⁽⁷⁾
- The companions of the Allah's Messenger ﷺ learned the texts and meanings of the revelation as intended by Allah and His Messenger, as they are the first audience of the revelation.
- They applied them in their life under the guidance and supervision of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.
- Whenever they had any doubt they referred back to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and it was cleared through the revelation.
- Allah Almighty has corrected them through His Messenger whenever they made some mistakes in understanding the texts.
- They are the authentic and best of the nations, as attested by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. ⁽⁸⁾

- The next two generations who followed them are also pious, authentic and best of the people after them. They are also the pious predecessors in its broadest sense.⁽⁹⁾
- Following the companions of the Messenger of Allah has been set as a condition by Allah to receive His guidance and pleasure, and to enter paradise.⁽¹⁰⁾
- A Muslim should learn and apply the texts of the revelations upon the understanding of the pious predecessors.

In summary, Allah prescribes that one should learn Islamic beliefs and rulings from the Texts of revelation, namely the Quran and Sunnah. These Texts must be understood and practiced exactly as the companions of the Messenger of Allah did.

References:

- (1) The Noble Quran, 7-Surah Al-A'raf, Verse No. 3
"Follow what has been revealed to you from your Lord and do not follow other than Him any allies. Little do you remember!"
- (2) The Noble Quran, 75-Surah Al-Qiyamah, Verse No. 17-19
- (3) The Noble Quran, 53-Surah An-Najm, Verse No. 3-4
- (4) The Noble Quran, 33-Surah Al-Ahzab, Verse No. 36
"And It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should have any choice about their affair. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error."
- (5) Al-Haakim, *Al-Mustadrak*, Graded by Dhahabi as Sahih
Narrated by Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "I am leaving among you two things by which you shall not be misguided thereafter: The Book of Allah and my Sunnah, and they shall not split until they reach me at the *Hawd*."

(6) **Ahmed, *Sunan*, Hadith No. 17415, Graded by Albani as Sahih**

Narrated by Oqbah bin Amir رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "The downfall of my nation will be through the Book and milk". They inquired, "Oh, the Messenger of Allah, what do you mean by 'the Book' and 'milk'?" He responded, "They will read the Quran but interpret it in ways differing from what Allah has revealed. Additionally, they will develop a strong attachment to milk, to the extent that they will abandon *Jumu'ah* and regular prayers, wandering through the deserts."

(7) **The Noble Quran, 5-Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse No. 67**

"Oh, the Messenger, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message. And Allah will protect you from the people. Indeed, Allah does not guide the disbelieving people."

(8) **The Noble Quran, 2-Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse No. 143**

"And thus we have made you a competent community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you.."

(9) **Bukhari, *Sahih*, The Book of Oaths and Vows**

Narrated by Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: The best of people are my generation, then those who follow them, and then those who follow them.."

(10) **The Noble Quran, 9-Surah At-Taubah, Verse No. 100**

"And the first forerunners, i.e., the *Muhajiroon* and the *Ansar*, and those who followed them perfectly - Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great attainment."

CHAPTER 20

THE METHODOLOGY OF ISLAM, PART-2

The authentic way to acquire Knowledge and Religion

Submission to the Textual Evidences

The phrase 'Submission to the textual evidence' means adhering to the Quran and Sunnah upon the understanding of the pious predecessors in matters of faith, worship, law, dealings and morality and the like. This is central to the beliefs and practices of Muslims, laying down a foundational framework for their religious and ethical affairs.

Textual sources (narrations) consist of three components. They are:

1. The Texts of the Noble Quran
2. The explanations of the Messenger of Allah
3. The applications of the pious predecessors

Here are the key points regarding absolute adherence to the Textual sources:

1. The religion of Allah is based on narrations, not on the logic or reasoning of people, nor on their whims and desires. ⁽¹⁾
2. Narrations are the ultimate truth and wisdom, whereas all other sources come from the logic, desires and experiences of the people. They are certainly of limited scope and are biased.
3. In the religion of Allah no priority or preference shall be given to human logic or desires over the textual sources. ⁽²⁾
4. So, it is binding upon us to submit to the textual evidence, as and when it reaches us through authentic sources. ⁽³⁾
5. It is incumbent upon mankind to submit to the narrations even if: ⁽⁴⁾
 - Their personal experiences may contradict them
 - They cannot grasp the rationale behind them
 - They feel some rulings are hard to implement
 - It opposes their personal interests
 - They feel it is against the spirit of their age, time or place, etc.

No scope for arguments, debates or disputes in the Religion of Allah

Allah has guided mankind to His path, which is straight, the shortest, and the only one. ⁽⁵⁾ This path leads us from our temporary house of tests and trials to our final and eternal abode. Those who are fortunate by the Grace of Allah to remain on this path must stand united in their beliefs and practices. In Islam, discord and factionalism in the guise of religion are strictly prohibited, and all means that lead to such discord, including arguments and

debates.⁽⁶⁾ Furthermore, arguments and debates are unlikely to result in resolutions or productive outcomes; instead, they are mostly counterproductive. In any case, arguments and debates oppose the very fundamental element of Allah's religion, which is total submission to His guidance and directives.⁽⁷⁾

Here are the key points regarding the argumentative stance, disputes, and debates on religious affairs:

1. Since Allah created mankind and designed their nature, He alone has the authority to determine their religion, knowing their needs, what they should or should not do, and all other matters concerning them.⁽⁸⁾
2. In the religion of Allah, there is no room for deductions, arguments, debates, or disputes based on human logic, reasoning, or desires; they are strictly prohibited.⁽⁹⁾
3. In the way of Allah, Islam, there is no other choice but to submit to the narrations absolutely and wholeheartedly, without any arguments or disputes.⁽¹⁰⁾

In a nutshell, absolute submission to the revelation or narrations is the essence of Islam, from which the religion of Allah has derived its name. Furthermore, it is the only way for believers to attain the highest rank for which they are destined by the leave of Allah.⁽¹¹⁾

References:

(1) The Noble Quran, 4-Surah An-Nisa, Verse 59

"O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best and best in result"

(2) The Noble Quran, 49-Surah Al-Hujurat, Verse 1

"O you who have believed, do not put [yourselves] before Allah and His Messenger but fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing."

(3) The Noble Quran, 33-Surah Al-Ahzab, Verse 36

"It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error."

(4) The Noble Quran, 4-Surah An-Nisa, Verse 65

"But no, by your Lord, they will not truly believe until they make you, [O Muhammad], judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in [full, willing] submission."

(5) The Noble Quran, 6-Surah Al-An'am, Verse 153

"And this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow other ways, for you will be separated from His way. This has He instructed you that you may become righteous."

(6) The Noble Quran, 6-Surah Al-A'raf, Verse 159

"Indeed, those who have divided their religion into sects – you have no connection with them in any matter. Their affairs are solely with Allah; then He will inform them about what they used to do."

(7) The Noble Quran, 40-Surah Ghafir, Verse 56

"Indeed, those who dispute concerning the signs of Allah without any authority having come to them - there is not within their breasts except pride, [the extent of] which they cannot reach. So seek refuge in Allah. Indeed, it is He who is the Hearing, the Seeing."

(8) The Noble Quran, 42-Surah As-Shoora, Verse 21

"Or have they other deities who have ordained for them a religion to which Allah has not consented? But if not for the decisive word, it would have been concluded between them. And indeed, the wrongdoers will have a painful punishment."

(9) The Noble Quran, 40-Surah Ghafir, Verse 35

"Those who dispute concerning the signs of Allah without an authority having come to them - great is hatred [of them] in the sight of Allah and in the sight of those who have believed. Thus does Allah seal over every heart [belonging to] an arrogant tyrant."

(10) The Noble Quran, 24-Surah, An-Noor, Verse 51

"The only statement of the believers when they are called to Allah and His Messenger to judge between them is that they say, 'We hear and we obey'. And those are the successful."

(11) The Noble Quran, 7-Surah Al-A'raf, Verse 131, 132

"When his Lord said to him (Ibrahim), 'Submit,' he said, 'I have submitted to the Lord of the worlds.' And Ibrahim instructed his sons to do the same. And so did Ya'qoob (saying): 'Oh, my sons, indeed Allah has chosen this religion for you, so do not die except as those who have submitted.'"

CHAPTER 21

THE METHODOLOGY OF ISLAM, PART-3

The authentic way to acquire Knowledge and Religion

Hold fast to *Al-Jama'a*, the authentic stream of Islam

The term *Al-Jama'a* refers to the authentic stream of Islam, realizing two aspects: one related to its principle, and the other to its practical application.

As for the first aspect, *Al-Jama'a* represents the ultimate truth, i.e., the straight path that the Messenger of Allah and his companions steadfastly followed. As for the second, *Al-Jama'a* is the ideal people or nation that perfectly pursues the straight path of the Messenger of Allah and his companions.⁽¹⁾

It is worth mentioning that when *Al-Jama'a* functions in full swing, there will be a legitimate Muslim ruler at its head, and the entire community will have given him allegiance as the subject. Effectively, *Al-Jama'a* will not defy a Muslim ruler; instead, they will remain as his subjects.⁽²⁾

Allah has commanded steadfast adherence to *Al-Jama'a*, and the avoidance of any actions that may corrupt its core meaning, or lead to sectarianism and disunity among Muslim nation.

Below are some important facts about *Al-Jama'a* and the unity of the Muslim nation:

- Splits have occurred among the polytheists and the people of the Book
- The Jews divided themselves into 71 sects
- The Christians divided themselves into 72 sects
- The Messenger of Allah warned that this *Ummah*, Muslim nation would be divided into 73 sects ⁽³⁾

The reasons for the split and disunity among the Muslims are summed up as below:

- Ignoring the narrations wholly or partially
- Giving priority to the logic and desires of the people over the narrations
- Interpreting the narrations according to their own logic and desires
- Ignoring the pious predecessors' understanding of the narrations ⁽⁴⁾
- The way to overcome this corruption and disunity is:
 - To return to the Book of Allah and the Traditions of the Messenger of Allah whenever a major or minor dispute occurs
 - To accept the Quran and Sunnah upon the understanding of the pious predecessors and to implement them as they practiced

The Messenger of Allah warned that all the sects of his nation would enter hellfire except one, which is *Al-Jama'a*, the authentic stream of Islam. They will enter paradise directly without any torment of hellfire.

Al-Jama'a, the Muslims who hold fast to the authentic stream that which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his companions followed, will remain on this planet until the end of the universe. To save oneself from hellfire, enter paradise and earn the pleasure of Allah, one should hold fast to *Al-Jama'a*.

Disunity is inherent in the ideology of those who associate false deities with Allah or follow their whims and desires. It is imperative to recognize such evils and stay away from them. Islam was revealed to unite people on the path of Allah and condemn all forms of division. Therefore, a Muslim should be always eager to preserve the unity of Muslim nation. ⁽⁵⁾

References:

(1) Bukhari, *Sahih, The Book of Holding Fast to the Quran and Sunnah*

Narrated by Mugheerah bin Shu'bah ؓ that Allah's Messenger said: 'A group from my *Ummah* will remain victorious following the truth, until the command of Allah comes to them while they are still dominant.'

(2) Muslim, *Sahih, The Book of Governance*

Narrated by Ibn Omer ؓ that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "One who withdraws his band from obedience to the Amir will find no argument in his defence when he stands before Allah on the Day of Judgment, and one who dies without having bound himself by an oath of allegiance to the Amir will die the death of one belonging to the days of *Jahillyya*."

(3) Abu Dawud, *Sunan, The Book of Sunnah*

Narrated by Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "The Jews were divided into seventy-one sects, and the Christians were divided into seventy-two sects, and my nation will be divided into seventy-three sects."

(4) Ibn Abi Asim, *Sunnah, Hadith No. 69*

Narrated by Mu'awiyah bin Abi Sufyan رضي الله عنه that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "The People of the Book before you divided into seventy-two sects in matters of desires, and this nation will divide into seventy-three sects in the field of desires."

(5) The Noble Quran, 2-Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 137

"So if they believe in the same as you believe in, then they have been rightly guided; but if they turn away, they are only in dissension, and Allah will be sufficient for you against them. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing."

